

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 17 August, 1978

Petitions—Ethnic Affairs (Ministerial Statement)—Questions without Notice—Supply Bill (first and second reading)—Senate Vacancies (Election of Senators)—Supply Bill (second reading resumed)—Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Financial Accounts of Statutory Authorities (Message)—Printing Committee (First Report).

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

Mr Speaker offered the Prayer.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced that the following petitions had been lodged for presentation:

Nude Bathing Beaches

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia, New South Wales, respectfully sheweth:

That we support your efforts to strengthen our family and community life. We therefore wish to register our firm opposition to legalisation and encouragement of public indecent exposure by the designation of certain public beaches and/or other public areas as "nude bathing" or so called "unclad" bathing areas. Such actions already taken outside the powers of Parliament have in effect caused the following results:

- (1) Restricted certain public beaches and public areas to one small privileged section of the community.
- (2) Given official approval, sanction and encouragement to indecent exposure which is unlawful conduct under our existing State laws.
- (3) Rejects the traditional Judeo-Christian ethic which is observed by the majority of the citizens of New South Wales.
- (4) Ignores the views of the majority of Australians, who by attitude and action reject this form of public behaviour.
- (5) Places heavy pressure on the State law enforcement agencies and courts as they seek to implement present laws relating to public indecent exposure, pornography and theatre obscenity.

We believe sufficient facilities exist for genuine "nudists" in the private, licensed and supervised nudists clubs.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will reverse the practice of the proclamation of "unclad" public bathing beaches.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petition, lodged by Mr Sheahan, received.

Drug Usage

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia, New South Wales, respectfully sheweth:

That we support your efforts to strengthen our family and community life particularly by increased penalties for "drug pushers" and distributors. We, however, wish to register our firm opposition to any legal changes which would increase or encourage the distribution or availability of so-called "soft" drugs, such as marihuana. We believe such drugs to be harmful to the physical and psychological health of the individual and therefore to the interest of the community of which such individual is part. Although there is current controversy concerning the question of such harm it appears to us quite foolish to legalize and encourage the use of such drugs unless or until it be shown that such drugs are in fact harmless. The serious social problems of alcohol should provide sufficient warning to our society.

Any efforts to legalize or **decriminalize** usage or distribution of such drugs will have the following results:

- (1) Encourage and inculcate a social acceptability towards such drugs.
- (2) Increase the volume of usage of such drugs in schools and the community by present users and by "drug pushers" through the proposed one oz. legal possession.
- (3) Extend the usage of such drugs to persons who would previously been abstained because of the legal sanctions.
- (4) Put pressure upon Parliament to establish and license import, growth, manufacture **and/or** distribution of such drugs, that is, to regulate another destructive industry contrary to the best interest of the individual and society.
- (5) There would be the probable temptation to use such drugs as another source of State revenue.

We urge the Government to increase the medical and counselling facilities for the assistance of drug users and to expand existing Drug Referral Centres and Clinics. We have general confidence in the existing law and its sympathetic implementation by the Police and Courts, especially section 556A where the circumstances warrant it.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House **will** firstly take no measures that could extend the major social problem of drug usage and secondly will oblige those who are promoting marihuana **and/or** similar drugs to prove without doubt that such drugs are harmless before any legalization or decriminalisation of use is introduced.

And your Petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petition, lodged by Mr Sheahan, received.

Sunday Hotel Trading

The Petition of the undersigned electors in the State of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

- (1) **A** referendum on Sunday trading in hotels was held in New South Wales in the year 1969 which showed an overwhelming majority voting against Sunday trading in hotels.

- (2) Alcohol is a contributing factor in a large proportion of road accidents causing many fatalities and maimings and more facilities for weekend drinking will inevitably add to the problem.
- (3) The high incidence of alcoholism among our young people is causing much concern.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House:

- (1) Will not pass any legislation which will allow any extension of Sunday trading in liquor in hotels or any other place where sale of liquor is permitted.
- (2) If however it is intended to submit legislation to the House, this should not be done until the people of New South Wales be given the democratic right of vote by referendum on this important issue.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound will ever pray.

Petitions, lodged by Mr **Caterson** and Mr Rogan, received.

Pensioners' Electricity Accounts

The Petition of the undersigned citizens respectfully sheweth:

That economic hardship is being suffered by those citizens of this State whose incomes consist solely or mainly of age ~~or~~ invalid pensions and who ~~are~~—

- (a) subject to increasing charges for electricity;
- (b) required ~~to~~ pay maximum rates applicable to smaller consumers; and
- (c) are not able to obtain any rebates under the existing provisions of the Electricity Act.

Your Petitioners accordingly call upon the Government of New South Wales to take early steps to so amend the Electricity Act as to empower each electricity distributing authority in this State to allow rebates on the electricity accounts of the abovementioned pensioners.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petitions, lodged by Mr Face, Mr **Moore** and Mr **Osborne**, received.

Quality of Education

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia, New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That because there is much **concern** in the community over the failure of modern education at primary and secondary levels to meet the expectations of many parents, teachers, lecturers, professors, employers and students;

That because there is considerable doubt as to the content and standards, philosophy and moral values of new courses or projects, such as M.A.C.O.S. ("Man—a Course of Study"—ex U.S.A.); "**People** of the Western Desert" (Aust.); and S.E.M.P. ("**Social** Education Materials **Project**"—Aust.) and in view of the fact that M.A.C.O.S. and S.E.M.P. have been withdrawn from Queensland schools;

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Parliament of New South Wales will:

- (1) Immediately suspend courses and projects such as "M.A.C.O.S.", "People of the Western Desert" and "S.E.M.P." from all N.S.W. primary and secondary schools and teacher's colleges, and conduct an independent public inquiry into their suitability and conformity with the provisions of the N.S.W. Education Act.
- (2) Enforce the following guidelines in relation to all text books, courses, projects, etc., used in State schools and institutions:
 - (a) They should encourage loyalty and respect for God, Queen and Country, our Federal and State Constitutions and observance of the laws of the land.
 - (b) They should recognize the importance of marriage, family life, motherhood and fatherhood, as well as the privacy of the family and the individual student.
 - (c) They should avoid profanity, indecency or any encouragement of racial hatred, anti-semitism, sedition or violent revolution against our Australian democratic parliamentary institutions.
 - (d) They should provide for studies in history and geography (rather than sociology) and show the importance of the Judeo-Christian ethnic as our natural Australian heritage.
 - (e) They should teach the 3 R's, that is, the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, so that all children receive an effective basic education for their future responsibilities.
- (3) Implement a system of public preview and approval of all text books, novels, courses and projects with reasonable access for all parents and citizens before they are approved for use in schools in accordance with an approved core curriculum.
- (4) Introduce a more meaningful system of the testing and assessing of educational results so as to provide a more equal opportunity for all students in N.S.W.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petitions, lodged by Mr Caterson, Mr Crabtree, Mr Mulock and Mr Pickard, received.

Trading Hours

The Petition of certain citizens of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That we, the undersigned, wish to express our strongest opposition to any extension of trading hours in New South Wales.

Past performance has proven that longer trading hours do not lead to increased sales. However, it does increase costs because shops have to be staffed for longer periods. To cover these increased costs, retailers are forced to increase prices and reduce staff levels. This means that longer trading hours increase both inflation and unemployment.

The Government's Committee of Inquiry into Retail Trading Hours proved last year that there was no consumer demand for extended trading hours.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will call on the Government to enforce the existing trading hours legislation and to resist any calls to introduce extra weekend trading.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petition, lodged by Mr Face, received.

Education Commission

The Petition of the undersigned citizens and parents of children attending schools in New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That because there is criticism, confusion, and great concern in the community and especially by parents about all levels of the present systems and methods and aims of education.

That the majority of the community and especially parents again are not aware of the formation of an Education Commission.

That the methods of informing the community and parents has not been satisfactory in reaching the majority, and therefore, the majority are unaware that such a commission is to be formed.

That there has been insufficient time allowed for the majority to become informed fully, as to the pros and cons of an Education Commission.

That there should be more information made available to the community and parents on all issues to do with education or the formation of an Education Commission and where our tax money is to be spent.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will:

- (1) Not allow under any circumstances the formation of an Education Commission at this time, and take steps to fully inform the public of what an Education Commission is all about and the effects it will and won't have on our children.
- (2) Hold a full open inquiry on education in New South Wales schools and take steps to fully inform the majority of the community and call for them to write and make submissions to this inquiry as a matter of urgency.
- (3) By holding a full open inquiry eliminate the existing criticism, confusion and concern and produce a standard of education that is acceptable to the majority of the community, i.e. parents, employers, students and other citizens of New South Wales.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petition, lodged by Mr Caterson, received.

Inquiry on Education

The Petition of the undersigned citizens of New South Wales and parents of children attending New South Wales schools respectfully sheweth:

That because of today's modern education, (that has no definite syllabus, does not put a lot of emphasis on the 3 R's but puts emphasis on social and moral issues. Compiles complicated school reports. Has a system of gradings that the majority do not understand.) We now find criticism, confusion and illiteracy. We now feel very concerned as parents and employers **and** citizens about education in both primary and secondary schools.

That because of this kind of education with emphasis on children being asked to question and evaluate for themselves matters concerning social and moral issues (through innovative programmes, projects, kits and text books and special courses that have not been fully evaluated). We find many problems arising in the home, work force and society and we feel perhaps the schools have infringed too far on the parents' role in educating their children on these matters and forming their children's attitudes, ethics and morals.

Your Petitioners humbly pray that your honourable House will take steps to hold a full independent open inquiry into education in New South Wales and take steps to satisfactorily fully inform the public on said inquiry and invite the public to comment as well as make written submissions.

or

- (1) Bring in a definite syllabus with emphasis on the 3 R's for primary schools.
- (2) Remove innovative programmes and courses and social studies until they are evaluated.
- (3) Replace Social Studies with History and Geography.
- (4) Have any school that operates as a "Progressive School" come back into line with other schools or allow parents a freedom of choice on such a school.
- (5) Ensure that primary and secondary schools have a good syllabus that is uniform in all schools so parents will be satisfied and teachers will not find their jobs so difficult or demanding and will not have too much responsibility placed on them individually.
- (6) Have school reports from primary and secondary schools made more easily understood by parents with marks out of 100 in all subjects and position in class.
- (7) Put more emphasis on the core of a definite syllabus on all subjects for secondary schools. With English to include, Spelling, Grammar, Reading and literate Speech.
- (8) Abolish gradings in secondary schools as they are neither understood or accepted by the majority of people.
- (9) Bring a return to full external examination on all subjects in **all** secondary schools for School Certificate and Higher School Certificate. With marks shown on these certificates in percentages or A, B, C, etc. Plus position in year and position in State. This would be of great benefit to parents, students and employers.

- (10) Have less emphasis on social and moral issues and see that teachers are encouraged to re-inforce the standards and values most children have already been taught by their parents in regard to respect for other people, democracy, law, traditional values and morals. Not seek to destroy these ideas.
- (11) Satisfy the taxpayer that his money is being spent on an education that is acceptable.
- (12) Bring the education of the children of New South Wales back to what is understood and accepted by the majority of today's society, do not prepare them for some future society that has not arrived as yet.
- (13) Endeavour to maintain any future system with the above outline for a reasonable period so that it can be fully evaluated before it is modified or changed in any way.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petitions, lodged by Mr **Caterson** and Mr Ferguson, received.

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Education System

The Petition of certain confirmed citizens of **Winston Hills** and **Baulkham Hills**, and other suburbs, being parents and friends of children attending various schools respectfully sheweth:

There is widespread criticism and confusion of the education systems.

There should be a return to either full external examinations or 50 per cent examination and 50 per cent assessment for School Certificate and Higher School Certificate.

There should be a return to a more easily understood School Reports and Certificates. There should be a return to a syllabus which includes spelling tests and Grammar, and some courses reintroduced should include Shorthand, Bookkeeping and Typing. There should be uniformity in all schools. Terminology such as "Moderated Reference Tests", "Core", "Electives" etc. should be done away with and plain simple English used.

The Education Department's methods of informing parents and the community of the Secondary School Board's invitation has not been satisfactory in reaching the majority.

Parents and community should have more say before the people concerned keep making so many changes every year in our schools. This only creates confusion.

Extension of time on the Secondary School Board's invitation, so more submissions can be made.

More information to reach the parents and community on the Board's final decision.

Your Petitioners humbly pray that your honourable House will take steps to eliminate the existing education problems as a matter of urgency.

And your Petitioners, in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petition, lodged by Mr **Caterson**, received.

Riverwood to East Hills Railway

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the State Electorate of East Hills of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

- (1) There is a single rail track from Riverwood to East Hills.
- '(2) For many years promises have been made to construct a double rail track from Riverwood to East Hills.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will at once in the public interest take steps to ensure the construction of a double rail track from Riverwood to East Hills.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petition, lodged by Mr Rogan, received.

Clearways

The Petition of the undersigned citizens of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That there is very widespread dismay in Ku-ring-gai Municipality, and most other parts of Sydney, at the personally signed statement dated 22nd June, 1977, by the Minister for Transport which said "The Traffic Authority is in the process of advising all Metropolitan Councils and Chambers of Commerce that the application of clearways embracing substantial periods of the day, and including weekends, to sections of the main and secondary road system is expected to be effected within the next three years."

That the Government's decision to transform **all** of Sydney's main roadways into what will virtually be 24-hour freeways, will have disastrous consequences on local shopping centres and virtually bring **an** end to commercial activity thereby creating lifeless traffic corridors.

That the decision disregards entirely the essential use of Church buildings for services, funerals, weddings, meetings and community functions day and night throughout the week.

That the decision will be disastrous for business houses whose capital investments of millions of dollars will be eliminated.

That the decision will be disastrous for local residents whose shopping facilities in Lindfield, Gordon, and elsewhere, will be eliminated.

That the decision crucifies small business because it, in effect, advantages the City of Sydney and large regional shopping complexes at the expense of the little shops.

That the decision takes no account of the additional traffic congestion in "side streets" which will result, thus reducing the residential amenity of hundreds of suburbs and localities.

That the decision has been made with no offer whatever of compensation, retraining or re-location to those thousands of **disadvantaged** Sydney-siders and especially the people of Ku-ring-gai Municipality.

That the decision has been made with no indication by the Government of the increased traffic flow which is supposed to result and no indication of a new freeway programme.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House reverse the decision of the Minister for Transport to apply clearways embracing substantial periods of the day, including weekends, to sections of the main and secondary road system within the next three years.

Petition, lodged by Mr **Moore**, received.

ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION REPORT

Ministerial Statement

Mr WRAN: I desire to make a ministerial statement to the House regarding the report of the Ethnic Affairs Commission. The commission was established under the provisions of the Ethnic Affairs Act, 1976, and it was charged specifically with furnishing a report recommending the legislative, administrative or other action that it considers necessary and practicable with respect to ethnic affairs and, in particular, with respect to promoting the integration of different ethnic groups and determining the functions that should be conferred and imposed on the commission and the manner in which the commission should be constituted. The report, which I shall shortly table, has now been presented to me. At the outset I should compliment the chairman and the commissioners for bringing together such a detailed and balanced report. Their task has not been an easy one but the report that they have furnished is in my opinion not only timely and appropriate but also realistic in its approach. It highlights the contributions of the ethnic communities and gives attention to the significant challenges for our whole community of ensuring the total participation in the political, social and economic life of people who have chosen New South Wales as their place of abode and workplace.

My Government came to office with a firm commitment to improve the position of people of ethnic background in our community. We were well aware of the lack of attention and concern of our predecessors for the need for action to be taken to create a harmonious society offering conditions for equal opportunity for all people regardless of their birthplace or social condition. Our predecessors appeared to have no regard for the facts that more than 20 per cent of the Australian population was born overseas and that, taking into account the children of immigrants, well over one third of our population, or one in three people were either born overseas or were the children of marriages of one or both parents who were born outside Australia. A very large number of the new arrivals in this country do not speak English. Almost all of the new settlers have special needs that must be fully understood so that they may be met either through the efforts of voluntary groups or government intervention.

As a measure of the concern that our predecessors had towards the problems of ethnic communities, it might be recalled that, in 1975-76 in its last year in office, the Liberal-Country party Government allocated specifically for ethnic **affairs** the princely sum of \$125,000. The problems of new settlers are immense. They face accommodation problems, job opportunity **difficulties** and the related problems of language and of integrating in strange surroundings in a society that at times appears **to be uncomprehending** and even hostile. It is our experience that these problems do not always stop after the first years of settlement. Sometimes they extend over one whole generation. I regret that these problems were not recognized by our predecessors or, if they were, they displayed complete insensitivity towards them.

My Government on coming to office was determined to move, and move **quickly**, to create an environment that would enable Australians born overseas to integrate into their new society while still allowing them to retain their links and the

traditions of their former homelands. It cannot be refuted that people of ethnic background have played a monumental role in creating and moulding the society that we all enjoy here. Not only **did** my Government establish the Ethnic Affairs Commission in its first year of office; it also increased sixfold, to \$750,000, the allocation specifically for ethnic affairs. This Government established the first community interpreter and information centres in Australia, and it is extremely pleasing to find that the Commonwealth and the governments of other States are moving in a similar direction. The allocation for ethnic affairs for 1977–78 was increased still further to \$1.73 million. The Treasurer will be indicating in his budget speech the amount to be allocated in 1978–79. It is against this background that the Ethnic Affairs Commission has prepared its report. I cannot attempt to summarize a report of such magnitude, complexity and scale. However, a number of significant features about the report must be highlighted.

First, it presents for the New South Wales Government's consideration a co-ordinated, detailed plan of action in the field of ethnic affairs. As I have already intimated, it is a balanced plan and takes into account the interests of the whole of our community. The past paternalistic attitude towards immigrants and ethnic **affairs** as expressed in other reports on this subject is **certainly** not repeated in this report. Second, the report looks beyond the system of multi-culturalism seen only as a **need** to preserve the cultural heritage of Australians with non-English-speaking backgrounds. It looks to the fundamental question of the total participation of migrants in Australian life including the sharing of **decision-making** in all issues of public interest.

The report begins by isolating the five main challenges for our community. It then addresses itself to how these challenges can be met. It recognizes the problem of unemployment with certain ethnic groups, especially the unskilled and the more recent settlers, amongst whom **unemployment** can be several times higher than the national average. The problems of unequal opportunity in some schools have been identified where it appears that children of non-English-speaking background are not given **an equal chance to** prepare themselves **to** compete in Australian life.

The problem of access to public services is explored. It is confirmed that access to public **services** is difficult for the **underprivileged**, especially those who do not speak English. The related problem of the lack of upward mobility of too many **Australians** of ethnic background who are still employed in subordinate positions is examined. Finally, the report concerns itself with the all-embracing problems of teaching English to both children and adults. Regrettably, the **commission** has confirmed that inadequate resources are now allocated to programmes to teach English as a second language.

Among its many detailed recommendations the report advises on the structures of the commission **itself** and the setting up of structures in other departments. In particular, the report does not see the commission as having a monopoly on ethnic **affairs**. On the contrary, its ultimate objective is seen to ensure that all elements of government administration regard ethnic affairs not as some separate or exotic offshoot of their functions, but as part of the ordinary, day-to-day attitudes and thinking. The report states that the underlying philosophy of the commission should be centred upon the need to promote integration by interchange and interaction **between** people, and between people and institutions.

The report sets for the commission a role of smoothing the way for the New South **Wales** Government administration in that broad area which now goes under the name of ethnic affairs. The report recommends that the commission have the following **specific** responsibilities: (a) to plan, co-ordinate, evaluate and promote the ethnic affairs **activities** of the New South Wales Government administration, under the **direction** of **the Minister**, but **with** independence in framing **recommendations**;

Mr Wran]

(b) to monitor for the Government the needs of the ethnic communities; (c) to provide a channel of communication between the ethnic communities and the Government; (d) to provide selected services to the ethnic communities **and** to new settlers, Which either are not available elsewhere, or which, from an **organization** viewpoint, are better managed by the commission; (e) to maintain liaison and co-operation with all bodies involved in immigration and ethnic affairs; (f) to draw into government decision-making the as yet largely untapped resources of the ethnic communities; (g) to help trade unions, public and private enterprises, professional bodies and others understand and develop the ethnic human resources available within their organizations; (h) to sponsor research in ethnic issues; and (i) to produce an annual report to be tabled in Parliament as well as reports on specific issues to be submitted to the Minister from time to time.

The communication between the ethnic communities and the government administration is one aspect of interaction which the commission can positively influence. A permanent commission, as envisaged in this report, will assist the Government in launching initiatives in all appropriate areas, after sharing its thinking, as much as possible, with the ethnic communities. This sharing is seen by many people in the ethnic communities as an indispensable step to give real meaning to the concept of integration. In the area of New South Wales Government administration the commission has found evidence of many good points, but also of insufficiencies, inefficiencies and inconsistencies, especially in the areas of employment, career opportunities, the distribution of information and access to services. These coincide, in many cases, with the findings of **Professor Wilenski**.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr WRAN: Several of the **commission's** detailed and technical **recommendations** relating to the New South Wales Government administration as an employer of people of ethnic background are being implemented, as a result of fruitful co-operation between the **commission** and the Public Service Board. Other recommendations are being studied to **find** the best way to implement them. The report makes recommendations about education, welfare, employment and industrial relations, the law and other areas. For example, it recommends:

Increases in both the depth and scope of teaching English as a second language to both children and adults;

Employment of teachers with overseas qualifications and experience to work in community language and culture **programmes**;

Streamlining and clarifying the responsibilities of the Commonwealth and State governments in the provision of services;

Continuation and expansion of direct assistance to ethnic groups to cater for needs, both for new settlers and for people who settle here and are now ageing;

Changes in manpower and retraining policies for the ethnic **workforce**, bridging courses for immigrants who have overseas qualifications and courses which will enable unskilled workers to acquire trade skills needed in the community;

New **legislation** covering aspects of **health and safety** at work;

Continuing liaison with the Law Reform **Commission** to ensure adequate input on issues of **concern** to the ethnic communities;

Changes in legislation to enable non-British **immigrants** to vote in **local** government and State elections and to gain permanent status in public service employment.

I should point out that women's issues cut across all recommendations of the report but a special section is devoted to immigrant women in the factories and in the home. Many of the recommendations when adopted will require additional expenditure on the part of the Government. The commission has prepared a detailed estimate of the cost of implementing the report over a five-year period. These estimates are at present being reviewed. I am pleased to advise the House that consultation between the commission and government departments has already resulted in several of the recommendations being implemented or having reached a stage of advanced **planning**. Therefore this report, intended for action, is, I am pleased to say, a report in action.

Much more has to be done and my Government has committed itself to move as quickly as possible to consider and implement, where appropriate, the recommendations contained in this report. In the meantime, I commend to honourable members that they read the report themselves. The Government will be considering the report and will welcome any reaction from the community on the recommendations. Finally, on behalf of the Government, I should like to extend our thanks to Dr **Paolo Totaro** and the members of his commission for their well presented and comprehensive report. I should also mention that the commission has prepared a summary of its report and translated it into thirteen languages for distribution to ethnic communities. I now lay a copy of the report on the table of the House.

Mr **COLEMAN**: The **first** point I must make is that it must be taken by the House to be a very unsatisfactory way of advancing discussion on the important matters **in** this important report, when the person responsible for commenting on the Premier's ministerial statement this morning receives a copy of this 600-page report ten minutes before the House sits. Of course, the situation is improving. The House will recall that an almost equally voluminous report of Professor **Wilenski** was also the subject of a ministerial statement. I received that report after the Premier had begun his speech, so ten minutes in advance of the speech is an improvement.

Mr Booth: Tell us about page 1.

Mr **COLEMAN**: I would **rather** deal with a different aspect because the report that I have received is not a complete report. When I turned to the index I saw a reference to chapter 47, but there is no chapter 47 in my copy of the report.

[Interruption]

Mr **COLEMAN**: I hope that the Treasurer's contribution to ethnic affairs will be a little more sensible than that. As the Premier referred to the financial expenditure involved, naturally I turned to the appendices so that I could refer to the submissions, but they are not in the report. Although the index refers to nine appendices, they are not in my copy of the report. The index refers also to consultants' reports and they, too, are not contained in this report. In a 600-page report like this, one would probably want to turn first to the full list of recommendations made to the commission, but none of those recommendations is here. It may well be that in due course the Premier will publish the full report as it is listed in the table of contents.

The Premier, in his rush to publish this report, has done an injustice to the hard-working members of the Ethnic Affairs Commission—and, of course, to the ethnic community itself. In one respect at least the Government has imitated the Commonwealth Government, which published the all-important **Galbally** report on this subject. Naturally I looked up the **Galbally** report in the **index** but it contains no reference to that report. On the other hand, there may be some fault in the index because the section under the letter " G starts with " **GO**. It strikes me as unlikely that there would be no material to be indexed between " **GA** " and " **GN** ". It may be that there is something **shonky** about the index.

According to the Premier, the Government has imitated the excellent initiative taken by the Commonwealth when it published the whole of the 138-page Galbally report in ten languages. He has said that he will publish a summary of the recommendations in a number of languages, and that is good. I was going to ask for that to be done. It is a shame that it has not been done already. It may well be that the section headed "Full list of recommendations", which is missing from this report, will eventually be available. From the very nature of their interjections, some Government members have indicated the depth of their interest in ethnic affairs. Perhaps we shall have to read the full list of recommendations and the summary in a foreign language before we can discuss this report. The commissioners appear to have done a most comprehensive job in preparing this report. However, the Opposition feels that the Premier is really misusing their efforts by rushing out this publication—presumably for electoral purposes. It would have been much better for ethnic affairs in this State and it would advance the principles and ideals of the commission if the Government had done its job thoroughly and conscientiously.

The Opposition has been looking forward to this report. It was the former coalition Government under the leadership of the former Liberal Party Premier, the honourable member for Wollondilly, that established the first ministry of ethnic affairs in Australia. The late Steve Mauger was Australia's first Minister for Ethnic Affairs. That initiative taken by the former Government is supported by the Opposition. Honourable member will recall that in announcing the Opposition's education policy in conjunction with the honourable member for Hornsby I said that it is our intention to establish a special directorate of ethnic education in New South Wales to cover all aspects of ethnic and migrant education and to co-ordinate them. A Liberal-Country party government will do just that.

A Liberal-Country party government will establish from the ethnic communities an advisory committee to work with the directorate. This committee will keep contact with the directorate, offer advice concerning educational problems and advise as to the best means of delivering educational services. This advice will cover all aspects of education—pre-school, primary, secondary, correspondence and community education programmes. The programmes for migrants learning English as a primary language and special cultural programmes will be part of the continuing educational programme carried on in schools and co-ordinated by the directorate.

The directorate of ethnic education will give special emphasis to community languages and cultures in schools. With the language and cultural heritage programmes we will use the present skills and capacities of many teachers already here and in this we would seek the full co-operation of the non-government schools sector even to subcontracting the use of their resources, both human and material. The directorate will be responsible for recommending on the nature and construction of cultural heritage programmes. We see the need to create special programmes on ethnic radio and in educational segments on television. I might add in passing that it was the same former Government and the same former Minister, the late Steve Mauger, and the same Liberal Premier, the honourable member for Wollondilly, who stimulated through financial assistance the birth and growth of ethnic radio, which is so popular throughout ethnic communities in this State.

In announcing the coalition Opposition's education policy I said that it would establish mobile units that will visit homes and community groups to help them with any educational difficulties as well as some social adjustment problems. Finally, I said that it will be the responsibility of the directorate of ethnic education to give all children an opportunity to study the language of their forbears by way of

correspondence courses where that is the only practical thing to do. I mentioned that as an area in which the Opposition has taken the initiative, just as the former coalition Government created the first ministry of ethnic affairs in Australia.

One thing I expected from the Premier was a statement on the fundamentally important question of Commonwealth-State co-operation and co-ordination. Though it is good to hear of any increase in the budget allocations for ethnic affairs in New South Wales, we must bear in mind that when talking about the education policy of the Commonwealth Government we are dealing with an administration which, following upon its adoption of the Galbally report, committed itself to a \$50 million programme over the next three years to assist the ethnic community. The Commonwealth Government accepted the recommendations set out in the Galbally report and in order to implement them to the full extent regards co-operation of the State governments as absolutely essential.

These are not to be exclusive and centralistic Commonwealth plans. They are plans that involve the co-operation of the States. They involve the establishment of a settlement council to assist financially in language matters, jobseeking, trade-union matters, the recognition of certificates held by new arrivals, and so on. A settlement council will be established in each State. The plans involve the setting up of a Commonwealth-State working party to advise on programmes to be funded by the Commonwealth for the teaching of English to children and adults. The Commonwealth is committed to expenditure of \$13.3 million on that programme.

[Interruption]

Mr COLEMAN: The Minister for Lands would do better not to interject when we are discussing ethnic **affairs**. I think the Minister for Education is unaware of the \$13.3 million programme involving a Commonwealth-state **working** party to advise on details of the Commonwealth-State programme to be carried out.

Mr Bedford: Thank you for telling me.

Mr Pickard: **The** Government did not take up the money that was available from the Commonwealth for the last programme.

Mr COLEMAN: That is so. I advise the Minister also that \$26.1 million has already been allocated for 1978 for special English language teaching for children. It **will** now provide an additional \$10 million over three years for the employment of more special English teachers. This is a Commonwealth programme. One assumes that it will be welcomed by the State Minister for Education. One would have expected it to be applauded by the Premier in particular when he was commenting on the report. I can find no reference to the programme in the report. It may be dealt with in the part of the report that is not here. It may be contained in the full recommendations, which the Premier has not given me to enable me to discuss them. Perhaps it is dealt with there, but I should have expected some comment on it by the Premier.

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

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

RAILWAY DEFICIT

Mr COLEMAN: I ask the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways a question without notice. Will the railway loss for 1977-78, as indicated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics figures, exceed the budgeted loss of \$327 million, which was 19 per cent higher than the previous year's loss? Do the latest Australian Bureau

of Statistics figures show that to the end of May in the current financial year, total rail passenger journeys declined by more than 3.5 million when compared with those for the preceding year? Is it true that the Public Transport Commission employed 3 280 more people last year? Is it the Minister's policy that the best way to reduce losses is to increase staff while railway patronage is decreasing?

Mr COX: In reply to the first matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition, the statistics that were supplied by the Public Transport Commission to the Australian Bureau of Statistics do not take into account subsidized fares, which are passenger-carrying fares. The figures will be collated shortly. My information is that the figures will be similar to those for passengers carried last year on rail. Patronage of Manly ferries has increased by 23.5 per cent—

Mr Coleman: I asked about the railways.

Mr COX: I am dealing with the overall position. I am anxious to let the honourable member know how things are going on the North Shore, and to give him the good news that when we put on the third Manly ferry, patronage increased by 23.5 per cent and revenue by 17 per cent. Bus patronage is expected to rise by about 1 per cent. I remind the Leader of the Opposition of the Liberal-Country party Government's marvellous record in its last two years in office. It then lost 59 million passenger journeys. I remind him, also, that when the former Government increased fares by 50 per cent in 1971 it had the disappointment of losing 67 million passenger journeys. Despite this the Leader of the Opposition now has the effrontery to talk in this House of loss of patronage. Every time the former Government moved on fares it had dramatic losses of patronage.

I have given these additional statistics to make that issue clear. The announcer on ABC television said that the chairman of the bureau had remarked that the figures were misinterpreted by the media. They were. I have no doubt that when the figures are presented to Parliament the result will again be satisfactory.

On the matter of increased staff, it is true that on our railway track programme, on which we have to spend more than \$200 million in the next five years, we have had to employ over 1 600 persons. This was necessary because of the failure of the former Government adequately to maintain the track in New South Wales. We brought out Mr Jenkins, a British expert. He inspected a thousand miles or so of the railway track in New South Wales and subsequently presented to us a report on the state of that track. That information was conveyed to Judge Staunton who conducted the Granville inquiry. There is no doubt that the railway track in New South Wales was in a terrible condition. Regrettably, we have been forced to employ people, on a temporary basis, to carry out a programme of maintaining and upgrading the track throughout New South Wales over the next five years. Also, we have had to increase the maintenance staff. The former Government virtually eliminated the track maintenance gangs. As an example, on the North Coast one man was handling a whole section of the track, trying to maintain it in reasonable condition. Need I remind the House that the Opposition said it would fight the Earlwood by-election on freeways and public transport, and it got a kick in the backside to the tune of a 10 per cent swing against it.

ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION REPORT

Mr FLAHERTY: My question without notice is directed to the Premier. Will he inform the House whether a summary of the report of the Ethnic Affairs Commission has been prepared? Will he inform the House also in what languages, apart from English, summaries have been prepared?

Mr WRAN: A **summary** of the Ethnic Affairs Commission report has been prepared. Apart from the English version, it will be published in Greek, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Dutch, Serbo-Croatian, Maltese, Macedonian, Russian, Polish and Arabic. While I am on my feet answering the responsible question asked by the honourable member for Granville, who over many years has exhibited great interest in Australians of ethnic origin, may I spring to the defence of the Ethnic **Affairs** Commission, which was attacked by the Leader of the Opposition? The report tabled this morning is not the Government's report; it is the report of the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales.

Mr Fischer: Is it complete?

Mr WRAN: I am pleased that the honourable member for Sturt asks me whether it is complete, for he shows a degree of perception that is lacking in his leader. I **am** certain that if I were to give the honourable member for Sturt the report of the Ethnic Affairs Commission he would find his way through it and not have the difficulties that the Leader of the Opposition apparently experienced. The Leader of the Opposition complained first that the report contained no recommendations. If the honourable gentleman turns to page 15 of the report he will find the committee's recommendations set out in full. Then he complained that there was no chapter 47 in the report. If he turns to page 401, he will see a heading in rather large type—almost as large as the type in the document on corrective services that he used a few weeks ago—"Chapter 47 Immigration, Women—To Sum Up."

Before one attacks a responsible body like the Ethnic **Affairs Commission**—which, after all, has done its best to prepare a report to assist the Government and all Australians, of ethnic origin or not—one should **really** learn how to refer to a document prepared by that body. What the Leader of the Opposition did—this will demonstrate how one can rely upon his accuracy—when he said that there was no chapter 47 in the report, was to turn to the appendices at page 405. Those appendices relate to various chapters in the book and the last reference in them is to chapter 46.

I do not want to take up any more of the time of the House in answering the question but I believe that I must express regret that when courtesies are extended to the Leader of the Opposition he should abuse them in the way he did this morning by **making** an absolutely **unjustifiable** attack upon a group of men and women in the Ethnic **Affairs** Commission who have performed a service of lasting benefit to the people of New South Wales.

BRUCELLOSIS

Mr BRUXNER: My question is directed to the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries. Will the Minister advise what progress has been made in the brucellosis eradication campaign in New South Wales? Is it expected that the target date of **1983** for a provisionally brucellosis-free State will be achieved? If not, will the Minister indicate the areas of the State that will remain untested at that time?

Mr DAY: At this point in time the estimated target date for provisional freedom from brucellosis is still **1983**. There have been some difficulties but they are being resolved. I do not expect that by **1983** any parts of the State will remain untested. I assure the honourable member for **Tenterfield** **that** the campaign is progressing according to schedule, and it will continue to do so.

RETURNS TO PRIMARY PRODUCERS

Mr **McGOWAN**: I direct a question without notice to the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries. Did the Minister say in the House last Tuesday that his aim and that of the Government is to return as much of the consumer's dollar to the primary producer as possible? Will he give the House an explanation of what he meant by that remark and how the Government plans to achieve this objective?

Mr **DAY**: I thank the honourable member for Gosford for his question, which deals with a matter that is important to the consumers of his electorate and to people throughout New South Wales. It is of vital interest also to primary producers. There are many areas in which the present Government has taken action to improve the percentage return of the retail price to the people who produce the article in the first place. I think it is fair to start with the dairy industry, because it was in the context of the dairy industry that I made the statement.

The Premier has indicated that steps are being taken to improve the percentage return of the price of milk to the producer. It goes without saying that there are a great number of producers who for the first time ever will get a share of the consumer dollar in relation to milk prices since we got the industry out of the hands of some of the greedy grubs in the former Government, and their mates. We have set about establishing a meat industry authority to give effect to the recommendations of a select committee of this Parliament that are designed to improve the producer's share of the retail dollar in the meat industry. That authority will commence operations on 1st November. It will have trading powers and all the powers that are necessary to introduce additional alternative means for the producer to dispose of his carcass animal much more effectively.

Under the Chicken Meat Marketing Act a panel has been set up to reach agreement between producers and processors of chickens for chicken meat with the object of returning to the producers a fair proportion of the consumer's dollar. The Egg Industry Stabilization Act has been amended to improve the return to the egg producers of this State. The Government set up, for instance, the **Berman** inquiry and it has since taken action to reduce charges across the board, with the complete support of the industry except for a handful of people who will not be convinced of the wisdom of the recommendations in that report. That has had the effect of returning to the producer a greater share of the retail price of eggs. We have announced that, in conjunction with Victoria, we are setting up a committee to set the price to the producer of dual purpose grapes. That committee will consist of three producers and three winemakers and it will be empowered to set the price of dual purpose grapes used in the making of wine. It is interesting to note that although a high retail price may be paid for a bottle of wine, the producer of it receives from about 10c a bottle up to a maximum of 13c a bottle, so if the producer's share is increased by 10 per cent it will have only a marginal effect on the retail price.

The **Labor** Government has introduced these initiatives or it is about to introduce them. Before a problem can be dealt with it must be identified clearly. About twelve months ago we set up a working party on food marketing. I have received a couple of interim reports from that working party and I believe that when the **final** report is received it will point the way accurately to many areas in which positive action can be taken. Some of these matters are of interest. The egg industry has the benefit of stabilizing legislation. Because the industry is properly organized the producer receives 63 per cent of the retail price. The situation is different for the beef producer

who receives, from the most common marketing chain, 35 per cent of what is **paid** retail for the meat. The potato producer gets **23** per cent of the retail price and the apple grower 24 per cent of the price realized for his crop.

The present Government caused an inquiry to be made into the conduct of **Flemington** markets. That inquiry pointed up areas **in** which reform was necessary. Taking those matters into consideration together with the recommendations of the **working** party on food marketing, we intend to take action. For instance, it has been shown that people are operating as both agents and merchants. Often a producer does not know whether he is selling his goods on commission or to a merchant, or both. Much of the activity at the markets needs to be properly controlled, and I propose to take action in that direction. For example, I propose to introduce whatever legislative measures are needed to ensure that people are licensed either as agents or merchants and that a proper record is kept of fruit and vegetables that pass through the marketing chain.

A thorough review has been made of the marketing of **primary** products, of **which** all primary producer organizations are aware. They have been kept in the picture and are in the middle of discussions about a review of the Act—the first thorough review of the legislation in fifty years. Primary producers generally welcome many of the suggestions that are being made. I hope that in the next six months, **with** industry support, we shall be able to resolve the necessary amendments to the Act to give greater efficiency to the marketing of primary products in this State. It is this Government's intention that New South Wales should lead Australia in the marketing of primary products. We propose to give thoroughly good value to consumers and to ensure that the producer gets as much as possible of the retail dollar.

SCHOOL SPORT

Mr **HATTON**: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Education. Has the Minister studied representations made by me and the honourable member for Bligh and the detailed submission of Mr Jim Bradley of Warilla high school on surfboard riding as a school sport? In recognition of the fact that surfboard riding is a major leisure time activity and of the desirability of having positive instruction in safety and lifesaving techniques, proficiency and physical fitness, what action is contemplated by the Minister following the recent complete examination of the matter by a departmental committee?

Mr **BEDFORD**: It is true that the honourable member for South Coast has made a number of representations to me on this question, together with my colleague the honourable member for Illawarra and the honourable member for Bligh. The question of surfboard riding as a school sport was raised with the department and was looked into by a special committee. **All** honourable members will acknowledge that surfboard riding is a sport that could be fraught with danger and for this reason it was very carefully examined by the special committee that I mentioned. In the next day or two the Assistant Director-General of Education will be issuing a statement outlining certain details, but broadly the proposal is that all the regions of education that have a frontage to the coastline—that is, the South Coast, St George, Central Metropolitan, North Sydney, Hunter and North Coast education **regions**—will be asked to invite schools in their areas to become involved in a pilot scheme. The aim is to have one school from each region involved in the project. The first schools that can meet all the conditions that will be laid down in regard to surfboard riding will be given permission to take part in the scheme this year. On the basis of the experience thus gained the scheme may be extended or modified. Certainly it **will be** reviewed at the end of the summer season.

A number of fairly stringent conditions will be laid down in respect of surfboard riding as a school sport. As they will be dealt with at length in the statement to be issued by the Assistant Director-General of Education I shall not go into **all** the details now. Teachers involved in the scheme will need to have their bronze lifesaving medallions and certificates in resuscitation techniques. The surfboard riders **will** have to work to the "buddy" system, that is, half the team will be on the beach watching the other half in the water. Also, special precautions will be taken in respect of shark patrols. Students who wish to take part in this sport will be required to show they have some competence in surfboard riding.

It may appear that the number of conditions that are laid down will be such that some people might feel that it is hardly worth while taking part in the scheme. In this initial phase when looking to see how we can proceed with it and perhaps introduce it as a school sport, every care must be taken to ensure that no accidents occur. I am putting it on the basis that it will be up to schools involved in the pilot programme to ensure that it is a successful programme that may in the future extend to other schools.

I thank those honourable members who have been interested in this matter. I add that, to ensure close liaison with the surf lifesaving authorities, in each region where this sport is developed a committee will be set up on which will be representatives of snrf lifesaving. This will enable the attitude and approach of that organization to be embodied in the pilot programmes that are being undertaken.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICERS

Mr ROGAN: Is the Minister for Education aware that last weekend the honourable member for Hornsby allegedly smeared certain officers of the New South Wales Department of Education, claiming that they may receive kick-backs from the sale of material to schools, namely, the MACOS social studies course? Will the Minister inform the House whether officers of his department have denied these aspersions? Is the Minister in a position to confirm that no officers of the department receive any financial inducements in respect of MACOS?

Mr BEDFORD: First, for the assistance of honourable members, I inform the House that the acronym MACOS represents the initials for Man—a Course of Study. This course known as MACOS was introduced into New South Wales in 1972. The first school to introduce it was Yowie Bay, which is in the electorate of the honourable member for Miranda, who supports the programme of study. It is a fairly extensive programme involving a full year's course. Not all schools use it. The cost of purchasing it is \$2,600. Parents and citizens' associations are considerably involved with the expenditure required. For some unaccountable reason, members of the Opposition, who between **1972** and **1976** did not have one word to say about MACOS or what the course was about, suddenly find that they should be leading the charge of the light brigade, if I might put it that way, in attacking this course of study. Although the question by the honourable member for East Hills was not related directly to the MACOS social studies course, as the term was mentioned I thought I should give honourable members the background to the course.

Only 150 schools in New South Wales, both government and non-government, are using this course. At the seminar that was held last week, which I understand was a fairly small one, it was alleged on the Saturday that certain officers of the Department of Education were receiving some kick-back, the expression mentioned in the honourable member's question, from the sale of this material. It seems to me that that sort of

smear is put in to try to denigrate MACOS. Of course, while people are doing that they are attacking perfectly sound officers of the Department of Education. The allegation was categorically denied on Saturday by the two people mentioned on that occasion.

Mr Cox: Who made the allegation?

Mr BEDFORD: A lady at the seminar. I shall come to that in a moment. On the Sunday, notwithstanding the categorical denial by the two officers whose names were mentioned, the honourable member for Hornsby by innuendo once again suggested that officers of the Department of Education were in fact getting kick-backs from the sale of this material.

Mr Pickard: Remove the smear from your officers, that is what I said.

Mr Speaker: Order!

Mr BEDFORD: I would want to remove the smear from the officers.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: I call the honourable member for Hornsby to order.

Mr BEDFORD: I deplore that any honourable member would purposely go into the community with a smear brush, use it and then ask that the smear be now removed. That is not a difficult thing to do. The officers have categorically denied it. I issue this challenge to the honourable member for Hornsby: if he can give me any substantial evidence at all that this is happening in that or any other area of education administration, I shall be happy to have an open and public inquiry into it. I am absolutely certain that the advice I have received from the Director-General of Education and his officers on this matter is correct. It was a smear. It ill behoves a member of Parliament, particularly one who was a former Minister for Education, to do that sort of thing in the public forum.

WATER AND SEWERAGE WORKS

Mr ARBLASTER: I address my question without notice to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports. I refer to the Government's direction to the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board that construction of both water and sewerage works is to be undertaken by the board's employees rather than by contract. Did the Minister receive advice from the board that such a direction would lead to a significant increase in the cost of construction of amplification and reticulation works? Was the Minister aware also of a statement made last April by the chief planning officer of the Housing Commission of New South Wales that board estimates for construction works varied between 180 per cent and 470 per cent above the actual contract cost? Will the Minister now confirm that as a result of his direction construction costs have in fact increased considerably and that many contractors who previously served the board well have been forced to lay off staff?

Mr FERGUSON: I gather that the honourable member for Mosman is referring to what are known as annual contracts. He should appreciate the difference between annual contracts and the work force that is employed directly by the water board. Comparisons are often made by Opposition members between costs and differences in price. There are many reasons why contractors can carry out water and sewerage reticulation at lower cost than the water board's day labour staff. The board's own work force has been found more suitable where many underground difficulties

cannot readily be foreseen or at the time are known to be severe. Careful work is required adjacent to buildings and essential installations, necessitating special security. The time available for completion of the work is limited. Many jobs require special plant or skilled labour not **generally** available to small contractors.

The board incurs additional costs over and above those of contractors in the following areas: first, developmental costs where the board is continually innovating, developing methods and incorporating new materials throughout its work. The contractor is required to carry out the board's tested methods on a straightforward basis. Further, the board uses a much higher proportion of less physically active employees than does a contractor. It uses more such people because it does not sack workers who have bad backs caused during service with the board. The board has a big percentage of employees who are on light duty. Liberal Party philosophy is to sack them and let them go on to the pension, which is being continually eroded by the present federal Government. I pay tribute to the fact that during the term of office of the former Government the water board made no attempt to sack workers as it believes in the rehabilitation of those employees rather than throwing them on the industrial scrap-heap.

The day labour force is used to cut through rock, from which work no great profits can be made. Annual contractors do work where they can charge along with no impedance. I deprecate the implication contained in the honourable member's question, which is a smear upon the day labour force of the water board. I will not accept any criticism of them and I will defend them to the end.

HANDICAPPED PERSONS

Mr QUINN: I address a question without notice to the Minister for Youth and Community Services. Did the Department of Youth and Community Services recently purchase premises at Brush Road, Eastwood, for the purpose of establishing a home for intellectually handicapped young women? Did the Ryde council, in response to local protests, refuse permission for the premises to be used for that purpose. If that is so, will the Minister advise the House what action he proposes to take?

Mr JACKSON: It is a fact that the department purchased a home in Brush Road, Eastwood, to house a number of young intellectually handicapped people. The purchase of the home is part of the Government's policy of normalization as far as handicapped people are concerned, whether they are intellectually handicapped or physically handicapped. Last financial year the department purchased eight similar homes. The housing of these people in residential areas has proved highly successful in assisting them with their disadvantage problems. Residing in small numbers in residential areas, they become part of the community. The psychological benefit to handicapped people has resulted in the policy being highly successful.

The Ryde council originally gave permission for the home to be used for this purpose. After protests from a number of local residents, a few days ago the Ryde council reversed that decision. I not only deplore the despicable action of a number of selfish people in the community who objected to handicapped people residing in their locality, but also I think that the Ryde council has displayed a great deal of weakness. I deplore that action. I assure the Ryde council as well as the objecting residents in the area that I shall do to them what I did to the people in Runyon Street, Wentworthville, at Redhead on the North Coast, at St Ives and other places where there are homes for this purpose: the department will fight them with every

available means within the law. I have directed my department immediately to appeal against the decision of the Ryde council. The council would better serve the community in assisting these unfortunate people by reconsidering the action taken by the council at its last meeting.

The honourable member for Wentworthville was involved in a situation at Wentworthville where a similar problem occurred. The department succeeded in having the local government authority approve of that application. A happy situation exists there, following twelve months' experience after the placing of intellectually handicapped people in that home. The same position pertains at all the other cottages where the department has housed people with similar disadvantages. I am sure that when the department appeals and the appeal against the decision of the Ryde council is successful some months after disadvantaged people are placed in the home at Brush Road, Eastwood, the community will accept those disadvantaged people, as people have done in other areas. Those people **who** have objected are selfish. I repeat: I deplore the despicable actions of these selfish people.

TRANSPORT PERMITS

Mr MASON: I direct a question without notice to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. Is the Minister aware that transport operators carrying cotton from western New South Wales to Victoria have no difficulty in obtaining permits from the Victorian Government to carry loads up to **38** tonnes on tri-axle vehicles? Has the New South Wales **Government** failed to make any similar provision for a permit system, causing transport operators in New South Wales going to Victoria to carry under-capacity loads? Will the Minister change his inflexible attitude on the weight restriction for interstate operations and, in the interests of uniformity, adopt a similar approach to that of the Victorian Government?

Mr COX: A limit of **36** tonnes was the recommendation contained in the comprehensive NAASRA report. The other **recommendation** was that over a period of time the regulation be changed to **38** tonnes. I have had discussions with a number of rural interests and with the Premier on the matter. The matter is under very active consideration. Recently I met with people from the rural areas of the State concerning the **carriage** of cattle. I am giving the matter serious consideration. I shall be having further discussions with the department and making announcements on the matter.

MEDIBANK

Mr KEARNS: I address a question without notice to the Minister for Health. Has the Minister seen a reported statement by the federal Minister for Health to the effect that he is not sure how the new health insurance proposals will work? In view of the fact that the changes will have a drastic impact on the health and hospital system of New South Wales will the Minister advise the House of any details he has received from the federal Government and what will be the likely effect of the changes in New South Wales?

Mr STEWART: This morning I saw a reported statement by the federal Minister for Health to the effect that he was not quite sure how the new proposals would work. That statement was made just one day after the Minister announced the new arrangements in the federal Parliament. I have read two statements by the Prime Minister concerning Medibank and the health scheme in Australia. In 1975, in his policy speech, the Prime Minister said that he would retain Medibank and ensure that the standard of health care did not decline. That was his only mention of health in that policy speech. In his 1977 policy speech the Prime Minister devoted

even less time to the health of the Australian people. He said that the Medibank reforms gave Australians a choice in health insurance. So, he uttered one sentence in 1975 and one sentence in 1977. Yet, the federal Budget brought down on Tuesday night last contained a passage that took the Treasurer half an hour to read. That was followed by a speech of the federal Minister for Health lasting half an hour. I am not surprised that the federal Minister for Health does not know how the scheme will operate; this is the third occasion on which the federal Government has interfered with the health scheme since it came to power in 1975. A suggestion has been made that these alterations will not be of any sort of permanent nature—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr STEWART: I have not been informed by the federal Minister of the nature of the changes. Like any other Australian citizen I had to listen to the speeches on Tuesday night. Late in the evening I was supplied with a copy of the speech made by the federal Minister for Health. Despite the fact that New South Wales is the largest deliverer of health and hospital services in Australia, it is still not privy to the details of the health scheme that has been announced. I noticed in a newspaper a statement that next Monday the Minister for Health will confer with health funds in New South Wales but at this time he has had no conference with the Government. Because of these announcements we find ourselves entirely in confusion. If honourable members think it is strange that the Health Commission of New South Wales should be in some sort of confusion, let me list, from what can be ascertained from the speech of the federal Minister for Health, the categories of persons under health care arrangements in New South Wales after 1st November. There will be eligible pensioners with a pensioner medical service card, who will be entitled to a refund of 85 per cent, on bulk billing. Non-eligible pensioners will be entitled to 75 per cent refunds. Socially disadvantaged persons—this morning the federal Minister for Health said he was not sure how they will be defined; in fact he was not sure how he would actually determine who were socially disadvantaged—form the third group. Then there will be the uninsured person, privately insured person on the basic rate, and the privately insured person with gap insurance. Then we shall have the new type, the privately insured, front end deductible category—and nobody will know how much of his front end he can deduct.

The result of all this is that a new form of gambling has been introduced in New South Wales—indeed throughout Australia. A person can play the poker machines, bet on the TAB, take extra doubles, daily doubles, **quinellas** and trifectas, and he can now bet on his health and lay the odds at 6 to 4 on, as a result of the new health scheme introduced by the federal Government. One of the great worries to me as Minister for Health is that after 1st November this year 43 per cent of the Australian public will be without health insurance. They are the people who are at present paying the Medibank levy. People will have until 1st November to take out health insurance. We all know that private health funds stipulate that a person has to be a member of the fund for two months before he is eligible for benefits. The federal Government has not suggested that uninsured people will be given any protection during the eligibility period.

What will be the position about the pregnant woman who was a Medibank levy payer? She may have chosen the doctor of her choice and booked a bed in a private room in a hospital because she has taken out private health insurance. What will happen if she finds on 1st November that she has no insurance cover because the private funds provide for a ten-month eligibility period before benefits are paid for a confinement. The federal Government has made no suggestion as to what cover will be provided in a case like that. The new health scheme raises another interesting point. I am a Medibank levy payer so I will immediately take out health insurance through a

private medical fund. I shall have to do it immediately in order to have cover **after** the two-month **eligibility** period. The problem is that my Medibank levy will continue to be deducted from my salary until 1st November. The result is that 43 per cent of Australians—if they decide to insure themselves privately—will be paying a double contribution for their health insurance. That is the **sort** of confusion—and it is an anomaly—that has arisen as a result of the federal Budget. Neither the federal Minister for Health nor the federal Government understands the **full** ramifications of the new health scheme. It is time the federal Government left health insurance to health administrators and left accountants, economists and the Prime Minister right out of the picture.

Perhaps the most important aspect concerns the **40** per cent subsidy. We are **all** aware that the Prime Minister has lemon juice in his veins. He is providing a **40** per cent subsidy to health funds and health insurance because it will represent an artificial injection of funds into the consumer price index. This financial year the Prime Minister will pay **\$600** million to hospital funds and health funds in order to keep contribution rates down **so** that no increase will be reflected in the consumer price index. The **40** per cent subsidy has nothing to do with health; it has nothing to do with the poor and the sick; it is an economic strategy introduced as a means of keeping down the consumer price index. The people of Australia will continue to pay more for their health insurance despite the **40** per cent subsidy.

The user-should-pay principle on which the **Prime** Minister relies is a great confidence trick that has been perpetrated on the people of Australia; it is a device aimed at bringing down the consumer price index. At the end of the December quarter the Prime Minister will crow that the consumer price index has been reduced by possibly two-and-a-half points or something of that order. That reduction will result from the **40** per cent subsidy being taken out of consolidated revenue and placed in the health funds as a means of keeping down contributions. We had the spectacle this morning of the spokesman for the health insurance funds saying that there was no guarantee that contributions would stay down—indeed some private health insurance funds were already considering a \$2 increase in contribution rates.

Might I say to the honourable member for **Bankstown** that the federal Government has not had the courtesy to inform this Government or the New South Wales Health Commission about the details of the new scheme. We are fearful that the change will cause administrative chaos. People will not know what type of insurance cover they have and families will not know whether they have health insurance or not. The new health scheme represents the third change that the federal Government has made. We should now get ready for the fourth change, which I feel will occur within the next twelve months.

SUPPLY BILL

Urgency

Motion (by Mr F. J. Walker) agreed to:

That it is a matter of urgent necessity that the Supply Bill be brought in and passed through **all** its stages in one day.

Suspension of Standing Orders

Mr F. J. WALKER (Georges River), Attorney-General [11.561: I move:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would preclude the Supply Bill being brought in and passed through **all** its stages in one day.

I take this course of action because, as honourable members will appreciate, the provisions of the New South Wales constitution provide that supply must be introduced in this State by 30th September each year. The people of New South Waies also know that we have an irresponsible Opposition and an irresponsible Legislative Council which is about to be reformed and that if the bill is to be passed pursuant to the provisions of section 5A of the Constitution, now is the appropriate time to do **it**. Those undemocratically appointed people in the other Chamber have the power, under section SA of the Constitution, to hold up supply for one month. We now have a desperate Opposition that will do and say anything, and for that reason the Government wants to put the Supply Bill through today.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction

Motion (by Mr Renshaw) agreed to:

That a bill be brought in for an Act to apply certain sums out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the Government Railways Fund, the Government Railways Renewals Fund, the Road Transport and Traffic Fund, the Metropolitan Transport Trust General Fund, the Newcastle and District Transport Trust General Fund, the Maritime Services Board Fund and the Maritime Services Board Renewals Fund, towards the services of the year 1978–1979.

Bill presented and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr RENSHAW (Castlereagh), Treasurer [11.591: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the bill is to enable the Government to continue to meet essential expenditure during the months of October and November, 1978, pending the passing of the Appropriation Act. As honourable members know, it is the practice for Parliament each year to enact an annual Appropriation Act which provides the necessary authority for spending from what may be termed the revenue and renewal funds of the State. This authority, however, expires on 30th June. After that date, provision is made under section 33 of the Audit Act for the Government to continue to meet essential expenditure, including paying the salaries and wages of teachers, members of the police force and other public servants. Section 33 empowers the Treasurer to make payments for regularly recurring services and ordinary contingencies of departments during the first three months of each financial year at the rate authorized under the Appropriation Act for the corresponding period of the previous financial year, and its authority will lapse on 30th September, 1978.

This Supply Bill is necessary in order to appropriate moneys to pay the public service and carry on normal services beyond 30th September, 1978. The bill is in the same form as last year's Supply Bill and specifically provides that payments under its authority will be limited to the rates sanctioned under the Appropriation Act, 1977. It will be necessary, of course, to obtain the Auditor General's certificate that funds are lawfully available and the Governor's warrant before the Treasurer may issue cheques drawn on the State's bank accounts.

The total amount sought in this bill is \$640,183,000, made up as follows: Consolidated Revenue Fund \$485,383,000; Government Railways Fund \$109,529,000; Government Railways Renewals Fund \$3,333,000; Road Transport and Traffic Fund \$10,619,000; Metropolitan Transport Trust General Fund \$16,235,000; Newcastle and

District Transport Trust General Fund \$1,697,000; Maritime Services Board Fund \$10,425,000; and Maritime Services Board Renewals Fund \$2,962,000. In accordance with normal practice, the amount of supply sought has been calculated at roundly one-sixth of the sums appropriated for the respective funds last year, although this is subject to the rate of any reduction in expenditure contained in the 1978-79 estimates, once those estimates have been presented to Parliament.

When assent has been given to the Appropriation Bill for the current financial year, the authority now proposed to be given under this bill will cease to have effect and all payments made since 1st July, 1978, under the authority of the Audit Act and under this legislation will be regarded as having been made under the Appropriation Act. The Government will shortly be presenting the Budget and honourable members will then have ample opportunity to debate the financial proposals of the Government for the current financial year. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr COLEMAN (Fuller), Leader of the Opposition [12.4]: The Treasurer asks in effect for supply of \$640 million without saying, other than in the broadest terms, for what programmes it will be used. The point has been made before and I think it should be made again and in due course be accepted by the Government, that it is not good enough to ask for this amount of money without being more precise about the programmes which this money will finance. The only assumption we can **make** is that the Treasurer intends that the money be spent on government business as usual. Perhaps he thinks we should not inquire for what particular purposes the money will be spent and that we should know that it is for government business as usual. The Opposition is dissatisfied with government business as usual. It believes that government business as usual is unsatisfactory and needs to be thoroughly overhauled.

The basic test to be applied to any government is, to what extent is the Government contributing to the economic recovery in its programmes on which this money will be spent? The Wran Government fails miserably in that test. By whatever test, whether it be in export-led recovery, investment-led recovery or consumer-led recovery, this Government fails. The Wran Government is a recession government: it is undermining recovery. The Opposition sees it as a government of disaster **dollied** up with a few cosmetic strokes and smart stunts.

A day or so ago the Premier said that in the past year new investments in manufacturing industry to the value of \$1,400 million have been announced for New South Wales. It is true that that figure has been furnished by the federal Department of Industry and Commerce. The Premier said that this shows what a great recovery New South Wales has made, what a good government New South Wales has and how that Government is stimulating investment in the State. However, the same federal Department of Industry and Commerce has issued figures indicating that whereas New South Wales has gained \$1,400 million worth of manufacturing industry investment in the past year, Queensland has gained \$1,500 million, Victoria \$1,700 million and Western Australia a massive \$2,200 million. The total investment announced by manufacturing industries for the year in Australia was \$8,150 million, of which the New South Wales share is a mere 17 per cent. That is not good enough for a State which, with its high population and sound resources, by tradition has in the past enticed 40 per cent, and sometimes more, of investment money.

The New South Wales figure does not compare favourably with the much higher figures of the less populous States of Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. When the Premier quoted the New South Wales figure and said it was a wonderful achievement he was, in reality, misleading the House. I assume that he

compared the figures gained by the various States. I emphasize that I am referring to manufacturing and not to mining. One would not expect investment in New South Wales to increase under this Government, which imposes horrific charges upon business. Over the past two years it has imposed new charges that have ripped off \$100 million from businesses. Sometimes the Government even has the temerity to say it has not increased charges at all. One cannot take seriously that sort of claim by the Government. Most of the extra charges have been imposed in the investment area.

I am sorry that the Attorney-General, who has responsibility for the Corporate Affairs Commission, is not here. Last night in this Chamber he challenged figures I quoted and said he would take the opportunity to debate the matter and correct me. The figures I quoted yesterday are correct and I shall repeat them now. The Attorney-General was either misleading the House or he does not know the real story. With regard to the lodgment of annual returns, charges made on exempt proprietary companies with shareholders of persons have increased 233 per cent. Charges made on non-exempt proprietary companies whose shareholders are companies have increased 275 per cent. I am pleased that the Attorney-General, who administers the Companies Act, has been able to join us in the Chamber.

Mr F. J. Walker: Why does the Leader of the Opposition have to get caught all the time? Does he not understand these things?

Mr COLEMAN: If the Minister will remain silent I shall explain to him the workings of his department. He appears to be unable to understand them himself. The charge imposed on public companies has been increased from \$20 to \$200. Does the Attorney-General deny that, and is it not an increase of 900 per cent?

Mr F. J. Walker: Why don't you try to understand these matters?

Mr Renshaw: What does that increased charge amount to in revenue received by the Government?

Mr COLEMAN: From all these charges revenue has increased by 85 per cent to a total of \$5.6 million.

Mr Renshaw: That is \$5.6 million out of something like \$1,000 million.

Mr COLEMAN: There is more to come. Mining leases have been increased by 200 per cent. Pilotage rates charged by the Maritime Services Board have gone up from a minimum of 36 per cent to a maximum of 150 per cent. Harbour and lighterage rates have been increased 20 per cent—one of the smaller increases. Other increases imposed by the Maritime Services Board involve tonnage rates, which have gone up 9.8 per cent, and transshipment rates, which have gone up 8.8 per cent. Let us look at the Valuation of Land Act, bearing in mind the interest of young home buyers. Naturally, one would not expect good news in this respect because the Premier is on record, when referring to the Parklea gaol proposal, as saying, "Don't give me any of that nonsense about young couples".

Mr Mason: He said hogwash.

Mr COLEMAN: No, the Attorney-General said hogwash. The Premier used the word nonsense. Naturally, young couples would not expect much joy from the increased charges under the Valuation of Land Act. The *ad valorem* scale of land valuation fees has risen twice in the period. A comparison of charges before the present Government was elected with present charges shows that on a \$10,000 block of land there has been an increase of 41.2 per cent; on a \$12,000 block, an increase of 39.4 per cent; on a \$15,000 block, an increase of 34.8 per cent; on a \$20,000 block,

an increase of 34.8 per cent; and on a \$50,000 block, an increase of 29.1 per cent. They are the sorts of increases in charges which this Government is imposing in New South Wales, and that is not a satisfactory state of affairs. It is not good enough for the Treasurer to come into this House and ask for \$640 million without explanation other than in the broadest and vaguest terms. There has been an increase of 25 per cent in inspection fees imposed by the Registry of Co-operative Societies. Builders have to pay a project home fee for each home they build under the Commonwealth-State housing scheme, and that has increased by 50 per cent.

Under the Scaffolding and Lifts Act, administered by the Department of Labour and Industry, fees are charged against the total estimated cost of the construction of a project, including the cost of demolition and excavation. For projects valued at less than \$100,000, the fees have risen by 25 per cent. Of course, the fee goes up as the cost of the project rises. For a project valued at \$160,000, the fee has been increased by 16.6 per cent, and so on until on a project valued at \$480,000 the increase is 37.5 per cent. Under the Factories, Shops and Industries Act, factories and shops have to pay registration fees based on the number of employees, and those fees have been increased. The increases range from 100 per cent for factories or shops with fewer than 100 employees, to 34 per cent where there are more than 100 employees.

Under the Bread Act, a bread manufacturer's licence fee has risen by 400 per cent. An operative baker's licence fee, like the hairdresser's registration fee, is now levied for life rather than annually as a revenue collection device. Employment and theatrical agents' fees levied under the Industrial Arbitration Act have gone up by 450 per cent. Under the Lotteries and Art Unions Act, the trade competition fee has gone up by 100 per cent. Charges have gone up from 33 per cent in some cases to 200 per cent in other cases in respect of fees payable on the registration of births.

The export coal levy has gone up. A new levy of 90 cents a tonne was imposed on all exported coal in May, 1978. That was increased to \$1.10 a tonne only three weeks later, and it is now expected that a further increase will be made to fix the fee at \$1.40 a tonne. At the present rate of \$1.10 a tonne an extra \$9 million will be raised annually. Rural rail freight rates have increased by 15 per cent on all commodities except wool and beer. Irrigation water charges were increased by 8 per cent in September, 1977. Meat inspection fees have been increased by a similar amount. It is no wonder that investment in manufacturing in New South Wales is so much lower, so dramatically lower, than investment in manufacturing in Western Australia, much lower than in Victoria, and lower than in Queensland.

The Government is not contributing to economic recovery in New South Wales, but is undermining such recovery. New South Wales has fallen behind the other States in almost all areas of economic growth, as can be seen from a glance at the figures on building, retail sales and employment. In the two years during which the Treasurer has occupied that office, New South Wales has crashed downhill economically. It has become the sick man of Australia. Looking at the building industry, which is the benchmark for investment and profitability for almost all other industries, one finds that two years ago housing commencements were running at 9 000 a quarter. This year they have dropped to 8 000 a quarter, which is a record low point since the war. In the same period home unit commencements have fallen from 1 900 to 1 300 a quarter—a decline of 32 per cent.

Work done on commercial buildings has fallen 17 per cent, or \$120 million, from the March quarter of 1976 to the corresponding period this year. That is the second lowest figure for any State in Australia. In real terms, retail sales have fallen by \$145 million or 9 per cent since the Government came to power two years ago,

Mr Coleman]

and that is the worst performance in any State other than Tasmania. Our share of motor vehicle registrations has fallen by nearly 7 000 units. This is the story of decline over two years in New South Wales in building, retail sales and motor vehicle registrations.

Mr Akister: That is because of the policies of the federal Government.

Mr COLEMAN: That could not be so because the federal Government's policies affect Victoria also, where the situation is much different. In all these critical areas the growth rate in New South Wales has fallen behind that in other States, as is clear from the figures on investment in manufacturing industry. Let us look at employment. Since the Labor Government came to office the number of unemployed in New South Wales has risen by 30 per cent to 131 000. It is now 6.1 per cent of the work force. The Premier says he is encouraged by the fact that unemployment fell marginally last month. Of course, it is falling marginally as young people, particularly those who are trying to enter the work force, emigrate to Queensland or Western Australia to find jobs.

Mr Mason: Why shouldn't they?

Mr COLEMAN: That is understandable in view of the tremendous number of opportunities in Western Australia and Queensland disclosed even by the figures referred to selectively by the Premier. What young man would want to hang around in New South Wales helping to increase unemployment? There has **been** a marginal fall, as the Premier said, but it has been caused by emigration from the State. That fact is confirmed by the migration figures. Our total net gain from migration is the lowest of the figures for all mainland States, and well behind the figures for Queensland and Western Australia, where people are going knowing that they are more likely to find jobs.

The Government has claimed also that employment in New South Wales increased in the month of June. That is a meaningless statement when one considers that the Government during its first two years in office has presided over a reduction of 38 000 jobs in the private sector, including 22 000 from manufacturing, 8 000 from construction, and 8 000 from the rural and tertiary sector. Notwithstanding the 20 000 additional positions created by the Government within the public sector, there has been a net reduction in total jobs in New South Wales of 18 000 in the two years from May 1976 to May 1978.

The Government has claimed that in the twelve months to June, 1978, the increase in the number of unemployed in New South Wales was 2 per cent. **How** misleading can one be? What the Premier does not say is that in the preceding twelve months, which was the Labor Government's first year in office, unemployment increased in New South Wales by 27 per cent, or 30 000 persons. The total increase in unemployment from May 1976 to June 1978 was 37 per cent or 39 000 persons. The Premier and the Government use statistics deceitfully because they are not really interested in the economy of New South Wales or in the unemployment position in this State, except to the extent that they can fiddle the figures.

The Government has overtaxed, overcharged and overregulated the private sector; it has killed personal enterprise and the qualities that it should encourage. When the Treasurer asks for supply in this way, against a background of this kind, the House is entitled to a better explanation from him. The Government has done nothing to revive confidence and to restore the economy of New South Wales. In fact, it is undermining it. What has this Government done to revive confidence **and**

restore prosperity? What has it done for an export-led recovery, an investment-led recovery, or a consumer-led recovery? For a start, it has ruined any chance of an export-led recovery. I ask honourable members to consider what the Government has done to the coal industry, our greatest earner of foreign exchange.

The *de facto* Minister for Mines—the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports—almost daily makes decisions affecting mining, and almost daily bans coalmining from vast areas of the State. He should be called the Minister for sterilization, because he continues to sterilize or prohibit mining. Already he has sterilized 650 million tonnes of high-grade coking coal in the southern mining districts. These include 330 million tonnes under the Nepean, Avon, Cataract and Woronora reservoirs; 65 million tonnes under the Cordeaux reservoir; 40 million tonnes under the O'Hare reservoir; 94 million tonnes under Devine weir; 42 million tonnes under the pipeline from Appin to Woronora, and 80 million tonnes under pipelines, penstocks and pumping stations. Already the Minister for sterilization—the Minister for Public Works—has reduced this State's reserves of high-grade coking coal by 20 per cent, thereby reducing its long-term earnings by at least \$18,000 million at current prices. Already he has sterilized enough coal to produce twenty years work for 14 000 miners in thirteen large mines. More is to follow. If the Department of Main Roads and the Public Transport Commission succeed in sterilizing coal reserves under all roads and railways, up to one-third of all known reserves of high-quality coking coal will be under an embargo.

The Government has rejected the finding of the three-year Royal commission that mining under stored waters is safe if the proper strict precautions are taken. The recommended precautions are stricter than those taken in any comparable country, and they are certainly stricter than those imposed in the United States or the United Kingdom. The Government has ignored the advice of its own Science and Technology Council, which sought impact statements on the use of surface land above coal reserves. The Premier says that he will place this on a statutory basis, but that appears to be a pointless device, because the council has already submitted a report on sterilization. Probably the Premier has not read it; certainly he has ignored it. But what it has done to the coal industry?

Without permission from Parliament, and against all advice, the Premier has gone ahead and set up an all-powerful dam safety committee, without including on that committee any professional mining engineers, geologists or rock mechanics, who are best qualified to advise on the effects of underground mining. The ill-advised sterilization programme will have the most damaging effects on the coal export and steel production industries. Already prospects for an investment-led recovery have declined. Investment confidence has waned, and high-risk capital has flowed interstate. The long-term effects will be even worse. The export coal industry will just fold up in thirty years time, even though there is sufficient high-quality coking coal to last at least fifty years.

In thirty years time this State's only reserves of top-quality coal, which must be used to enrich exports from the northern and western districts, will be left untouched and untouchable under reservoirs, pipelines, pumping stations and penstocks nominated by the Minister for Public Works. Thousands of jobs will be lost as existing mines are prematurely closed and thousands of new jobs will never be created because proposed mines will not open. Indeed, thousands of millions of dollars of foreign exchange will be lost to New South Wales, and the export coal industry will eventually be driven out of New South Wales, which will be forced to import its coking coal from Queensland or Victoria.

Mr Coleman]

That is the Government's philosophy in the coalmining industry, and that is its attitude towards export-led recovery for New South Wales. It is worse than that, for any chance of an export-led recovery has already been lost by the Government's dithering policy on railways and ports, the infrastructure that is essential to the export coal industry. The importance of adequate ports and railways cannot be overstated. If the recovery of the New South Wales economy is to be led by export earnings, it is imperative that the Government provide the infrastructure that will attract increased export sales. However, under this Government these essentials have deteriorated so badly that the coal industry cannot export its present volumes of coal efficiently, and has no hope of meeting increased demand because there is no way of getting the coal out of the State. Japan, The Netherlands, Denmark, South Korea and France are all looking to increase their purchases of Australian coal, but all are seeking guarantees from suppliers of their ability to fill larger orders on time and at the most efficient price. None of them will come to New South Wales if the ports are inadequate and too costly, and if the rail costs are too high. They will turn to Queensland, or will go even farther afield, to South Africa and Canada, all of which provide cheaper and more efficient transport and loading services.

Despite the threat of lost markets, the Government has done nothing to provide bigger, faster and cheaper services. It abandoned the Botany Bay coal loader, but has done nothing to provide a suitable alternative, even though the loaders at Port Kembla and Balmain are hopelessly overburdened. Ships have regularly been required to stand off Port Kembla for up to ten days, incurring demurrage costs of \$6,000 to \$7,000 a day. Thousands of tonnes of coal have had to be rerouted to Newcastle, thus imposing an extra cost of transportation directly on the industry, first, at the rate of 90 cents a tonne and now at \$1.10 a tonne. The levy is expected soon to rise to \$1.40 a tonne.

Evidently the Government has no comprehension of the sensitivity of transportation costs in the international coal market. These costs constitute up to a third of the total export price paid for New South Wales coal, and if handling costs are permitted to exceed those of our competitors New South Wales will quickly lose its markets. Despite all this, the Government charges 5c to 6c a tonne-mile for rail transportation, which is three times more than the going rate in Canada. It charges a further rail levy of \$1.10 a tonne. It charges port levies that are among the highest in the world; at Port Kembla and Balmain they are double the amounts charged by the Queensland Government at the coal loading port of Gladstone. All these charges are government imposed or government created, and all reduce the State's competitiveness in world markets. Obviously, the Government learned nothing from the experience of Australia's iron ore industry, which suffered so heavily from excessive federal government charges during the Whitlam years that it was passed over by Japan as prime supplier of iron ore to that country.

Of course, the Premier has promised a new loader at Port Kembla to overcome the bottleneck problems. But he also promised to reduce unemployment, which has risen by 30 per cent. He promised to reduce the public service by from 5 per cent to 8 per cent, but he has increased it by 20 000 or 6.3 per cent. He promised contracts for two new container ships, but the order was cancelled. He promised an \$82 million Ford assembly plant at Ingleburn, but left it to the company to announce that it would not proceed with that project. He promised a \$40 million entertainment centre in the Haymarket but nothing has happened, and nothing will. He promised to contain taxes and charges, but has increased at least twenty-five charges to raise more than \$100 million in extra revenue.

The Premier has broken one promise after another, but still he expects the people of New South Wales and our **oversea** customers to believe that coal loading difficulties will be solved by a new loader at Port Kembla. His promises no longer cut ice with anybody, especially when they are unrealistic and impracticable. Indeed, a new coal loader at Port Kembla is both unrealistic and impracticable. For a start, Port Kembla would be able to accommodate vessels of only 55,000 tonnes, at a time when all of our coal trading partners are building or planning harbours for vessels of 100,000 tonnes or more. Further, Port Kembla has totally inadequate facilities for stockpiling coal, and is farther from the long-term coal deposits than Botany Bay or any other northern site, thus attracting even greater rail freight costs. The price of coal from the western field alone will rise by at least \$3.50 a tonne, made up of \$1.50 in extra rail costs and \$2.00 to cover the higher cost of loading. At this rate of increase this coal will simply be priced out of the international market.

Furthermore, the sterilization policy adopted by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports will have exhausted all the high-grade southern coal supplies in thirty years and the coal loader at Port Kembla will then be left sitting miles from the nearest coal supply. When that happens, Port Kembla's need will not be for a coal loader but for a coal unloader, for Queensland coal will then have to be imported to feed the southern steel mills. How does the Premier propose that the increased volumes of western coal be transported to Port Kembla?

I asked the Minister for Transport a question on that matter earlier in the week and I am sure the Treasurer listened very closely to the Minister's answer. The Minister said that he did not know how western coal will get down to Port Kembla but that he was thinking about it, having a good look at the matter. We know that the coal cannot be taken down the existing steep line from Moss Vale to Port Kembla. The only existing realistic route is along the **Illawarra** line through miles of residential suburbs, causing noise pollution and disrupting commuter services.

According to the Simblist report—a very good report—up to thirty-seven coal trains a day will get within striking distance of Botany Bay and then rumble down through every suburb from **Marrickville** to Wollongong—through Rockdale, Kogarah, Hurstville, Como, Helensburgh, **Stanwell Park**, **Corrimal**, **Bulli** and Fairymeadow. They will go right alongside the —

Mr Renshaw: They will not go into Botany Bay.

Mr COLEMAN: Yes, that is your plan. I am referring to your proposal. To get the western coal to Port Kembla the Government proposes that thirty-seven coal trains a day will rumble past Botany Bay, within striking distance of that port, and through all those suburbs. That is the route directed by this Government, which spread the big lie about coal trains passing through **Earlwood** en route to Botany Bay, knowing that this was not involved. It has shown a callous disregard for all residents along the Illawarra line.

The Premier has tried to take the heat off this environmental calamity by proposing a new railway from **Penrith** to Liverpool and from Douglas Park to Port Kembla. But according to the Simblist report, the minimum construction cost of this project would be \$137 million. The actual cost—all costs taken into account, including the cost of sterilizing the coal—would be \$635 million. With a further \$55 million for the coal loader, the total cost would be \$690 million. The Botany Bay programme, which the Government rejected, would have cost \$100 million.

Mr Renshaw: You have accepted it.

Mr **COLEMAN**: Even if construction of these rail loops and of a new coal loader at Port Kembla began tomorrow—if this dithering Government actually decided to do something and the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways awoke from his reverie and made a decision—they would not be completed for another four to six years. Our export coal industry cannot afford to wait that long. **Oversea** buyers want guarantees now, and the local industry needs action now. But all they get from the Government is dithering and more committees. While the Government dithers, jobs and money are being lost.

The **Bargo** mine could employ 450 men immediately. Tahmoor could also employ 450 immediately. At least 900 jobs could have been created by now, if this Government had not adopted the sterilization policy and had proceeded with Botany Bay or provided an alternative means of moving coal out of New South Wales. Those jobs have been lost. But those mines and others are working at less than capacity and will continue to do so because of this Government's dithering.

The Government has failed to provide the necessary guarantees to domestic producers and **oversea** buyers. It has failed to provide the coal loading facilities needed to get the industry working at full capacity. It has failed to adopt realistic safety standards for mining under stored waters, or under anything else for that matter. It has failed to contain the costs of handling coal on our railways and at our ports. It has failed to support the export industries that could revive the economy of New South Wales.

That is what the Government has done for the prospect of an export-led recovery. It is a story of disaster, of undermining a prospect of export-led recovery. What has it done for an investment-led recovery? I referred earlier to the misleading figures presented by the Premier when he quoted the Commonwealth survey which showed \$1,400 million worth of new investment in New South Wales, but he did not say that this is lower than the value of new investments in Western Australia, Queensland and Victoria, or that it represents only 17 per cent of total new investments in manufacturing industry in Australia. The position is pathetic. Investment has declined not only in the coal mining industry but also right across the spectrum of industry and commerce. The picture is clear.

In two years private capital investment has decreased alarmingly. One does not have to look far to find the reason. The Government is committed to increasing expenditure in the public sector at the expense of the private sector. New Government boards and commissions have been created to take over from private enterprise and 20 000 extra public servants have been put on the public sector payroll. The Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies assured us that by now the Rental Bonds Board would control 350 000 leases and \$40 million of people's money. It does not. It has been a failure, in his own terms. But worse than that, money is being wasted on maintaining this useless board. It has had a disastrous effect on the rental housing market. It has discouraged private investment in rental housing and contributed to the fall in available accommodation and the rise in rental costs. It has made life more difficult for the tenants whom the Minister pretended it would assist. The rental position is now worse in Sydney than it is in any other capital city of Australia.

The Land Commission, which was set up by this Government, competes unfairly with private land developers. It has caused a fall in invested development capital because private companies are under threat from this competitor. Proposed amendments to the Land Sales Act, if implemented, would have transferred \$400 million of purchasers' deposits to the control of the Government-owned Rural Bank. This further grab at private funds caused some panic and the Minister for Lands

or the Premier had to announce that although the bill had been approved by Cabinet, it was to be withdrawn for further consideration. The Minister for Lands first said that there was no such bill. When the honourable member for Dubbo gave him a copy of the bill he said that it had not been approved by Cabinet. When the honourable member for Dubbo gave him a letter from the Premier saying that it had been approved by Cabinet he said that he had not yet read it. He would not take the blame for it. That is the sort of Minister he is.

There was also the attempted takeover of Coal and Allied Industries Limited. This Government has constantly refused to guarantee security of tenure to mining companies. Why would people want to invest here? Why should investors prefer this State to Queensland or Western Australia? Under this Government the strike situation in New South Wales is a further deterrent. Strikes condoned by this Government—some of them were even encouraged by the Government—have caused loss of production and loss of return upon investment. A typical example is the storemen and packers strike, which was caused solely by a government-sponsored sweetheart deal between one employer and the union. It paralysed the waterfront and retail stores for four weeks. That sweetheart deal, which was made outside the indexation guidelines, was irresponsible. It threatens to start another wage-price inflation spiral. If it leads to a national flow-on in all industries the inflation rate in Australia will be back to double-digit figures. But this Government encouraged it. Whenever the unions flex their muscles—particularly a union such as the storemen and packers—the Government toes the line regardless of economic consequences. The effect is reduced confidence and reduced investment in New South Wales.

There was not one public comment about that strike from the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy, but he made plenty of private comments, ringing up the retailers and telling them to capitulate as they could not win. But there was not one word of criticism of the union from him. The same applies to the Premier. The retailers, relying on the law, did not give in, to the bitter disappointment of the Minister.

The same situation arose in the Public Transport Commission. The Government pressed the commission into accepting an over-award sweetheart deal with railway drivers. National rail strikes are now planned round the country to keep abreast of wage increases in this State resulting from that sweetheart deal. All these strikes have paralysed vital sectors of the economy, but every time the Government has failed to lift a hand. The figures are plain. In April, the last month for which figures are available, time lost in industrial disputes in New South Wales accounted for 46 per cent of the Australian total, yet New South Wales has only 35 per cent of the Australian work force. Time lost in this State was the same as the total time lost in Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania combined. It is no wonder investment capital is being transferred to other States. Who would want to invest in New South Wales? The Attorney-General's remark "all this hogwash about free enterprise" will give scant encouragement to investors. It is small wonder that investors are deterred from investing in New South Wales when the first law officer of the State, who is in charge of the administration of the Corporate Affairs Commission, describes private enterprise as so much hogwash.

Then there are the Government charges that I read at the beginning of my speech. Lodging fees for the Corporate Affairs Commission have risen by 233 per cent for small companies and 900 per cent for public companies. Mining leases on Crown land are up 200 per cent. Pilotage rates have been increased by 150 per cent. Bread manufacturers' licences are up 400 per cent. A whole series of 25 charges rip off \$100 million from the business sector. That is a great stimulus to investors. It is impossible for the private sector to meet the demands of this Government and

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to lead the recovery of New South Wales. It can lead the recovery of New South Wales only if it is not continually levied, pilloried and plundered by this Government. If confidence is to return to investment, if new jobs are to be created, if industry is to return to capacity production, this Government must make reductions, not impose increases. It has closed the door on any possibility of an investment-led recovery. While the Treasurer is asking this House for \$640 million—8 per cent more than last year in real money terms—to pay for the additional public servants he has hired, the Government is closing the door to an export-led recovery and investment-led recovery. He gives no detailed explanation why he wants the money.

What are the possibilities of a consumer-led recovery? The legislation introduced by the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies has added to the cost of **almost** everything. Consumers now have less to spend and less capacity to generate increased production. Up to 5 per cent has been added to prices right across the board to cover the cost of charges that may be brought before the Consumer Claims Tribunal. The price of second-hand vehicles has risen by up to \$1,000. Millions of dollars have been spent by manufacturers to meet this Government's date stamping and labelling requirements. This cost will be passed on to **consumers**, but the quality of the product will not be improved. All building costs have risen as a direct result of new demands by the Builders Licensing Board and by higher long service leave payments. Home buyers have been further penalized by the increased use of day labour, which has added over \$1,000 to the cost of every **building** block. Every consumer has been forced to pay more and more to fund the Minister's squad of business inspectors, and every consumer has been forced to pay more for the mountains of red tape generated by this Government. Most of all, every tax-paying consumer has been penalized by State taxation—I am not talking about charges—which is the highest in Australia. It is the highest because the Government is committed to pay for an ever increasing public sector. It is the same commitment explained by the **Labor** Party's federal shadow treasurer, Mr Ralph Willis, when he said earlier this year:

We would face a **mammoth** task in rebuilding the public sector and maybe an equally mammoth task in convincing the electorate that it should pay a higher level of tax to enable us to do so . . . the solution to that problem can only lie in **public** education.

One has to have public education to get the public to love higher taxation. This Government is committed to the same philosophy. That is why New South Wales has the lowest exemption for payroll tax in Australia and why it retains death duties when they have been abolished in Queensland and substantially reduced in Victoria. That is why over twenty-five charges have been increased in the last two years to produce an extra \$100 million in Government revenue, and why the Premier refuses to accept stage 2 federalism which will give a rebate to every taxpayer in New South Wales. It is time that this State passed that legislation and adopted a policy of giving the taxpayers of New South Wales an income tax rebate.

Let me be plain. I reject entirely the federal Government's income tax surcharge policy. What we need now is an income tax rebate in New South Wales. If the Government agrees with me in rejecting the surcharge, let it support the Opposition's bill for an income tax rebate in New South Wales. The Government has refused to accept the best opportunity in years to inject money and confidence into the New South Wales economy. That opportunity must be seized now if we are to return to the productive sector of the community a portion of the wealth that has been taken from it to feed the growth of government. The opportunity must be taken now to encourage individual effort and incentive. The actions of the Government have resulted in a severe contraction of the New South Wales private sector. Since May, 1976, when

the present Government came to office 38 000 jobs have been eliminated from the private sector. Instead of promoting economic recovery the Government has added to the burden of the private sector by hiring an additional 20 000 people in the public sector at a total cost of \$250 million. The official wages bill for the public sector has increased by **\$250** million. Despite the rapid growth in government employment the total number of jobs, both government and private, has declined by 18 000 since May, **1976**.

The Opposition is committed to economic recovery. Above all it is committed to reducing taxation and charges. Let this Government try to convince the people that they are better ~~off~~ paying higher State taxes and maintaining the costliest public sector, and better off with unnecessarily high levels of unemployment. Let the Government explain why New South Wales State taxes and charges are 25 per cent higher than those in Western Australia, 22 per cent higher than those in South Australia and **41** per cent higher than those in Queensland. These differences in *per capita* State taxation clearly show that New South Wales is the highest taxed State in Australia. The Opposition is determined to reduce the tax burden in New South Wales. We want to stop the tax-push inflation which has eroded the purchasing power of wage-earners and undermined the possibility of a consumer-led recovery. The Opposition believes it is time for the Government to heed the advice of the Marks committee on New South Wales taxation, which called for "greater economy and efficiency in the utilization of revenue already being extracted from the taxpayer." That statement was made before the present Government came to power. It is time to get the New South Wales economy on the upswing. We should not continue to lose opportunities, as this Government has, for an export-led recovery, an investment-led recovery and a consumer-led recovery. When the Liberal-Country party coalition is returned to government it will grasp those opportunities and create new ones. What this State needs is an overall economic plan to boost exports, restore confidence and investment, and increase consumer purchasing power. The first step will be to introduce **legislation** for an income tax rebate in New South Wales.

Mr MADDISON (Ku-ring-gai) [**12.50**]: This bill requires the House to approve the appropriation of \$640 million for the months of October and November this **year**. It is interesting to note that last year the equivalent **bill** was introduced on 15th September, so the House is now being asked to approve of these expenditures approximately a month earlier than it was in **1977**. One is entitled to ask what is the purpose of such an early Supply Bill. One can conclude only that this **bill** will prepare the way for a premature election and the presentation of a State budget **after** the general election rather than before it, as would happen in the normal course of events. The Premier will have a lot to answer for if this is the intention of his Government. On prior occasions he has expressed trenchant criticism of other governments that have gone to the polls prematurely. On one occasion the Premier used the phrase, "**A cynical exercise in power**". If that is what the Premier is on about here today, then he is proved to be the hypocrite that we know him to be.

The Premier should not overlook the public reaction that will be directed against him and his Government if he goes to an election before putting the Budget before Parliament. On the radio this morning I heard a report that quoted the Premier as categorically denying that there would be an early election. I understand that this question was canvassed at a Cabinet meeting this week and that a firm date has been fixed. If that is a fact then this House, this Parliament and the people are entitled to know it as quickly as possible. It should not be held a close preserve of the Premier and Cabinet. One of the problems is that there has been a lot of shilly-shallying by the Premier when he has been asked by the media what precisely his intentions are. Last year he seemed statesmanlike when saying that he did not favour a

premature election. Now it appears that he is about to launch one. I have grave doubts whether this Parliament will debate the Budget before a general election. The Address-in-Reply debate, which started on Tuesday, has now been virtually aborted by the political shenanigans yesterday when the federal Budget was debated and today when the Attorney-General moved a motion of urgency requiring the Supply Bill to be passed through all its stages in one day.

Clearly the House will not have sufficient time to canvass the important matters contained in the Governor's Speech or omitted from it. Apparently the Government is running away from the criticism that can be offered of its performance and intentions. The Opposition feels that it is being prevented from canvassing the omissions of the Government by having the Address-in-Reply debate circumscribed, as it has been this week. Not one Opposition member has yet had a chance to participate in the Address-in-Reply debate. Though we are in the third day of this new session, that motion has merely been moved and seconded.

Mr Renshaw: The Leader of the Opposition had plenty to say.

Mr MADDISON: The Treasurer knows that what I am saying is correct. The Leader of the Opposition was addressing himself to the inadequacies of the Government and the Premier. It would be highly improper for the Premier to go to a general election without giving Parliament the opportunity to discuss the economic policies that the Government proposes for the next twelve months. We need to know what the Government has in mind about taxation and charges. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the Government's undercover method of raising revenue through charges. I do not propose to canvass that matter. The facts are well known to honourable members, and should be better known throughout the community.

If the Budget is not debated the electorate will have to take the Government's proposals on trust. The electorate should not be left in any doubt about how the Labor Party proposes to increase economic activities in this State. Is it to be a deficit budget? Is it to be a balanced budget? Or is it to show a surplus? The problem is that the Premier has double standards: he says one thing one moment, and something different the next. On 9th October, 1974, when he was Leader of the Opposition, he said in a budget debate:

We believe, also, that too much revenue is being raised and that in any event a much higher deficit could be carried and relief given from some of the taxes. Except for the increase in royalties on coal and minerals, the Treasurer has neglected non-consumer areas for purposes of imposing taxes and charges. Taxes, for instance, on developers and companies related to capacity to pay would be much fairer than slugging the man in the street whose finances in these inflationary times are already stretched to the limit and beyond. The insistence of the Treasurer that this Budget will not hurt anybody, to borrow one of his favourite terms, is ludicrous.

At that time he was advocating a deficit higher than that proposed in the 1974 Budget. One must note from that comment the continual business-bashing approach of this Government, which talks of taxes on developers and companies being related to their capacity to pay. The business community and the private sector should be well aware that behind the Premier lies an intention that he firmly expressed when a member of the Opposition as being part and parcel of his party's policy. It explains his party's continuing attacks on the private sector. On 8th October, 1975, during the budget debate that year, while he was still Leader of the Opposition, he said:

The Budget could have been in considerable deficit without significantly contributing to inflation.

In another section of his speech he said:

The reality is that the Budget could have been in considerable deficit without significantly contributing to inflation at all.

He said also:

. . . the **mentality** that has been brought to the Budget is very much that of the cornerstore grocery shop namely, "Let's balance the books".

Clearly the Premier was advocating both in 1974 and 1975 that there was a need to stimulate the economy and that the State should go further into deficit. If we are to get the economy in New South Wales moving and reduce unemployment, which I said last night should be an objective of Government policies, ways and means must be found of stimulating the economy. We need to know precisely what the Government has in view in regard to its budgetary and economic policies. I repeat that if we go to an election without knowing those things it will be absolutely devastating to the public, who will not know whether the Government's intentions are bona fide. They will have to rely on promises, promises. On many occasions the Premier has gone on record as saying, as he says now, that federal taxes should be reduced. Apparently it is good enough for the federal Government to reduce taxes, but not good enough for him to reduce them.

Debate adjourned until a later hour on motion (by leave) by Mr Maddison.

[Mr Speaker left the chair at 1 p.m. The House resumed at 2.25 p.m.]

SENATE VACANCIES

Election of Senators

At 2.25 p.m. the House proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber to attend a joint sitting to choose two Senators in the places of the Hon. Sir Robert Carrington Cotton, K.C.M.G., resigned, and Senator the Hon. James Robert **McClelland**, resigned.

The House having reassembled at 2.40 p.m.,

Mr Speaker reported that at a joint sitting this day Christopher John Guelph **Puplick** and Kerry **Walter** Sibraa had been chosen as Senators in the places of the Hon. Sir Robert Carrington Cotton, K.C.M.G., resigned, and the Hon. James Robert **McClelland**, resigned.

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr MADDISON: Before the luncheon adjournment I was talking about the double standards of the Premier with regard to tax rates. I was saying that for the past two and a half years, nearly three years, the Premier **has** been complaining bitterly about the level of income tax levied by the Commonwealth Government. Prior to Premiers' conferences and federal budgets, **the** Premier has continually stressed the need for income tax reductions. Yet when it comes to the framing of State budgets, the Premier has not shown any desire to give tax relief to the taxpayers of New South Wales, which it is within his Government's command to provide. The Premier has been highly critical of the proposal put forward last week by the Leader of the

Opposition that he would introduce in this session of the Parliament a bill to be styled Rebates to Taxpayers (Personal Income Tax) Bill. Indeed, the Premier has really castigated the Leader of the Opposition, outside the House and again in the past two days in the House, for even daring to suggest that there is a case for a rebate of income tax, under the second stage of the Commonwealth Government's federalism policy.

As I said earlier in the debate, the prospects seem to be very slight of honourable members having a meaningful debate in reply to the Governor's Address at the opening of the session. It seems doubtful indeed whether honourable members will have a meaningful debate on the Budget, if they are to have such a debate at all. It is terribly important when one is debating the Supply Bill to be able to highlight the dangers that confront the Parliament in having a dissolution of both Houses before the financial and economic policy of the Government is set in train. The most important thing I want to talk about is the prospect of a review in personal income tax by way of a rebate, which may well send the State into deficit. In 1974 and 1975 the Premier, when in opposition, was continually proclaiming that the State could go into bigger and better deficits. At that time I quoted chapter and verse from *Hansard* his stated views.

There is no doubt that the Premier twists and turns and, having regard to the audience he is addressing, he will say what he believes suits his purpose at a given time. He will say a completely different thing at another time. Many of his statements made even a few weeks apart do not bear comparison. The Premier seems to get newspaper headlines for his intentions. In some respects he could rival the Minister for Local Government who, when he was Lord Mayor of this city, was known as Headline Harry. Since entering the Parliament, the Minister for Local Government has lost that appendage. It seems to have been taken over by Headline Neville. Clearly, the Premier can get headlines for a mere statement of intention, which never is and never has been, in so many fields, translated into action.

The Opposition wants the opportunity to examine and to expose the defects and deficiencies of the Government. The Opposition wants to be able to show that the Government's promises are not matched by performances and that the Premier and his supporters run off after intimating their intentions to do this, that and the other but have failed to do a thing. The Opposition wants the opportunity to talk, in both the budget debate and the Address-in-Reply debate, on matters such as the present state of the Government's policy on expressways. What is the Government's policy on bail reforms? For two years the Government has been sitting on a report on bail reform. Honourable members will have noticed in the Governor's Address that the Government proposes to reform the bail laws. Also, after a lot of procrastination, the Government is promising that it will take legislative action in regard to compensation for sporting injuries, an area that it has ignored over the past eighteen months.

Honourable members have been told many times by the Attorney-General that he proposes to reform all manner of laws. At one stage he intended to reform the law applying to rape. Again, he was to bring in legislation in regard to harsh and unconscionable contracts. That was a matter, he said, of great urgency, but it was 1976 when Professor Peden reported to the Government on the need to reform the law of contracts. For two and a half years honourable members have heard that the Premier would bring in a tribunal to hear complaints against the police. That matter received another run in the Governor's Speech this week. Presumably it is another promise that will remain unfulfilled. Opposition members, and I am sure many public servants, are concerned about what will happen to the Wilenski report. How many of the recommendations in that interim report are to be adopted by the Government and brought into effect by legislation?

Yesterday I was interested to listen to the debate on the setting up of a select committee of both Houses to look into the presentation of public accounts **and** the accounts of public authorities and the general strengthening of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament. Is that a cosmetic exercise only to be aborted by the early dissolution of the Parliament for a premature general election? There are so many matters of great public interest and importance that honourable members should be debating that, as I said this morning, the public will react violently to any decision by the Government to hold a premature election. Let us be quite clear about it: the Government has until June next year in which to call a general election.

An election held before the new year would be premature. We know full well that the public of Australia and particularly of New South Wales is sick and tired of being continually dragged to the polls. The public will not react kindly to any decision by the Premier to hold an early election. I sincerely hope that I am wrong in my fears that this Supply Bill, introduced a month early, predicates that we will not have a debate on the Budget. I hope that this Supply Bill is not merely designed to carry us over until after an election. The people are entitled to know precisely how the Government proposes to manage the State's economy and how it will stimulate economic activity. The public is entitled to know how the Government proposes to treat the private sector by way of stimulating investment, increasing job opportunities and reducing unemployment.

I have mentioned the problems of matching performance with promises made by the Premier. I liken the position in this place to the suggestion in the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *Iolanthe* that the House of Lords in Britain did nothing in particular and did it very well. A similar criticism may be offered of the Premier: he does nothing in particular but he does it very well. Supply must be granted to allow time for the Budget to be debated. Why it is necessary to bring in a Supply Bill at this time of the year has a lot of people guessing. I have my own ideas. I hope I am wrong. I hope we will be given the opportunity to have a full-scale debate on the Address in Reply and a full-scale debate on the Budget. It is in those debates that members have the opportunity to expose the deficiencies of the Government and to disclose the hypocrisy of the Premier and his Ministers who are great headliners but poor performers.

Mr **EINFELD** (Waverley), Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies [2.53]: We are debating the passage of the Supply Bill in order to give the Government funds to meet expenditure subsequent to 30th September. These funds are necessary to pay the wages of public servants, police officers and the like and to keep in progress instrumentalities for which the Government is responsible. I am not surprised that the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai should seek the call on this bill and present their Address-in-Reply speeches for fear that they may not get an opportunity to do so later. The more I listen to the Leader of the Opposition the more I become aware that he is a cozenor of the highest degree. Some of his predecessors have deserved the title of pseudologists and mythologists but this Leader of the Opposition does not seem to care what he says and to what lengths he goes to endorse his deliberate misrepresentations and petty fogging criticism for which there is absolutely no foundation.

Last night the Leader of the Opposition, when accused by the Premier of presenting a forged document, did not seek to make a personal explanation, nor did he do so today. When the Premier challenged the Leader of the Opposition to debate the question whether he had used a forged document the Leader of the Opposition did not flinch, budge or move one little bit. One would think that today he would have

sought your permission, Mr Speaker, to make a personal explanation. He knows that you are a fair man and have great experience, and he would be in no doubt that you would give him an opportunity to make a personal explanation. He did not do that. He remained mute. He did not attempt to defend himself at all.

Today the Leader of the Opposition held in his hand a report comprising many hundreds of pages relating to the Ethnic Affairs Commission. He made an idiot of himself by saying he could not find the recommendations contained therein, and that he could not locate chapter 47. He demonstrated his inability, his lack of knowledge and his lack of experience. It is obvious that he has wasted the years he has been in this Parliament. He has not learned anything. He has shown himself to be a fabricator and equivocator of the first degree. I shall refer to some of the obvious untruths which he expressed clearly and loudly. He knew when he was attacking matters of my administration and of the administrations of other Ministers that the things he was saying were false and had no foundation. Whenever he runs short of words he throws in a phrase such as, "That is what the Minister said himself," well knowing that he is telling a lie.

The honourable member for Ku-ring-gai, who is quite a nice man, a gentleman of good standing, demonstrated today that he is also a man who worries. He is really troubled about the coming State elections. He said the Opposition is concerned. He said the Premier has until next June to call an election and that the Opposition did not want to see one before then. Who could blame him for thinking that way? If it were not so serious for the honourable gentleman and his colleagues one could almost laugh at the situation. When one considers what happened recently in Earlwood who could blame the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai and his colleague for being concerned? It would be bad enough if the elections were held next June; if they were held tomorrow the Opposition would be decimated. Perhaps I might say also that should the federal coalition Government go to the polls tomorrow it, too, would be decimated, if one can believe only half of what one hears from people in the streets following the disastrous Budget handed down in Canberra earlier this week.

There is no wonder that the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai and the Leader of the Opposition are trembling and shaking and saying, "Goodness me, what will we do if there is an early election?" Mr Speaker, you are safe in the electorate you represent. You are a popular figure and, obviously with good reason, the people who live in your area are delighted to have you as their representative. But, the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai is in a completely different situation. He lives with a lot of other silvertails in a geographic area that suits him down to the ground.

Of course, even in the most conservative areas of Earlwood the people show that they can change their voting pattern. There are some conservative areas of Earlwood, as the former Premier would know, otherwise he would not have stayed in office as long as he did. Recently the people of Earlwood took the opportunity when they voted with pleasure for the Labor candidate to elect a new member who represented a vigorous party led by a man of great enterprise, initiative and vigour. The honourable member for Ku-ring-gai is worried, and understandably so. As representative of an area in which people ordinarily vote for the Tory side he knows that following the next elections there will be plenty of room on the Opposition side of this House and that the Treasury benches will be crowded.

The people are well aware that if they want stable, decent, reasonable government, they should give the Labor Party their support. I do not blame the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai for feeling as he does. In fact, I hardly blame the Leader of the Opposition, in spite of the untruths he includes in his utterances,

for being worried lest there be an early election. The honourable member for **Kuring-gai** makes almost a plaintiff plea to the Government not to have an early election. He hopes there will be an Address-in-Reply debate. Of course, he and his leader have already made their contributions to this debate. He says further that he hopes there will be a budget debate and that there will not be an election before next year.

The Leader of the Opposition is hoping against hope, knowing that political life is sometimes fluid, that there might be a change in the sentiments of the people of New South Wales. But he should know better. He should know that the longer it is before an election, the less chance his party has of getting any reasonable numbers in this Parliament to represent the interests of a few people it serves. I listened today to the Leader of the Opposition when he spoke in an earlier debate. I am sure he believes that, if he speaks loudly, he is a more effective speaker, and that the bigger the lie he tells the more chance he has of getting the people to believe it. The opposite is true. When he speaks loudly he croaks, and he becomes even more ineffective than when he is speaking normally. Also, when the Leader of the Opposition tries to make himself more impressive, he makes himself less so because he has no charisma, dignity or standing. Unfortunately for him, he is opposing a Premier who is probably the most outstanding citizen of the State.

I do not have to point to the results of the **Earlwood** by-election, where there was a swing to **Labor** of an unprecedented **9.4** per cent. I can understand how miserable the Leader of the Opposition must be with this result. If I had time I would send for some buckets and towels to cope with the tears being shed by all his colleagues on that side of the House. There is no need for me to talk about this swing of **9.4** per cent, for even the Gallup polls disclose that **Neville Wran**, Premier of New South Wales, is accepted by 78 per cent of the people. That is a higher percentage than has ever been achieved by any other Premier of the State. Naturally, honourable members opposite are full of anguish, disappointment, misery and unhappiness. Most of us go through the political doldrums, but the Liberal Party is going through a period of greater degradation and shame than has any party in the political history of this country.

We all remember what the Leader of the Opposition said about the **9.4** per cent swing to **Labor** in the **Earlwood** by-election. He said that if the election had been held a week earlier the swing would have been greater, and from that reasoning he deduced that the Liberal Party was gaining. He could have said, using that argument, that by **1999** the Liberal Party might be getting a vote or two. Of course, everybody laughed at his remarks and thought what a character he was. Even people in his own party thought it was comical when he said that the **9.4** per cent swing to **Labor** in the **Earlwood** by-election was encouraging to his party. He was referring to a seat that had been held by the Liberal Party for 28 years. Although what he said was laughable outside, it becomes worse in the Parliament where the party should be able to rely on its leader here. The Liberal Party has a majority in the federal Government, as the citizens know to their own discomfort, but the Leader of the Opposition in this House attacks various industries for which honourable members on this side of the House are caring with great determination and dedication. Ministers are adopting conscientious approaches and earning greater and greater reputations.

In his speech earlier today, the Leader of the Opposition said that the time will come when New South Wales will have to import coal from Victoria and Queensland. Anyone who knows anything about the coal industry would realize that that is laughable, having in mind that this State can pick up export coal orders galore

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and is making great strides forward in many respects. Over the term of this Government it has received notifications from industries already settled in the State or about to do so, representing a total capital investment of more than \$1,200 million. That makes the statements of the Leader of the Opposition ridiculous.

I now refer to the comments by the Leader of the Opposition concerning the rental bond board. It is another of his big lies when he claims that the Minister has stated that the scheme is no good. It is true that when I introduced the legislation into this Parliament I said that there was about \$35 million to \$40 million of rent bonds which could properly be used for the benefit of the community. It is true that the bond moneys have not yet reached \$35 million, and also that some devious landlords and agents are avoiding sending their bond moneys to the board. However, we are catching these people one by one, and they will be examples to the community of people who cheat against the laws of the land. So far 195 323 bonds, with a total value of \$32.3 million, have been lodged with the board. This is the alleged failure about which the Leader of the Opposition spoke so glibly. The way he put it was a complete untruth and an obvious lie, as he must have known if he had any knowledge of the matter at all. Indeed, he must have known it was a fabrication. One can see that he is a pettifogger and a cozener, which means he is a person who tell untruths. Not only that, he is pigeon-hearted, lily-livered, and a quailing, unheroic defeatist. That means he is a coward. He says things loudly knowing very well that they are **untrue**.

I said a moment ago that up to 16th August 195 323 people had lodged bonds with the rent board to a total value of \$32.3 million. The board works so well that when a bond has to be paid back, and the landlord and the tenant both agree that it should be paid to one or the other party, it is paid out in the same time as it takes to cash a cheque at the bank. A sum of \$7 million has been paid out, and the balance on hand at 16th August was \$25.3 million. **As I** announced when the legislation was passing through this House, the money is to be invested with terminating building societies or in other proper securities, such as the Rural Bank, which would advance moneys to be used as loans for people who want to buy houses. The interest will be made available to project builders or through terminating building societies at the rate of \$23,000 to \$25,000 for each home, at $5\frac{3}{4}$ per cent interest. First-home buyers will be able to obtain loans, sometimes making repayments that are less than the rent they have been paying. Builders will guarantee people homes for \$1,500 less than the normal price, and they have promised to employ builders now unemployed.

I am delighted to say that \$500,000 from the rental bond board has already been distributed to terminating building societies for projects accepted from builders who are willing to build these homes. I expect that in September another \$500,000 will be invested. This means that, as a result of the activities of the board, by the end of September \$1 million will have been distributed through terminating building societies to first-home buyers at the rate of between \$23,000 and \$25,000 by way of loan or first mortgage, to be repaid at $5\frac{3}{4}$ per cent interest. This proposal was not a dream, and it was what the Leader of the Opposition said was not true.

The results already achieved make the Leader of the Opposition appear positively stupid. Of course, it is probably simple for him to make himself look **silly**. The facts are that his malevolent claim about the rental bond board has impressed no one. Certainly he has impressed no one on this side of the House, and **I am sure** his own colleagues would like to replace him if they had anyone left to take his place. They used him to replace someone else. Indeed, the man he replaced has gone and we have been notified that the **earler** leader of his party is also going. In the past few weeks the ranks of the party lead by the Leader of the Opposition have thinned out. Experienced men are departing. There are so many resignations that there will need to

be a **general** election rather than a number of by-elections to replace **them**. The honourable member for Wollondilly, a former Premier, was replaced by the present Leader of the Opposition—or was it the former honourable member for Earlwood? It is hard to remember who replaced **who**, because the leadership **on that** side of the House has changed so often. One wonders where it will all stop. If there are any other radio **broadcasting** stations wanting news readers, a few more in the Liberal Party might jump out **of** it and join the ranks of the news media.

The rental bond board is budgeting for a profit of \$1.5 million. That is a profit over **and above** the expense of running the board, purely out of interest received from permanent building societies and other organizations. In fact, the surplus profit for the period 1st November last to 16th August, after all administrative expenses and establishment costs, was \$445,000. The Leader of ~~the~~ Opposition has been telling obvious, outright lies to the Parliament, and therefore to the people of New South Wales. He deliberately concocts figures which sound all right to him. Although he is not present in the Chamber now, I hope he is listening to this debate in his room. I am willing to call him a liar as I am now doing. He will find when he examines the figures that the profit is \$445,000 for the period I indicated. That is after payment of establishment costs. The budgeted profit is expected to be \$1.5 million.

The Leader of the Opposition then began to talk about other things and he mentioned date stamping. It is true that the Government has gazetted regulations to provide that foodstuffs having up to two years durability are to have a date stamp on them by 1st January next year. That is part of the policy on which my colleagues and **I** were elected to office. The Leader of the Opposition was quite **wrong**—it further demonstrated his stupidity—when he said what the cost of date stamping would be. In the **first** place, the cost of the Department of Consumer Affairs is 60 cents per head of the population of New South Wales. He talked about the millions of dollars that date stamping **will** cost **industry**. I have just come back from a 26-day **oversea** visit when I visited the OECD countries, including the United Kingdom and France, and some States in the **United States** of America, including Washington. I found there that nearly all those States are ready to provide or have already provided for date stamping.

When a general survey of supermarkets was made by two university students from the University of New South Wales, it was found that the great preponderance of people—not 50 per cent, **60** per cent or 70 per cent but 90 per cent—were anxious to have date stamping on foodstuffs. What is the answer to that? Is it not proper that when people go to a supermarket they should know whether the goods they are buying are fresh or **stale**? This policy was announced years ago, but when the **Labor Party** **gained** office in May, 1976, and spoke about it, there were objections. Our researchers and the chief engineer in charge of weights and measures went with representatives of **the Council** of Food Technology Associations and other organizations to factories to determine whether greater costs would be involved. Objections came mainly from factories that were already putting code stamps on foodstuffs. They did not want to put on date stamps because they did not want the customer to know whether the goods were stale or fresh.

The Government is most anxious that **consumers should** have this **information**. This is **what** the Leader of the Opposition opposes. At the next general **elections**—of which **his** party is **frightened**—I challenge him and **his supporters** to say publicly that if they **get into office** they will do away with date stamping. They talk about reducing the Department of Consumer Affairs and **the** consumer claims tribunals. The legislation to **establish** the tribunals was passed by the **previous** Government. Thousands of claims **and** inquiries are received from citizens and they are dealt with without much anxiety or **worry**. **The consumer** claims tribunals are operating **successfully** and happily. They hear **6,000 claims** a year. The **results they** have achieved have been magnificent. **Claims**

Mr Einfeld

are decided without fuss at a cost of \$2, but neither the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is made has to pay anything. The result is that the parties generally are satisfied. Judgments so far have been about 65 per cent in favour of complainants and about 35 per cent in favour of those against whom complaints are made. It is, of course, understandable that some people are not happy because their claims have been rejected. The department has received about twenty-five complaints against decisions.

Between 1 000 and 1 300 telephone calls are received every day at the Department of Consumer Affairs. Not all of them are complaints. Some are inquiries and some are follow-ups on complaints. This is what the Leader of the Opposition decries as business bashing. Members on his side of the House are indulging in consumer bashing. The consumers of this State are now able to go to a department that will listen to their complaints, mediate on their behalf and resolve, generally quite happily, the complaints they make. Previously they never got a hearing from anyone.

The Opposition is clearly opposed to consumer protection. As it has said many times, it is anxious to reduce the activity of the Department of Consumer Affairs. When the honourable member for Kirribilli is not in Queensland or concerning himself with the Taxation Department, he purports to be a shadow minister and complains that there is no right of appeal in the consumer claims tribunals, and that proceedings there are not bound by the rules of evidence. He said that if ever the Liberal Party is elected to government it will cut down the tribunals. Mr Speaker, you are younger than I am and you may live long enough to see the parties opposite returned to office. But I hope you never see a Liberal government in New South Wales. I do not think I shall live long enough to see that happen, for I do not expect to last beyond the end of this century. The honourable member for Kirribilli forgets that it was a government of his political persuasion that introduced the legislation. There are such tribunals in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia, as well as in the United Kingdom and most of the States of America and Canada. It is true that the Government has extended the tribunals. The amount that can be dealt with by a consumer claims tribunal is now \$1,500. We have made consumer claims tribunals available at night so that people will not have to lose time off work if they sue or are sued before a tribunal. I suppose the honourable member for Eastwood is just as worried as the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai about the next elections. He represents an electorate where most of his constituents are Tories, but I remind him that every day more Tories are starting to join the ranks of Labor.

Mr Stewart: He has already lost his seat once. He knows what it is like.

Mr EINFELD: I was sorry when the honourable member for Eastwood lost his seat. He is not a bad fellow. He is an accountant and I know that he mucks up his figures, but he is not such a bad chap. I am sorry he lost his seat. The accusations by the Opposition are so far-fetched that in the election campaign I shall tell people far and wide—and it will be true—that the Liberal Party wants to take a course that will cause deep distress. That giant of the Opposition, the former member for Cronulla, who was my shadow minister and who preceded me in one of the portfolios I have held, said quite clearly that Liberal government would cut down on consumer protection because it is a waste of money. The honourable member for Northcott, when speaking here last November, talked about the evils of consumerism. It is quite clear that the Liberal Party is against consumer protection. It does not realize that every country in the western world has embarked on a campaign of protecting consumers against those few persons who would be dirty, take advantage of, exploit and cheat people.

In the past two days people have been telephoning the department complaining about shopkeepers who are already charging the higher price for cigarettes, whisky and brandy before they have used up their old stocks. Inspectors have been sent out to follow up the complaints. Those who want to exploit consumers should be shown up for what they are. A general election will be held some time between now and next year: it will be some time between **now and** next June, for sure. The Opposition should take advantage of that forecast because it represents the people who want to exploit and cheat and take advantage of the ordinary citizens. The Opposition will be shown up for what it is and honourable members opposite will be inundated with complaints that they do not represent ordinary people, but only those who want to take advantage of citizens generally.

Mr J. A. CLOUGH (Eastwood) [3.23]: It will be a happy day when one listens to the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies without having to suffer his vituperation and personal denigration of people in the worst possible terms. I suppose he thinks that is a fine approach for a Minister of the Crown. I do not. I think it is degrading and scandalous that one should have to sit here every time the Minister rises and hear pour forth from his lips words of personal abuse, condemnation and vituperation of other honourable members. The Minister is rather an enigma. He said that consumer protection was necessary. He conceded that honourable members on this side established the present system, but he maintained that he was responsible for it. Honourable members should take that claim with a grain of salt. In any event, the system was established. The Minister went on to say that such a magnificent job had been done that the worth of the department has been proved. In the next breath he said that it receives 30 000 telephone calls a year. It seems rather a paradox that on the one hand he should claim enormous success and, on the other hand, state that about 750 telephone calls a week are received, after nearly three years of Labor government. If that is success, I do not know what real success is.

The Opposition does not support thieves and cheats. It endeavoured to do what the Minister, perhaps, is trying to do to ensure that injustice is not the order of the day within the community and that people in business are not doing the wrong thing. For the Minister to say that members of the Opposition support thieves and robbers and cheats is an exaggeration. I am sure no one would agree with him. The Premier also is quite a character. On various occasions he has claimed that there will soon be a general election, that there will not be a general election, that there might be one, and that there could be a general election. He has said that there will be a general election if there is another indication of a by-election.

The Premier might claim to have gazed into his crystal ball before the Treasurer introduced the Supply Bill. As the honourable member for Wollondilly has announced that he will resign on 1st September, doubtless the Premier will say that he has to have a general election because another by-election will be necessary. However, when the Supply Bill was introduced the honourable member for Wollondilly had not made known that he would resign. It is ridiculous of the Premier to intimate that because the honourable member for Wollondilly has said he will resign the Premier must go to the polls to avoid having a series of by-elections. Honourable members know that is untrue but doubtless the press will print what the Premier says, as it always does. The press always seem to think that whatever the Premier says is right, but many people do not believe that.

The Supply Bill was introduced for the purpose of continuing supply for two months beyond the end of September. It proposes to allow further expenditure of \$640.183 million, an increase of \$76.6 million over the previous period or 13.6 per cent. Taking the items in order, the amount to come from the Consolidated Revenue Fund is \$485.383 million, an increase of \$54.6 million or 12.7 per cent.

The amount to come out of the Government Railways Fund is **\$109.529** million, an increase of **\$17.7** million or **19.3** per cent. Out of the Government Railways Renewals Fund will come **\$3,333** million. From the Road Transport and Traffic Fund will come an amount of **\$10.619** million, an increase of **\$139,000** or **1.3** per cent. From the Metropolitan Transport Trust General Fund will come **\$16.235** million, an increase of **\$2.16** million or **15.53** per cent. Out of the Newcastle and District Transport Trust general fund will come **\$1.697** million, an additional **\$185,000** or **12.2** per cent. Out of the Maritime Services Board Fund **\$10.425** million will come, an increase of **\$1.25** million or **15.3** per cent. Out of the Maritime Services Board Renewals Fund will come **\$2.962** million or **19** per cent more. The increase in real money terms, allowing for inflation, is **\$47** million or **8** per cent.

What is the increase for? It seems to me that it is to meet the increased wages bill of the additional **20 000** public servants who have been added to the Government's work force since it came to office. I refer back to the Premier's remarks of June, **1976**, when he said that there would be no increase in staff. He said then that in the ensuing twelve months the Public Service of New South Wales would be reduced by between **5** per cent and **8** per cent, and that the Government would increase public service efficiency and prevent extravagance which had occurred under the previous Government. To my knowledge public service efficiency has not increased to date. An additional **20 000** employees have been taken on and an extra **8** per cent or **\$47** million is needed to pay them.

I am not happy about supporting a bill relating to additional funds to enable the Government to carry on its services after 30th September. Let us examine the Government's record and assess what it has achieved. It has appointed environmentalists, planners, social workers, hydrologists, economists, in fact you name it—for what purpose we do not know. As yet we have not heard anything about the results achieved by those appointments. The Government has promised to do much about tourism though we had heard nothing to suggest any progress in that industry. The Government has claimed it has not increased charges. In fact it has increased charges by more than **25** per cent across the board. Motor vehicle registration fees have been increased by a third. Electricity charges have been considerably increased. Many government charges have been increased, all to the detriment of the wage earner and his family. This Government has not tackled moral issues. It has completely laid off such controversial subjects as gambling, casinos, pornography, homosexuality and anti-discrimination. The Government was soundly defeated in the upper House when it brought forward anti-discrimination legislation and it has retreated from that area. It is my view that should Labor be returned to office—and I doubt it will happen—the public will see a reintroduction of that legislation. Should the Government be returned with majorities in both Houses of Parliament there will be no holding it back. If that should happen I foresee a bleak future for this State on moral issues. Under Labor administration we have seen price control, rent control and trade practices control introduced. In those respects government intrusion is worse here than in any other State.

The Attorney-General has an obsession about white-collar crime and he continues his persecution of businessmen. We have seen the softline approach to prisons. Crime is on the increase. Day after day prisoners escape from lawful custody. Only yesterday two prisoners escaped from a prison vehicle while being transported from one gaol to another. All facets of crime are increasing and the incidence of crimes of violence is alarming. I charge the Premier with disregarding this extraordinary behaviour in our community. The Government intends to build a new gaol in the Blacktown area at a cost of **\$13** million. I wish to express my personal opinion on this subject,

though it does not necessarily accord with my party's view. I agree that criminals have to be held somewhere but it is most regrettable that the Government finds it necessary to spend \$13 million at a time when many other areas of government activity are in need of development.

The Government says that things are better in New South Wales. Nevertheless, it **still** finds it necessary to build a new gaol. Either community behaviour has improved or it has not. If it is better, there would be no need for a new gaol. If it is not better, a new **gaol** might be needed. The Government cannot have it both ways. It is unfortunate **that** \$13 million is to be spent on a new gaol at a time when the needs of education, health, transport and other areas are so great.

The Government promised it would cure the transport ills of New South Wales, reduce the State deficit and provide better services. The only area in which it has provided improved transport service is in **Earlwood** where it sent all the new buses during the recent by-election campaign. I do not know whether they will stay there or be whisked away. As a general election is probably just round the corner, perhaps the new buses will be left in Earlwood. Understandably, that is the only area in Sydney where there has been an improvement in public transport. Elsewhere it has not been improved one iota. If I am wrong I invite the Minister for Transport to tell me where there have been improvements in the State's transport services. Members on this side of the House should like the Government to act more responsibly in answering questions put on the *Questions and Answers* paper. Many questions were on the paper but when the Parliament prorogued they were in effect lost. That reveals a complete lack of regard for the right of members to seek information to satisfy their concern on issues and to keep their constituents properly informed on government administration. Time and again I am asked for details on certain matters relating to government activities. Often I am **unable** to answer those questions as the Government will not supply the information I need. A similar situation confronts other honourable members. I take it that the Government has no intention of supplying members of Parliament with any more information that it wants them to have.

One might look with great interest and some cynicism into the speech made by His Excellency the Governor in August, 1976. His Excellency then said many things on behalf of the new **Labor** Government. He detailed a heavy programme, yet two years later the Government has not even scratched the surface of that programme and is a long way from meeting its promises. On that occasion His Excellency said:

My Government is deeply concerned about the high level of unemployment in New South Wales.

The Premier tells us that New South Wales is the best State in the Commonwealth, yet unemployment in this State is about the same as it was two years ago. It is nothing less than a **Jekyll and Hyde** situation. On the one hand it is this and on the other hand it is that. In fact, it reminds me of a song from the play "Fiddler on the Roof". One might say that while the Premier fiddled the State burned. In May, **1976**, **Labor** came to government, at great surprise to itself and to everyone else. In opening the new session of Parliament in August of that year His Excellency the Governor said:

The Government has established an Advisory Committee, chaired by the Deputy Premier, on which employers and unions are represented for the purpose of joint initiatives being taken and representations made to the Federal **Government** for assistance to that industry.

Mr J. A. *Clough*]

A similar committee, of which the Premier is chairman, known as the Manufacturing Advisory Council, has been established to seek ways to reverse the downward trend in production, increase employment in the manufacturing industries and to arrest the movement of significant sections of manufacturing industries interstate and overseas.

Has there been any improvement? The obvious answer is no. His Excellency said further:

The Government will support the concept of education as a life-long process. Programmes designed to remedy deficiencies in children's environmental and social backgrounds will be further developed, including the disadvantaged schools programme begun by the Schools Commission. The Government has already appointed a Working Party as a first step to the appointment of an Education Commission.

The Government has received a report but it is no closer to a decision. Of course, there will be no decision before the election. What is the Government's attitude towards independent schools? It promised to fund them to the extent of a real 20 per cent of what it costs to educate a child. It has funded them to the extent of 20 per cent on the 1976 figures and that represents only 16 per cent today. One cannot believe that the position will improve under this Government. I could go right through this speech that was delivered in 1976 by the Governor and demonstrate to honourable members how promise after promise has not been kept. Another important item is where His Excellency stated:

The Government is determined to assist people seeking to buy their own home. It has already abolished Crown Land Auctions. A Lands Commission will be established for the purpose of developing land for resale at cost to homeseekers. Government guarantees are to be provided to lending institutions to enable first home purchasers to borrow up to 100 per cent of the value of a dwelling.

To further assist persons purchasing their first home, a scheme is to be introduced to relieve homeseekers of legal costs and to stagger stamp duty payments for up to 5 years.

What a sad and sorry story. We know the result has been almost infinitesimal. We know, also, about the abysmal failure of the Lands Commission, the administration of which can only be described as a travesty. I could go on outlining what the Government promised to do and what it has not done. In those days, the Government talked about increasing the strength of the police force. Although there has been a slight increase in the strength of the force, it has been nothing like the numbers that are needed. In the Speech prepared by the Government for His Excellency it was further stated:

The construction of new public buildings will proceed to the limit of available funds. The school building programme is being continued and further projects are at the detailed planning stage.

We know the extent of the progress in that area—it could be written on the back of a postage stamp. In the same Speech, it was mentioned that there were to be major provisions in health. I shall not go through the whole list of promises, but I shall give an example of what is happening in this field under the present Government. I have written to the Minister for Health about this matter, and he has at least had the courtesy to reply. I hope that in due course I shall get further information on the subject. Recently I received complaints from two constituents who were unable to gain admittance of patients to Ryde Hospital in the electorate of Yaralla. As a great

favour, these people, including an age pensioner suffering from pneumonia, were admitted to the Ryde Psychiatric Centre when a special privilege was extended to them by the doctor in charge there.

The Ryde Psychiatric Centre has 150 beds which were, I was informed, to be used for general nursing and general hospital purposes. However, the trade unions stepped in, and that was the end of the matter. It is a sad and sorry day when the trade union movement can prevent the use of 150 vacant hospital beds at this centre, which has lovely buildings in pleasant surroundings. The trade unions there are engaged in some sort of a demarcation dispute, and will not permit the use of these beds for general nursing. I ask the Government to have a little backbone and to take a **hand** in this matter, by making sure that old people with pneumonia are not left to die in their beds at home while trade unionists sit by and squabble about lines of demarcation.

I should like to say much more about the deficiencies of the Government, but I shall leave that for the people to determine at the polls. However, as I said, the supporters of the Labor Party might think they are riding high, but when the chips are down I am sure it will not be the cakewalk that some of them think it will be.

Mr CAMERON (Northcott) [3.45]: The Premier dresses very well, and, by virtue of that fact, has earned his entitlement to be ~~called~~—as he is now widely ~~called~~—the immaculate deception. He deserves high marks for everything that runs to promises and cosmetic surfaces rather than to substance. I put strongly to the House that the primary duty of any government is to govern, and that it is in that substantial respect that this Government is patently bad. It is taking advantages of every opportunity that offers itself—attractively in a surface and cosmetic way—to do nothing and, by virtue of not disturbing people, thereby seeks to attract electoral support.

This House has recently come out of an over-long, 19-week recess, and is faced by the situation that, far from the Government governing, far from it accepting its responsibilities—as has the Fraser Government in Canberra by making unpopular decisions to remould the economy of the nation—and far from being a supportive partner with the Commonwealth, it is simply fiddling as the economy burns, standing still doing nothing, looking for electoral surpluses here and there, but not facing up to any of the great challenges confronting the nation in these difficult times. In question time in this House, when Ministers should be willing to accept challenges relating to issues of substance, the Government in question time after question time, arranges to have questions directed to that great time waster, the Minister for Youth and Community Services. Although the Minister redeemed himself fractionally today, this is done in the knowledge that he will waste fifteen of the forty-five minutes allocated for question time in this House.

I regard it as certain that the Supply Bill before the House, which makes provision for payments during October and November, 1978, in respect of regularly recurring services and ordinary contingencies, is just another part of the Government's programme designed to escape its responsibility to govern, and simply to seize advantage of prevailing surpluses, running for it in terms of electoral favour, to get to the people as soon as it can.

Mr Bannon: The honourable member is saying that we are in front?

Mr CAMERON: I concede that, at the moment the Government is running high. However, instead of accepting its responsibility, it is trying to get to the people. Instead of governing, it is running away from that responsibility. The simple fact is that we are **part** of a great Australian federal system of government that has **out-**

standing advantages, in that it diffuses power through three tiers of government and through a number of Parliaments, all of which are highly desirable. But the fact that we have so many Parliaments and so many Houses of Parliament results in this country having too many elections. We should not have 3-year terms but Cyear terms for parliamentary office, thereby reducing the number of expensive elections imposed on the public. It is as plain as a pikestaff that the Government is running from its responsibility by looking for an opportunity to hold an unnecessary expensive election ahead of time.

It is time the media and the people of this State challenged the Government to accept its responsibilities, to stop encouraging surface charades and cosmetic exercises, and to face up to the economic challenges. It has equal responsibility with the federal Government and the other State governments to tackle the great economic problems that confront Australia. Obviously that is the last thing the Government intends to do. It has occupied the Treasury benches of this State for more than two years, and in the whole of that time the only thing it has really changed—with the mistaken acquiescence of the Opposition, but nonetheless its acquiescence—has been the constitution of the upper House of this State.

What a magnificent tribute it is to what is still basically a capitalist system in New South Wales that a socialist government has to confess, after having been in office for two and a half years, that there was nothing really bad enough about the upper House to warrant a change. It has been essentially, completely and totally a do-nothing government that has occupied the Treasury benches for this period in excess of two years. All we have is this continuing focus upon cosmetics and appearances, and a preoccupation with surface issues that do not matter. There has been a continual ignoring of the running sores that exist in the community.

We saw an intriguing spectacle when the honourable member for Wollondilly was Premier of this State. When he set up a public relations unit within the Premier's Department, the media of the State fell upon him, berated him, chided him, lampooned him and attacked him. Yet the present Premier has taken over that unit, enormously magnified it until it has become a multi-million dollar operation, with no purpose other than to build and sustain the personal image of the Premier of the day. Yet he has been able to do it without fleeting or passing criticism from the media. The Premier is preoccupied with maintaining illusions, images and appearances. The incredible thing that he focusses on is presenting to the people the illusion that he is still a young, slim, trim, dynamic man in the prime of life. We have seen the unbelievable sensitivity that he has shown about disclosing his age, how he kept pretending that he was in his forties when he had long since moved into his fifties. That sort of conduct in a woman would be excused; it would be regarded as feminine frailty. In a male Premier we can be a little surprised.

The Premier has achieved that standing in life which is a satisfaction to most ordinary family men. He has become a grandfather, yet he used this great image machine to destroy any reference to the fact that he is something that would give pride to an ordinary man—a grandfather—upon the basis that it might show that he is really past his prime now, that he is into his fifties and has accepted this present standing of being a grandfather within a family. He manages to keep his hair nice and dark but we understand —

Mr Stewart: On a point of order. The House is debating the Supply Bill. Although I realize that it is in order for honourable members to wander far and wide over the whole spectrum of government finance and administration in New South Wales, I think the matter to which the honourable member for Northcott is now

alluding does nothing to raise the prestige or decorum of the House. I submit that the honourable member ought to be asked to direct his **attention** to some point of government administration **and** stop trying to take out his spleen on the Premier, who is the most successful Premier this State has ever seen.

Mr SPEAKER: I **am** sure that the honourable member for Northcott realizes that he has got well away from the subject of the debate. Although other honourable members have canvassed a wide range of subjects, they have dealt with money matters. I cannot see that whether the Premier is a grandfather or not has anything to do with money matters.

Mr CAMERON: I thank you, Mr Speaker, for that guidance. I am keen to come to the matters that constitute the substance of the Supply Bill. We look to a number of matters dealing with payments to come out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the railways fund and the road transport and traffic fund. **All** of these matters raise great questions as to what the mode is in which the Government of this State is to be continued if need be during the months of October and November. We can ask ourselves dramatic questions in that regard. Is it going to be a continuation of the policies that are running at the moment—policies that are dramatically boosting the deficit of the Public Transport Commission from \$300 million, moving inexorably towards \$400 million, with an almost certainty of it being \$500 million within a very short space of time? This is at a time when patronage is again declining. Without any doubt the biggest problem facing the **people** of Sydney **is** that because of the **inadequacy** and **unsuitability** of public transport in terms of rail services and **bus services**, commuters—people who would be patrons of those **services** if they were **satisfactory**—are continually being forced into private motor vehicles. The main road and arterial road systems of the city of Sydney are becoming untraffickable because they are oversaturated.

Within my electorate of Northcott the greatest problem I have to contend with is that, **as** in many other suburban areas, the road network, whether main roads or arterial roads, is entirely inadequate to handle the increasing volume of **traffic**. Sundays have become an absolutely impossible problem as people get on to the roads to try to get out of the city and seek some relaxation. They find that it is becoming impossible to do it. A great deal of the problem is due to the fact that the public transport services run by this Government are so unattractive that people never get round to using them. I believe that this reflects what the real objectives of government in this State should be. Whether we are just thinking of the months of October and November of this year on an interim supply basis or whether we are thinking of a much more expansive time span, we need a **tauter**, more muscled government and we should get away from the flabby, elephantine overgrowth that the policies of this Government promote.

This is what the policies of the Fraser Liberal Government in Canberra are **all** about. They are designed to achieve smaller government, and smaller government makes possible bigger individuals and more **fulfilled** citizens, but the policies of the Wran Government in New South Wales, in so far as it has any policies apart from timeserving, lead towards the flabby, elephantine overgrowth of government. That is why 20 000 additional public servants have come on to the payroll in the short space of time since the Wran Government has come to power. That is why we find this tremendous employment shift from the private sector to the public sector in New South Wales. That is why we find the pattern of State government employment going up while federal government employment decreases within the boundaries of New South Wales. The Government ought to be tackling these matters but it is running away from them. How much of this \$485 million that we are

going to pass under this Supply Bill for the months of October and November from the Consolidated Revenue Fund will go to sustaining such uneconomic, **unenterprising** undertakings of the State Government as the Government Insurance Office, the State Tile Works, the State dockyard, the State Brickworks, the day labour force of the water board, the State laundry service and the State furniture undertaking? How much of the inefficiencies of these various bodies will account for the large **sum** that we vote on this interim supply basis to come out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund?

I have already spoken about the incredible situation in relation to the rickety, State-owned services. It is a bizarre situation that a government-owned bus has an operating cost per mile of \$1.87 whereas a private bus has an operating cost per mile of only 87c. Because different trade unions are involved, private buses manage with union co-operation to operate on a one-man basis. The government buses always carry an extra man, which pushes up costs and makes their operation uneconomic.

In New South Wales there are about 1.5 million families. Virtually everyone belongs to a family. If honourable members look at the enormous economic incubus involved in the deficit of the public transport system, for a start, they will realize that each family has to pay \$300 a year to neutralize the deficits of the public transport system, before the family starts to pay its first dollar in fares. The irony is that the family pays that enormous sum each year but the services provided by the Public Transport Commission of New South Wales are just so unsuitable, uncomfortable, inconvenient and unattractive that most families do not use the services. Most families go to the further trouble, more and more expensive though it is becoming, to run their own cars, rather than use the public transport system. It is the greatest single economic problem facing the Government of New South Wales. One can be absolutely sure, whether it be for the two months of October and November or for a long term, that that problem is being ignored, because the Government is locked into the union support straitjacket and cannot afford to do anything that offends the transport unions.

Because petrol has become extremely expensive, yesterday the Premier complained that the government bus services would have to pay an extra \$6 million or so a year because of increased petroleum costs. The Government has the remedy, in part, right at its own feet. By simply adopting the Townobile electric bus, which would use electricity provided from the State's own abundant coal reserves which are located in Labor-held electorates in the main—the Townobile electric bus is superior in terms of economics, environment and efficiency—the Government would be ensuring continued employment for coalminers in those Labor-held electorates. It would be giving to the State the best kind of public transport that one could imagine. The State would not then be facing an extra \$6 million burden for increased petroleum costs. It would not need to look at the problem relating to the drying-up of supplies of petroleum or other fuel oil supplies in the next few years.

The Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways is laced into a **strait-jacket** and is not willing to look to that unique Australian solution to the problem. He is committed to importing diesel buses from Germany. Again and again the same kinds of patterns are seen. I understand that the Minister tested the Townobile electric bus yesterday. I am almost certain that he gave the test in order to fail the vehicle on some flimsy pretext, such as an inadequate braking system. I shall look forward to seeing the results of the test.

In area after area there are enormous running sores confronting New South Wales, yet the Government, under the leadership of the Premier, goes on looking only at the surface and at cosmetics. It never gets to the interior, the heart, the substance of the matter. Things get worse and worse every week. I say without

hesitation that the greatest of these continuing running sores within New South Wales is the abuse of union power. It is a running sore to which the Government will never face up. Honourable members heard the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies berating the Leader of the Opposition for alleged cowardice—a charge that cannot conceivably be made out. I say that the Government itself is too cowardly to face up to the real problem and tackle the abuse of union power which, more than anything else, is dragging down the State. Honourable members can be sure that when the months of October and November are long past, if the Government is still in power that running sore will still not be healed, just as the problems of rural decay and other problems in the public sector, the overgrowth problems to which I have referred will not be solved.

If it is true that a tax revolt is developing, and the people are revolting against the excessive taxation burdens that governments of all kinds are imposing upon them, that is one of the best signs one could find. It means that people are saying that they do not want big governments, and elephantine over-government; they want governments that are lean, taut and well muscled. The people want a government that deserves their support. They are beginning to say, if the Government does not really need to do it, it should not do it at all. If an activity is a commercial activity, it should be the preserve of the private sector and the Government should stay out of it. If that is the new mood of the people, it is only a matter of time before they start to learn the lesson that has been accepted by the Rt Hon. J. M. Fraser and his supporters in Canberra, courageously and truthfully, disregarding the hysteria of leader writers on newspapers. The real problem lies at the State level and not at the federal level. At the State level here there is no insight into the need for tax economy.

The Leader of the Opposition in New South Wales is absolutely on the right track when he makes it quite clear that the Liberal Party is committed to the concept of lower taxation and a tax rebate, which the new federalism policies of the Fraser Government make possible. That is one of the most heartening signs that has surfaced in the governmental sphere of the nation in recent times. The great tax spending culprits in government throughout Australia are largely at the State level in parliaments such as the Parliament of New South Wales. If the tax revolt is to become effective and a move is to be made towards smaller governments and bigger people, the taxpayers will have to start looking to the big State tax spenders.

I do not raise any great issue over whether the House passes this Supply Bill. What I do say is that the Government is running away from its responsibility to govern. That is the primary responsibility of any party that occupies the Treasury benches. Instead of frittering away question time in this House and running to the electors with expensive elections, the Government should do what it is elected to do—what it has been put in **government** to do—govern. If a government is given a three year term it should use it and get on with the business it is being paid to do. It should stop putting on to the taxpayer costs running into millions of dollars for unnecessary elections. Governments are elected to govern: let this Government get about that simple task.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Committee and Adoption of Report

Bill reported from Committee without amendment, and report adopted on motion by Mr Stewart on behalf of Mr Renshaw.

Mr Cameron]

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Stewart.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL
ACCOUNTS OF STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Message

Mr Speaker reported the receipt of the following message from the Legislative Council:

Mr Speaker—

The Legislative Council having had under consideration the Legislative Assembly's Message dated 16 August, 1978, agrees to the Resolution embodied therein relating to the appointment of a Joint Committee upon the public accounts and the financial accounts of Statutory Authorities.

(2) That the Representatives of the Legislative Council on the Joint Committee be the Honourable D. R. Burton, the Honourable W. L. Lange, the Honourable R. B. Raines and the Honourable J. S. Thompson, and fixes Wednesday, 23 August, 1978, at 10.30 a.m. in Legislative Assembly Committee Room No. 2 as the time and place for the first meeting.

(3) That, on this occasion, the Council agrees to waive its claim to equal representation on the Joint Committee and requests that its action in so doing should not be drawn into a precedent.

Legislative Council Chamber,
Sydney, 17 August, 1978.

HARRY BUDD,
President.

PRINTING COMMITTEE

First Report

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

House adjourned, on motion by Mr Stewart, at 4.12 p.m.
