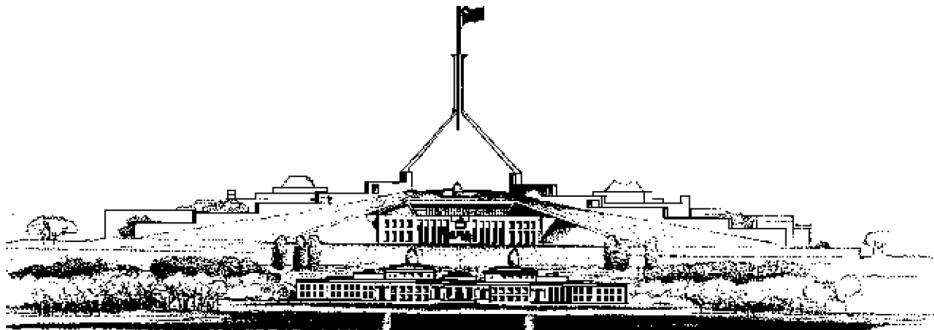




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



House of Representatives

Official Hansard

No. 38, 1974
Thursday, 19 September 1974

TWENTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUSTRALIA

TWENTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION: FIRST PERIOD

Governor-General

His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Paul Meernaa Caedwalla Hasluck, a member of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order, Knight of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia from 30 April 1969 to 10 July 1974.

His Excellency the Honourable Sir John Robert Kerr, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, one of Her Majesty's Counsel learned in the law, Governor-General of Australia and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Force of Australia from 11 July, 1974.

Second Whitlam Ministry

(From 12 June 1974)

Prime Minister	The Honourable Edward Gough Whitlam, Q.C.
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Overseas Trade	The Honourable James Ford Cairns
Minister for Minerals and Energy	The Honourable Reginald Francis Xavier Connor
Minister for Social Security	The Honourable William George Hayden
Leader of the Government in the Senate, Attorney-General and Minister for Customs and Excise	Senator the Honourable Lionel Keith Murphy, Q.C.
Minister for Foreign Affairs	Senator the Honourable Donald Robert Willesee
Treasurer	The Honourable Frank Crean
Minister for Services and Property and Leader of the House	The Honourable Frederick Michael Daly
Minister for the Media and Manager of Government Business in the Senate	Senator the Honourable Douglas McClelland
Minister for Defence	The Honourable Lance Herbert Barnard
Minister for Agriculture	Senator the Honourable Kenneth Shaw Wriedt
Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory	The Honourable Rex Alan Patterson
Minister for Labor and Immigration	The Honourable Clyde Robert Cameron
Minister for Education	The Honourable Kim Edward Beazley
Special Minister of State and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister in Matters Relating to the Public Service	The Honourable Lionel Frost Bowen
Minister for Repatriation and Compensation	Senator the Honourable John Murray Wheeldon
Minister for Urban and Regional Development	The Honourable Thomas Uren
Postmaster-General	Senator the Honourable Reginald Bishop
Minister for Housing and Construction	The Honourable Leslie Royston Johnson
Minister for Transport	The Honourable Charles Keith Jones
Minister for Health	The Honourable Douglas Nixon Everingham
Minister for Manufacturing Industry	The Honourable Keppel Earl Enderby, Q.C.
Minister for the Capital Territory	The Honourable Gordon Munro Bryant, E.D.
Minister for the Environment and Conservation	The Honourable Moses Henry Cass
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs	Senator the Honourable James Luke Cavanagh
Minister for Science, Minister Assisting the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Matters Relating to Papua New Guinea and Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence	The Honourable William Lawrence Morrison
Minister for Tourism and Recreation, Vice-President of the Executive Council and Minister Assisting the Treasurer	The Honourable Francis Eugene Stewart

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TWENTY NINTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION: FIRST PERIOD

Speaker—The Honourable James Francis Cope

Leader of the House—The Honourable Frederick Michael Daly

Chairman of Committees—Gordon Glen Denton Scholes

Deputy Chairmen of Committees—John Lindsay Armitage, Joseph Max Berinson,
Edward Nigel Drury, C.B.E., Geoffrey O'Halloran Giles,
Henry Alfred Jenkins, Anthony Sylvester Luchetti, Philip Ernest Lucock, C.B.E. and
Vincent Joseph Martin

Leader of the Opposition—The Right Honourable Billy Mackie Snedden, Q.C.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition—The Honourable Phillip Reginald Lynch

Leader of the Australian Country Party—The Right Honourable John Douglas Anthony

Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party—The Honourable Ian McCahon Sinclair

Adermann, Albert Evan	Fisher (Qld)
Anthony, Rt Hon. John Douglas	Richmond (N.S.W.)
Armitage, John Lindsay	Chifley (N.S.W.)
Barnard, Hon. Lance Herbert	Bass (Tas.)
Beazley, Hon. Kim Edward	Fremantle (W.A.)
Bennett, Adrian Frank	Swan (W.A.)
Berinson, Joseph Max	Perth (W.A.)
Bonnett, Robert Noel	Herbert (Qld)
Bourchier, John William	Bendigo (Vic.)
Bowen, Hon. Lionel Frost	Kingsford Smith (N.S.W.)
Bryant, Hon. Gordon Munro, E.D.	Wills (Vic.)
Bungey, Melville Harold	Canning (W.A.)
Cadman, Alan Glyndwr	Mitchell (N.S.W.)
Cairns, Hon. James Ford	Lalor (Vic.)
Cairns, Hon. Kevin Michael Kiernan	Lilley (Qld)
Calder, Stephen Edward, D.F.C.	Northern Territory
Cameron, Hon. Clyde Robert	Hindmarsh (S.A.)
Cameron, Donald Milner	Griffith (Qld)
Cass, Hon. Moses Henry	Maribyrnong (Vic.)
Child, Gloria Joan Liles	Henty (Vic.)
Chipp, Hon. Donald Leslie	Hotham (Vic.)
Clayton, Gareth	Isaacs (Vic.)
Coates, John	Denison (Tas.)
Cohen, Barry	Robertson (N.S.W.)
Collard, Frederick Walter	Kalgoorlie (W.A.)
Connolly, David Miles	Bradfield (N.S.W.)
Connor, Hon. Reginald Francis Xavier	Cunningham (N.S.W.)
Cope, Hon. James Francis	Sydney (N.S.W.)
Corbett, James	Maranoa (Qld)
Crean, Hon. Frank	Melbourne Ports (Vic.)
Cross, Mansfield Douglas	Brisbane (Qld)
Daly, Hon. Frederick Michael	Grayndler (N.S.W.)
Davies, Ronald	Braddon (Tas.)
Dawkins, John Sydney	Tangney (W.A.)
Drummond, Peter Hertford	Forrest (W.A.)
Drury, Edward Nigel, C.B.E.	Ryan (Qld)
Duthie, Gilbert William Arthur	Wilmot (Tas.)
Edwards, Harold Raymond	Berowra (N.S.W.)
Ellicott, Robert James, Q.C.	Wentworth (N.S.W.)
Enderby, Hon. Keppel Earl, Q.C.	Canberra (A.C.T.)
England, John Armstrong, E.D.	Calare (N.S.W.)
Erwin, Hon. George Dudley	Ballaarat (Vic.)
Everingham, Hon. Douglas Nixon	Capricornia (Qld)
Fairbairn, Hon. David Eric, D.F.C.	Farrer (N.S.W.)
Fisher, Peter Stanley	Mallee (Vic.)
FitzPatrick, John	Darling (N.S.W.)
Forbes, Dr the Hon. Alexander James, M.C.	Barker (S.A.)
Fraser, Hon. John Malcolm	Wannon (Vic.)
Fry, Kenneth Lionel	Fraser (A.C.T.)
Fulton, William John	Leichhardt (Qld)
Garland, Hon. Ransley Victor	Curtin (W.A.)
Garrick, Horace James	Batman (Vic.)
Giles, Geoffrey O'Halloran	Angas (S.A.)
Gorton, Rt Hon. John Grey, C.H.	Higgins (Vic.)
Graham, Bruce William	North Sydney (N.S.W.)
Gun, Richard Townsend	Kingston (S.A.)
Hayden, Hon. William George	Oxley (Qld)

Members of the House of Representatives

Hewson, Henry Arthur	McMillan (Vic.)
Hodges, John Charles	Petrie (Qld)
Holten, Hon. Rendle McNeilage	Indi (Vic.)
Howard, John Winston	Bennelong (N.S.W.)
Hunt, Hon. Ralph James Dunnet	Gwydir (N.S.W.)
Hurford, Christopher John	Adelaide (S.A.)
Hyde, John Martin	Moore (W.A.)
Innes, Urquhart Edward	Melbourne (Vic.)
Jacobi, Ralph	Hawker (S.A.)
James, Albert William	Hunter (N.S.W.)
Jarman, Alan William	Deakin (Vic.)
Jenkins, Henry Alfred	Scullin (Vic.)
Johnson, Leonard Keith	Burke (Vic.)
Johnson, Hon. Leslie Royston	Hughes (N.S.W.)
Jones, Hon. Charles Keith	Newcastle (N.S.W.)
Katter, Hon. Robert Cummin	Kennedy (Qld)
Keating, Paul John	Blaxland (N.S.W.)
Kelly, Hon. Charles Robert	Wakefield (S.A.)
Keogh, Leonard Joseph	Bowman (Qld)
Kerin, John Charles	Macarthur (N.S.W.)
Killen, Hon. Denis James	Moreton (Qld)
King, Hon. Robert Shannon	Wimmera (Vic.)
Klugman, Richard Emanuel	Prospect (N.S.W.)
Lamb, Anthony Hamilton	La Trobe (Vic.)
Lloyd, Bruce	Murray (Vic.)
Luchetti, Anthony Sylvester	Macquarie (N.S.W.)
Lucock, Philip Ernest, C.B.E.	Lyne (N.S.W.)
Lusher, Stephen Augustus	Hume (N.S.W.)
Lynch, Hon. Phillip Reginald	Flinders (Vic.)
MacKellar, Michael John Randal	Warringah (N.S.W.)
Macphee, Ian Malcolm	Balaclava (Vic.)
McKenzie, David Charles	Diamond Valley (Vic.)
McLeay, Hon. John Elden	Boothby (S.A.)
McMahon, Rt Hon. William, C.H.	Lowe (N.S.W.)
McVeigh, Daniel Thomas	Darling Downs (Qld)
Martin, Vincent Joseph	Banks (N.S.W.)
Mathews, Charles Race Thorson	Casey (Vic.)
Millar, Percival Clarence	Wide Bay (Qld)
Morris, Peter Frederick	Shortland (N.S.W.)
Morrison, Hon. William Lawrence	St George (N.S.W.)
Mulder, Allan William	Evans (N.S.W.)
Nicholls, Martin Henry	Bonython (S.A.)
Nixon, Hon. Peter James	Gippsland (Vic.)
O'Keefe, Frank Lionel	Paterson (N.S.W.)
Oldmeadow, Maxwell Wilkinson	Holt (Vic.)
Patterson, Hon. Rex Alan	Dawson (Qld)
Peacock, Hon. Andrew Sharp	Kooyong (Vic.)
Reynolds, Leonard James	Barton (N.S.W.)
Riordan, Joseph Martin	Phillip (N.S.W.)
Robinson, Eric Laidlaw	McPherson (Qld)
Robinson, Hon. Ian Louis	Cowper (N.S.W.)
Ruddock, Philip Maxwell	Parramatta (N.S.W.)
Scholes, Gordon Glen Denton	Corio (Vic.)
Sherry, Raymond Henry	Franklin (Tas.)
Sinclair, Hon. Ian McCahon	New England (N.S.W.)
Snedden, Rt Hon. Billy Mackie, Q.C.	Bruce (Vic.)
Staley, Anthony Allan	Chisholm (Vic.)
Stewart, Hon. Francis Eugene	Lang (N.S.W.)
Street, Hon. Anthony Austin	Corangamite (Vic.)
Sullivan, John William	Riverina (N.S.W.)
Thorburn, Ray William	Cook (N.S.W.)
Uren, Hon. Thomas	Reid (N.S.W.)
Viner, Robert Ian	Stirling (W.A.)
Wallis, Laurie George	Grey (S.A.)
Wentworth, Hon. William Charles	Mackellar (N.S.W.)
Whan, Robert Bruce	Eden Monaro (N.S.W.)
Whitlam, Hon. Edward Gough, Q.C.	Werriwa (N.S.W.)
Willis, Ralph	Gellibrand (Vic.)
Wilson, Ian Bonython Cameron	Sturt (S.A.)
Young, Michael Jerome	Port Adelaide (S.A.)

THE COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD)

STANDING COMMITTEES

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS—Mr Cross (*Chairman*), Mr Clayton, Mr Collard, Mr Dawkins, Mr Hunt, Mr Jarman, Mr Ruddock, Mr Thorburn, Mr Wentworth.

ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION—Dr Jenkins (*Chairman*), Mr Bourchier, Mr Kerin, Mr Lamb, Mr Morris, (from 15 October 1974), Mr Ian Robinson, Mr Sherry (to 15 October 1974), Mr Wilson.

HOUSE—Mr Speaker, Mr Berinson, Mr Bungey, Mr Donald Cameron, Mr Clayton, Mr Cohen, Mr Holt en.

LIBRARY—Mr Speaker, Mr Cross, Mr Erwin, Dr Klugman, Mr Luchetti, Mr O'Keefe, Mr Wentworth.

PRIVILEGES—Dr J. F. Cairns, Mr Donald Cameron, Mr Drury, Mr Enderby, Mr Innes, Dr Jenkins, Mr Lucock, Mr Scholes, Mr Viner.

PUBLICATIONS—Mr McKenzie (*Chairman*), Mr Erwin, Mr Hodges, Mr Lamb, Mr Mathews, Mr Millar, Mr Oldmeadow.

ROAD SAFETY—Mr Cohen (*Chairman*), Mr Bennett, Mr Erwin, Mr Katter, Dr Klugman, Mr McKenzie, Mr Ruddock.

STANDING ORDERS—Mr Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, the Leader of the House, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Anthony, Mr Berinson, Mr Bryant, Dr J. F. Cairns, Mr Drury, Mr Garland, Mr Sinclair.

JOINT STATUTORY COMMITTEES

BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS—Mr Speaker (*Chairman*), Mr President, Senator Coleman, Senator Webster, and Mr Donald Cameron, Mr Coates, Mr Duthie, Mr England, Mr Sherry.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS—Senator McAuliffe (*Chairman*), Senator Grimes, Senator Guilfoyle, and Mr Collard, Mr Connolly, Mr Graham, Mr Lusher, Mr Martin, Mr Morris, Mr Reynolds.

PUBLIC WORKS—Mr Keith Johnson (*Chairman*), Senator Jessop, Senator Melzer, Senator Poyser, and Mr Bonnett, Mr Garrick, Mr Kelly, Mr Keogh, Mr McVeigh.

JOINT COMMITTEES

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY—Senator Milliner (*Chairman*), Senator Sir Kenneth Anderson, Senator Devitt, Senator Marriott, and Mr Fisher, Mr Fry, Mr Howard, Mr Kerin, Mr Whan.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE—Senator Wheeldon (*Chairman*), Senator Carrick, Senator Drury, Senator McIntosh, Senator Maunsell, Senator Primmer, Senator Sim, and Mr Berinson, Mr Coates, Mr Connolly, Mr Corbett, Mr Cross, Mr Dawkins, Dr Forbes, Mr Fry, Mr Giles, Mr Kerin, Dr Klugman, Mr Lucock, Mr Oldmeadow, Mr Peacock.

NORTHERN TERRITORY—Mr James (*Chairman*), Senator Keeffe, Senator McLaren, Senator Marriott, Senator Sheil, and Mr Calder, Mr FitzPatrick, Mr Kelly, Mr Wallis.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SYSTEM—Mr Scholes (*Chairman*), Senator Sir Magnus Cormack, Senator Drake-Brockman, Senator Gietzelt, Senator McAuliffe, Senator Mulvihill, Senator Rae, and Mr Berinson, Mr Fairbairn, Dr Forbes, Dr Jenkins, Mr Ian Robinson, Mr Young.

PECUNIARY INTERESTS OF MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT—Mr Riordan (*Chairman*), Senator Georges, Senator James McClelland, Senator Marriott, Senator Webster, and Mr Keating, Mr Martin, Mr Nixon, Mr Eric Robinson.

PRICES—Mr Hurford (*Chairman*), Senator Chaney, Senator Coleman, Senator Gietzelt, Senator Scott, and Mrs Child, Mr Hodges, Mr Howard, Mr King, Mr Whan, Mr Willis.

SELECT COMMITTEES

SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES—Mr Mathews (*Chairman*), Mr Cadman, Dr Gun, Mr Innes, Mr McVeigh, Mr Oldmeadow, Mr Wilson.

PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS

SENATE

Clerk—J. R. Odgers, C.B.E.
Deputy Clerk—R. E. Bullock, O.B.E.
First Clerk-Assistant—K. O. Bradshaw
Clerk-Assistant—A. R. Cumming Thom
Principal Parliamentary Officer—H. C. Nicholls
Usher of the Black Rod—H. G. Smith

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Clerk of the House—N. J. Parkes, O.B.E.
Deputy Clerk of the House—J. A. Pettifer
First Clerk Assistant—D. M. Blake, V.R.D.
Clerk Assistant—A. R. Browning
Senior Parliamentary Officers—L. M. Barlin and I. C. Cochran
Serjeant-at-Arms Office—D. M. Piper

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTING STAFF

Principal Parliamentary Reporter—W. J. Bridgman
Assistant Principal Parliamentary Reporter—K. R. Ingram
Leader of Staff (House of Representatives)—G. R. Fraser
Leader of Staff (Senate)—J. F. Kerr

LIBRARY

Parliamentary Librarian—A. L. Moore, O.B.E.

JOINT HOUSE

Secretary—R. W. Hillyer

THE ACTS OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION: FIRST PERIOD)

- Aboriginal Land Fund Act 1974 (Act No. 159 of 1974)—
An Act to assist Aboriginal Communities to acquire Land outside Aboriginal Reserves.
- Aboriginal Loans Commission Act 1974 (Act No. 103 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Provision of Financial Assistance for certain Purposes conducive to the Advancement of the Aboriginal People of Australia.
- Adelaide to Crystal Brook Railway Act 1974 (Act No. 85 of 1974)—
An Act to approve an Agreement between the Australian Government and the Government of South Australia relating to the Construction of a Railway from Adelaide to Crystal Brook, and for other purposes.
- Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act 1974 (Act No. 115 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Aged Persons Homes Act* 1954–1973.
- Aged Persons Hostels Act 1974 (Act No. 131 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Aged Persons Hostels Act* 1972.
- Air Navigation Act 1974 (Act No. 124 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Air Navigation Act* 1920–1973 and for purposes connected therewith.
- Air Navigation (Charges) Act 1974 (Act No. 114 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Air Navigation (Charges) Act* 1952–1973, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Airline Equipment (Loan Guarantee) Act 1974 (Act No. 99 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Provision of certain Equipment for a Domestic Airline.
- Appropriation Act (No. 1) 1974–75 (Act No. 94 of 1974)—
An Act to appropriate certain sums out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending on 30 June 1975.
- Appropriation Act (No. 2) 1974–75 (Act No. 95 of 1974)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 1975.
- Appropriation (Urban Public Transport) Act 1974 (Act No. 158 of 1974)—
An Act to appropriate Moneys out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of Urban Public Transport.
- Arbitration (Foreign Awards and Agreements) Act 1974 (Act No. 136 of 1974)—
An Act to approve Accession by Australia to a Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards, to give effect to that Convention, and for related purposes.
- Asian Development Fund Act 1974 (Act No. 54 of 1974)—
An Act to Authorise certain Contributions by Australia to the Asian Development Bank for the purposes of an Asian Development Fund.
- Australian Development Assistance Agency Act 1974 (Act No. 137 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Provision by Australia of Aid for Developing Countries.
- Australian Shipping Commission Act 1974 (Act No. 83 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Australian Coastal Shipping Commission Act* 1956–1973.
- Australian Tourist Commission Act 1974 (Act No. 82 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Australian Tourist Commission Act* 1967–1973.
- Banking Act 1974 (Act No. 132 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Banking Act* 1959–1973, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Banks (Housing Loans) Act 1974 (Act No. 143 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Funds to enable Banks to make additional Loans for Housing, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Broadcasting and Television Act 1974 (Act No. 55 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Broadcasting and Television Act* 1942–1973 in relation to certain Licences, and for related purposes.
- Canberra Water Supply (Googong Dam) Act 1974 (Act No. 34 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Construction of a Dam on the Queanbeyan River in New South Wales and the Supply of Water from that Dam for use in the Australian Capital Territory, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Commonwealth Banks Act 1974 (Act No. 81 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Commonwealth Banks Act* 1959–1973 with respect to the Functions of the Development Bank and to the Remuneration of the Holders of Certain Offices.
- Commonwealth Electoral Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 38 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Distribution of the States into Electoral Divisions.
- Companies (Foreign Take-overs) Act 1974 (Act No. 141 of 1974)—
An Act to amend section 2 of the *Companies (Foreign Take-overs) Act* 1972–1973.
- Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act 1974 (Act No. 92 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act* 1971–1973, and for other purposes.

The Acts of the Session

- Conciliation and Arbitration (Organizations) Act 1974 (Act No. 89 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Law relating to Conciliation and Arbitration.
- Customs Act 1974 (Act No. 28 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Customs Act* 1901–1973.
- Customs Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 120 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Customs Act* 1901–1973, as amended by the Customs Act 1974.
- Customs Tariff 1974 (Act No. 117 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Duties of Customs.
- Customs Tariff (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 118 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Duties of Customs.
- Customs Tariff Validation Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 119 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for the Validation of certain Collections of Duties of Customs in accordance with Customs Tariff Proposals, and for related purposes.
- Customs Tariff Validation Act (No. 3) 1974 (Act No. 163 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for the Validation of Collections of Duties of Customs under Customs Tariff Proposals.
- Dairy Adjustment Act 1974 (Act No. 166 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Financial Assistance in connexion with Dairy Adjustment Programs.
- Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (Pension Increases) Act 1974 (Act No. 105 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for Increases in certain Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit Pensions.
- Defence Service Homes Act 1974 (Act No. 125 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Defence Service Homes Act* 1918–1973.
- Delivered Meals Subsidy Act 1974 (Act No. 108 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Delivered Meals Subsidy Act* 1970–1973.
- Election Candidates (Public Service and Defence Force) Act 1974 (Act No. 59 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Members of the Public Service and the Defence Force who become Candidates for election to the Legislative Assembly for the Northern Territory and similar Bodies for other Territories, and for related Purposes.
- Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1974 (Act No. 164 of 1974)—
An Act to make provision for Protection of the Environment in relation to Projects and Decisions of, or under the control of, the Australian Government, and for related purposes.
- Estate Duty Assessment Act 1974 (Act No. 130 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Law Relating to Estate Duty.
- Evidence Act 1974 (Act No. 31 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Evidence Act* 1905–1973.
- Excise Act 1974 (Act No. 29 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Excise Act* 1901–1973.
- Excise Tariff Act 1974 (Act No. 121 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Duties of Excise.
- Export Finance and Insurance Corporation Act 1974 (Act No. 122 of 1974)—
An Act to establish an Export Finance and Insurance Corporation.
- Export Market Development Grants Act 1974 (Act No. 154 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Grants for the purpose of providing Incentives for the Development of Export Markets.
- Extradition (Foreign States) Act 1974 (Act No. 21 of 1974)—
An Act to amend sections 10 and 21 of the *Extradition (Foreign States) Act* 1966–1973.
- Financial Corporations Act 1974 (Act No. 36 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Corporations engaged in certain Financial Operations.
- Glebe Lands (Appropriation) Act 1974 (Act No. 35 of 1974)—
An Act to appropriate the Consolidated Revenue Fund for purposes connected with the Purchase by Australia of certain Lands at Glebe in the State of New South Wales.
- Handicapped Persons Assistance Act 1974 (Act No. 134 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for Assistance by Australia towards the Provision of Facilities for Handicapped Children, Disabled Persons and certain other Persons.
- Health Insurance Act 1973 (Act No. 42 of 1974)—
An Act providing for Payments by way of Medical Benefits and payments for Hospital Services and for other purposes.
- Health Insurance Commission Act 1973 (Act No. 41 of 1974)—
An Act to constitute a Health Insurance Commission and for purposes connected therewith.
- Homeless Persons Assistance Act 1974 (Act No. 148 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Payments by Australia in respect of the Provision of Assistance for Homeless Persons and for certain other Persons.

The Acts of the Session

- Housing Agreement Act 1974 (Act No. 102 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Financial Assistance to the States for the purpose of Housing.
- Income Tax Act 1974 (Act No. 127 of 1974)—
An Act to impose a Tax upon Incomes.
- Income Tax Assessment Act 1974 (Act No. 26 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Law relating to Income Tax.
- Income Tax Assessment Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 126 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Law relating to Income Tax.
- Income Tax (Bearer Debentures) Act 1974 (Act No. 128 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Income Tax (Bearer Debentures) Act* 1971.
- Income Tax (Dividends and Interest Withholding Tax) Act 1974 (Act No. 27 of 1974)—
An Act to impose Income Tax upon certain Dividends and Interest derived by Non-residents and by certain other Persons.
- Income Tax (International Agreements) Act 1974 (Act No. 129 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Income Tax (International Agreements) Act* 1953–1973.
- International Development Association (Further Payment) Act 1974 (No. 142 of 1974)—
An Act to approve the making by Australia of a further Payment to the International Development Association.
- International Monetary Agreements Act 1974 (Act No. 22 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize Australia to Subscribe for Additional Shares of the Capital Stock of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- Judges' Pensions Act 1974 (Act No. 162 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Judges' Pensions Act* 1968–1973 in relation to certain Persons who are or have been Judges of the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea.
- Julius Dam Agreement Act 1974 (Act No. 72 of 1974)—
An Act relating to an Agreement between Australia and the State of Queensland in respect of the Construction of a Dam, to be known as the Julius Dam, on the Leichhardt River.
- King Island Shipping Service Agreement Act 1974 (Act No. 149 of 1974)—
An Act relating to an Agreement between Australia and Tasmania in respect of Financial Assistance to Tasmania in connexion with a Shipping Service to King Island.
- Liquefied Gas (Road Vehicle Use) Tax Act 1974 (Act No. 76 of 1974)—
An Act to impose a Tax on the use, for the purpose of propelling Road Vehicles, of Liquefied Gas.
- Liquefied Gas (Road Vehicle Use) Tax Collection Act 1974 (Act No. 77 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Taxation imposed on the use, for the purpose of propelling Road Vehicles, of Liquefied Gas.
- Live-stock Slaughter Levy Act 1974 (Act No. 111 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Live-stock Slaughter Levy Act* 1964–1973.
- Live-stock Slaughter Levy Collection Act 1974 (Act No. 112 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Live-stock Slaughter Levy Collection Act* 1964–1973.
- Loan Act 1974 (Act No. 144 of 1974)—
An Act to Authorize the Raising and Expenditure of Moneys for Defence Purposes.
- Loans (Australian Industry Development Corporation) Act 1974 (Act No. 156 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize the Raising of a certain sum of Money and to authorize Australia to make certain Moneys available to the Australian Industry Development Corporation, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Loans (Australian National Airlines Commission) Act 1974 (Act No. 97 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize the Raising of a certain sum of Money and to authorize Australia to make certain moneys available to the Australian National Airlines Commission, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Loans (Qantas Airways Limited) Act 1974 (Act No. 98 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize the Raising of a certain sum of Money and to authorize Australia to make certain Moneys available to Qantas Airways Limited, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Local Government Grants Act 1974 (Act No. 100 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance in relation to Local Governing Bodies.
- Marginal Dairy Farms Agreements Act 1974 (Act No. 49 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Marginal Dairy Farms Agreements Act* 1970.
- National Health Act 1974 (Act No. 37 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *National Health Act* 1953–1973 in relation to Registered Organizations.
- National Roads Act 1974 (Act No. 52 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to the Construction and Maintenance of National Roads.
- Nitrogenous Fertilizers Subsidy Act 1974 (Act No. 78 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Nitrogenous Fertilizers Subsidy Act* 1966–1973.

The Acts of the Session

Northern Territory (Administration) Act 1974 (Act No. 30 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Northern Territory (Administration) Act 1910–1973*, and for other purposes.

Nursing Homes Assistance Act 1974 (Act No. 147 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Financial Assistance in respect of Nursing Homes.

Papua New Guinea Act 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Papua New Guinea Act 1949–1973*.

Papua New Guinea Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 161 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Papua New Guinea.

Papua New Guinea Loan (International Bank) Act 1974 (Act No. 87 of 1974)—
An Act to approve the Guarantee by Australia of the Discharge of the Obligations of the Government of Papua New Guinea under a Loan Agreement made with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and for purposes connected therewith.

Papua New Guinea Loans Guarantee Act 1974 (Act No. 88 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for the Giving of Guarantees by Australia with respect to Loans to be raised Overseas by Papua New Guinea, and for purposes connected therewith.

Parliament Act 1974 (Act No. 165 of 1974)—
An Act to determine the site of the New and Permanent Parliament House, and for other purposes.

Parliamentary Papers Act 1974 (Act No. 33 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Parliamentary Papers Act 1908–1963*.

Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1974 (Act No. 32 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1946–1973*.

Pay-roll Tax (Territories) Act 1974 (Act No. 109 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Pay-roll Tax (Territories) Act 1971–1973*.

Petroleum and Minerals Authority Act 1973 (Act No. 43 of 1974)—
An Act to establish a Petroleum and Minerals Authority.

Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1974 (Act No. 57 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1967–1973* in relation to Papua New Guinea.

Post and Telegraph Act 1974 (Act No. 61 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Post and Telegraph Act 1901–1973* and certain Regulations under that Act.

Post and Telegraph Rates Act 1974 (Act No. 60 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Post and Telegraph Rates Act 1902–1973*.

Prices Justification Act 1974 (Act No. 47 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Prices Justification Acts 1973*.

Public Works Committee Act 1974 (Act No. 48 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Public Works Committee Act 1969–1973*.

Queensland Grant (Bundaberg Irrigation Works) Act 1974 (Act No. 113 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Queensland Grant (Bundaberg Irrigation Works) Act 1970*.

Queensland Grant (Clare Weir) Act 1974 (Act No. 123 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to Queensland in connexion with the Construction of a Weir on the Burdekin River near Clare.

Queensland Grant (Proserpine Flood Mitigation) Act 1974 (Act No. 116 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to Queensland for the purpose of Flood Mitigation Works in relation to the Proserpine River.

Queensland Grant (Ross River Dam) Act 1974 (Act No. 71 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the State of Queensland in connexion with the Construction of the Second Stage of the Ross River Dam in that State.

Remuneration Tribunals Act 1974 (Act No. 80 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973*.

Repatriation Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 24 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Repatriation Act 1920–1973*, as amended by the *Repatriation Act 1974*, and to appropriate the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of certain payments resulting from those amendments.

Repatriation Acts Amendment Act 1974 (Act No. 90 of 1974)—
An Act Relating to Repatriation and related matters.

Representation Act 1973 (Act No. 40 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Representation Act 1905–1964*.

River Murray Waters Act 1974 (Act No. 146 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *River Murray Waters Act 1915–1973*.

Roads Grants Act 1974 (Act No. 53 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to Roads other than National Roads.

Seamen's Compensation Act 1974 (Act No. 93 of 1974)—
An Act to increase certain Amounts of Compensation payable to and in respect of Seamen.

The Acts of the Session

- Seamen's War Pensions and Allowances Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 25 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Seamen's War Pensions and Allowances Act 1940–1973*, as amended by the *Seamen's War Pensions and Allowances Act 1974*.
- Senate (Representation of Territories) Act 1973 (Act No. 39 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for the Representation in the Senate of the Australian Capital Territory, the Jervis Bay Territory and the Northern Territory of Australia.
- Service and Execution of Process Act 1974 (Act No. 96 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Service and Execution of Process Act 1901–1973*.
- Sewerage Agreements Act 1974 (Act No. 73 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Agreements between Australia and the States of Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia in respect of the Provision of further Financial Assistance for Sewerage Works in those States.
- Social Services Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 23 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Social Services.
- Social Services Act (No. 3) 1974 (Act No. 91 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Social Services.
- States Grants (Aboriginal Assistance) Act 1974 (Act No. 104 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to the Aboriginal People of Australia.
- States Grants Act 1974 (Act No. 84 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *States Grants Act 1973* to grant additional Financial Assistance to the State of Tasmania.
- States Grants (Advanced Education) Act 1974 (Act No. 140 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *States Grants (Advanced Education) Act 1972–1973*.
- States Grants (Beef Cattle Roads) Act 1974 (Act No. 74 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *States Grants (Beef Cattle Roads) Act 1968*.
- States Grants (Capital Assistance) Act 1974 (Act No. 106 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in connexion with Expenditure of a Capital Nature and to Authorize the Borrowing of Certain Moneys by the Australian Government.
- States Grants (Dwellings for Pensioners) Act 1974 (Act No. 160 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in connexion with the Provision of Self-contained Dwellings for certain Pensioners.
- States Grants (Fruit-growing Reconstruction) Act 1974 (Act No. 157 of 1974)—
An Act relating to an Agreement between Australia and the States with respect to the Provision of further Assistance to Persons engaged in Fruit-growing.
- States Grants (Housing Assistance) Act 1974 (Act No. 101 of 1974)—
An Act to Authorize Advances to the States of Financial Assistance in connexion with Housing and to Authorize the Borrowing of Certain Moneys by the Treasurer.
- States Grants (Nature Conservation) Act 1974 (Act No. 151 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Financial Assistance to the States for Purposes connected with Nature Conservation.
- States Grants (Schools) Act 1974 (Act No. 110 of 1974)—
An Act to Increase the Financial Assistance payable to the States in relation to Schools.
- States Grants (Soil Conservation) Act 1974 (Act No. 150 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Financial Assistance to the States for Purposes connected with Soil Conservation.
- States Grants (Special Assistance) Act 1974 (Act No. 107 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to Queensland and South Australia.
- States Grants (Technical and Further Education) Act 1974 (Act No. 138 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Grant of Financial Assistance to the States in Connection with Technical and Further Education.
- States Grants (Universities) Act 1974 (Act No. 75 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Grant of Financial Assistance in Connexion with Universities.
- States Grants (Universities) Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 139 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *States Grants (Universities) Act 1972–1973*, as amended by the *States Grants (Universities) Act 1974*.
- States Grants (Urban Public Transport) Act 1974 (Act No. 45 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Financial Assistance to the States for the purpose of Urban Public Transport.
- States Grants (Water Resources Assessment) Act 1974 (Act No. 145 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *States Grants (Water Resources Measurement) Act 1973*.
- Statute Law Revision Act 1974 (Act No. 20 of 1974)—
An Act for the purposes of Statute Law Revision.
- Stevedoring Industry (Temporary Provisions) Act 1974 (Act No. 44 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Stevedoring Industry.

The Acts of the Session

- Structural Adjustment (Loan Guarantees) Act 1974 (Act No. 155 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize the giving of Guarantees on behalf of Australia in respect of Loans made for the purposes of Structural Adjustment in Industry.
- Tarcoola to Alice Springs Railway Act 1974 (Act No. 86 of 1974)—
An Act to Approve an Agreement between the Australian Government and the Government of South Australia relating to the Construction of a Railway from Tarcoola to Alice Springs, and for other purposes.
- Taxation Administration Act 1974 (Act No. 133 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Taxation Administration Act* 1953–1973.
- Trade Practices Act 1974 (Act No. 51 of 1974)—
An Act relating to certain Trade Practices.
- Transport (Planning and Research) Act 1974 (Act No. 50 of 1974)—
An Act to make Provision with respect to Planning and Research in connexion with Transport.
- Universities Commission Act 1974 (Act No. 79 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Australian Universities Commission Act* 1959–1973.
- Urban and Regional Development (Financial Assistance) Act 1974 (Act No. 135 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Financial Assistance to the States for Purposes connected with Urban and Regional Development.
- Urban Public Transport (Research and Planning) Act 1974 (Act No. 46 of 1974)—
An Act to make Provision with respect to Research and Planning in connexion with Urban Public Transport.
- Wheat Export Charge Act 1974 (Act No. 64 of 1974)—
An Act to impose a Charge in respect of Wheat and Wheat Products exported from Australia.
- Wheat Industry Stabilization Act 1974 (Act No. 62 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Marketing of Wheat and the Stabilization of the Wheat Industry.
- Wheat Products Export Adjustment Act 1974 (Act No. 63 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize the Australian Wheat Board to require the making of certain Payments in respect of the Export of Wheat Products.
- Wool Industry Act 1974 (Act No. 65 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Industry Act* 1972–1973.
- Wool Industry Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 152 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Industry Act* 1972–1973.
- Wool Marketing (Loan) Act 1974 (Act No. 58 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize certain Advances to the Australian Wool Corporation and to authorize the Borrowing of certain Moneys by the Treasurer.
- Wool Marketing (Loan) Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 153 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Marketing (Loan) Act* 1974.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 1) 1974 (Act No. 66 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 1)* 1964–1973.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 67 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 2)* 1964–1973.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 3) 1974 (Act No. 68 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 3)* 1964–1973.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 4) 1974 (Act No. 69 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 4)* 1964–1973.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 5) 1974 (Act No. 70 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 5)* 1964–1973.

THE BILLS OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD)

Audit Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Australia Council Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Australian Industry Development Corporation Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Book Bounty Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Australian Film Commission Bill 1974—

Initiated in the Senate. Passed by the House of Representatives. Returned to the Senate.

Broadcasting and Television Bill (No. 2) 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Broadcasting Stations Licence Fees Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Conciliation and Arbitration Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Conciliation and Arbitration Bill (No. 2) 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Electoral Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading

Electoral Laws Amendment Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Health Insurance Levy Bill (No. 2) 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Health Insurance Levy Assessment Bill (No. 2) 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Income Tax (International Agreements) Bill (No. 3) 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Industries Assistance Commission Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

National Compensation Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives.

National Investment Fund Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Northern Territory (Stabilization of Land Prices) Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Phosphate Fertilizers Bounty Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Refrigeration Compressors Bounty Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Stevedoring Industry Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Superior Court of Australia Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Television Stations Licence Fees Bill 1974—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Remuneration and Allowances Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

THE PARLIAMENT CONVENED
TWENTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION

The Parliament was convened by the following proclamation (Gazette No. 52A of 1974):

PROCLAMATION

Australia
PAUL HASLUCK
Governor-General

By His Excellency the
Governor-General of
Australia

WHEREAS by the Constitution it is, amongst other things, provided that the Governor-General may appoint such times for holding the sessions of the Parliament as he thinks fit:

Now therefore, I, Sir Paul Meernaa Caedwalla Hasluck, the Governor-General of Australia, do by this my Proclamation appoint Tuesday, 9 July 1974, as the day for the Parliament to assemble for the despatch of business:

And all Senators and Members of the House of Representatives are hereby required to give their attendance accordingly at Parliament House, Canberra, at 10.30 o'clock in the morning, on Tuesday, 9 July 1974.

Given under my Hand on 25 June 1974,

By His Excellency's Command,

E. G. WHITLAM
Prime Minister

CONTENTS

THURSDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 1974

CHAMBER

Petitions

Television: Pornographic Material	1525
Universal Health Scheme	1525
Child Endowment	1525
Aid for Sahelian Region of Africa	1525
Baltic States	1526
Family Law Bill	1526
Human Rights Bill	1526
Television and Cinema Programs	1526
Baltic States	1526
Question INDIA'S NUCLEAR TEST	1527
Question MAINLINE CORPORATION	1527
Question CAPITAL GAINS TAX	1527
Question COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA	1528
Question HOUSING INDUSTRY ACTIVITY	1529
Question PORT OF NEWCASTLE	1529
Question EDUCATION: NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS	1530
Question GEORGI ERMOLENKO	1530
Question MAINLINE CORPORATION	1530
Academic Salaries	1531
Question PROPOSED FUEL AND ENERGY LEGISLATION IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA	1531
Question ACCOMMODATION FOR THE AGED	1532
Question ELECTORAL ACT	1532
Question CAPITAL GAINS TAX	1534
Prices Justification Tribunal	1534
United Nations Conference On The Law Of The Sea	1534
Primary Industry Reports	1534
Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation	1534
Bureau Of Transport Economics	1534
Hospital And Health Services Commission	1534
Supply 1974	1534
Weapons Research Establishment	1534
Question INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE	1534
National Estate Ministerial Statement	1535
Alleged Indemnity Payments Involving Maritime Unions Discussion of Matter of Public Importance	1538
Inquiry Into Alleged Payments To Maritime Unions	1540
Question TERMS OF REFERENCE	1540
Grievance Debate	1553
Question JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRICES	1556
Nitrogenous Fertilisers Subsidy Bill 1974 Second Reading	1558
Papua New Guinea Loan (International Bank) Bill 1974 Second Reading	1559

Wool Marketing (Loan) Bill 1974	
Second Reading.....	1560
States Grants (Beef Cattle Roads) Bill 1974	
Second Reading.....	1561
Universities Commission Bill 1974	
Second Reading.....	1561
Remuneration Tribunals Bill 1974	
Second Reading.....	1562
Post And Telegraph Rates Bill	
Second Reading.....	1564
Third Reading	1594
Post And Telegraph Bill (No. 2) 1974	
Second Reading.....	1594
Third Reading	1594
Children's Commission	
Ministerial Statement	1594
Personal Explanation.....	1595
Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill 1974	
Second Reading.....	1595
Third Reading	1621
Wheat Products Export Adjustment Bill 1974	
Second Reading.....	1621
Third Reading	1621
Wheat Export Charge Bill 1974	
Second Reading.....	1621
Third Reading	1621
Adjournment	
Family Welfare Bureau- Australian	1621
Industry -Unemployment-Steel -Electoral.....	1621

QUESTIONS IN WRITING

Answers To Questions Upon Notice

Australian Capital Territory: Land Leases (Question No. 492).....	1627
Victoria: Electoral Subdivisions (Question No. 501)	1627
Australian Servicemen: Foreign Awards (Question No. 507)	1631
Public Service: Coombs Report (Question No. 543).....	1632
Fire Fighting Procedures (Question No. 548).....	1632
Australian Capital Territory Housing: Inter-departmental Committee (Question No. 580).....	1634
State Schools: Costs (Question No. 596).....	1634
Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly (Question No. 599).....	1634
Industrial Inspectors (Question No. 600).....	1634
Ministerial Stan's: Appointment of Relatives (Question No. 659)	1634
Carnarvon-Space Tracking Station (Question No. 701)	1635
Island Lagoon- Tracking Station (Question No. 702).....	1635
Elections: Postal Votes (Question No. 704)	1635
Electoral Divisions (Question No. 708).....	1637
Elections: Informal Votes (Question No. 709)	1638
Australian Capital Territory: Child Care Services and Facilities (Question No. 716).....	1641
Tuggeranong: Housing (Question No. 724)	1641
Australian Capital Territory: Increased Land Rates (Question No. 717)	1642
Queensland Floods: Public Service Volunteers (Question No. 742).....	1642
Palmerston Freeway (Question No. 761).....	1642
Department of Overseas Trade: Management Consultant Firms (Question No. 789)	1643
Department of Labor and Immigration: Management Consultant Firms (Question No. 802).....	1643
Department of Education: Management Consultant Firms (Question No. 803)	1643
Norfolk Island (Question No. 846).....	1644
Industries: Australian Ownership and Control (Question No. 850).....	1644
Election Campaign: Secretarial Assistance (Question No. 853)	1644
Australian Council For The Arts	1645
Public Service Board	
Attorney-General's Department: Research and Development Staff (Question No. 864)	1645
Department of Customs and Excise: Research and Development Staff (Question No. 865)	1646
Christmas Island (Question No. 927)	1646
Australian Advisory Committee on the Environment (Question No. 936)	1646
Stevedoring Industry (Question No. 939).....	1647

Thursday, 19 September 1974

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. J. F. Cope) took the chair at 10 a.m., and read prayers.

PETITIONS

The CLERK—Petitions have been lodged for presentation as follows and copies will be referred to the appropriate Ministers:

Television: Pornographic Material

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully sheweth:

That we strongly oppose the easing of restrictions on the importation, production in Australia, sale or distribution of pornographic material whether in films, printed matter or any other format.

That any alterations to the Television Programme Standards of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board which permits the exploitation of sex or violence is unacceptable to us.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Government will take no measures to interfere with the existing Television Programme Standards or to permit easier entry into Australia, or production in Australia, of pornographic material.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Dr Edwards, Mr Fairbairn and Mr Luchetti.
Petitions received.

Universal Health Scheme

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled.

The humble petition of undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully sheweth:

That the proposed Universal Health Scheme is essential to the well being of all Australians, in so far as it will—

- (i) Provide that all Australians irrespective of their means will have access to a high standard of health care.
- (ii) Every Australian will be automatically covered for doctors' and hospital bills thus ensuring that citizens will not longer be burdened with additional psychological strains because of inability to meet the high cost of medical treatment.
- (iii) It is committed, in principle, towards the ideal that an individual's contribution to the cost of health services should be based on his or her capacity to pay—that people who derive the most financial benefit from our society should give the most for its support.
- (iv) It guarantees freedom of choice so that every Australian will be able to attend the doctor or hospital of his or her own choice.
- (v) In the long term it will take the politics out of medical care and will thereby allow dedicated members of the medical profession to return to the occupation of their

choice—The care of the ill and the prevention of disease.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Government will hasten to introduce this much needed scheme so that health care services in Australia can begin to function equitably, efficiently, and economically.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.
by Mr Martin, Mr Morris and Mr Reynolds.

Petitions received.

Child Endowment

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully sheweth that:

Child Endowment received by families has declined relative to average earnings so that today it is about 20 per cent of its value in 1949.

The Interim Report of the Australian Government's Commission Into Poverty recommended a substantial increase in Child Endowment as a way of alleviating poverty.

This report pointed out that increased Child Endowment deserved priority and would be advantageous to the community in the long run.

It specifically recommended increasing child endowment

from 50 cents to \$1.50 for the first child;
from \$1.00 to \$2.00 for the second child;
from \$2.00 to \$4.00 for the third child;
from \$2.25 to \$7.00 for the fourth child;
and to \$8.00 for subsequent children.

Your petitioners humbly request that the Government increase Child Endowment in the September Budget.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Dr Edwards.

Petitions received.

Aid for Sahelian Region of Africa

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully sheweth:

That up to ten million people are said by the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Kurt Waldheim, to face death by starvation in the Sahelian region of Africa and that as a result of this drought, many nomads are being forced to give up their traditional way of life, and

That the resources of the Governments of this region are inadequate to cope with either the immediate or long-term needs of these people.

We your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the House urge that the Australian Government grant both immediate emergency aid to a value of at least ten million dollars and continue to assist in the long-term agricultural and social development of this region.

And that it take a leading part in initiatives to set up a World Food Fund and World Fertilizer Fund at the World Food Conference this November.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Dr J. F. Cairns.

Petition received.

Baltic States

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully showeth:

Whereas according to the principles embodied in the United Nations charter the right to self-determination belongs to every nation, big or small, the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been deprived of it for 30 years by the Soviet Union. Whilst all Australian Governments hitherto have not recognized the Soviet sovereignty over these States, the Prime Minister has now made a single handed decision to grant such recognition. The undersigned petitioners wish to express their concern and dismay and humbly beg that such a decision be reversed.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Clyde Cameron.

Petition received.

Family Law Bill

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives, in Parliament assembled.

The petition of the Undersigned, being citizens of Australia, respectfully showeth:

That we strongly oppose The Family Law Bill, 1974, which is being introduced into our Federal Parliament by The Honourable The Attorney General, Senator Lionel Murphy, because of the absence of protection for the human family in its natural and traditional constitution as the basic unit, the ostensibly permanent unit of human society.

We oppose the Bill because of the omission of a clearly defined clause like that which is incorporated in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and which declares that both men and women shall have equal rights in marriage and that Parents shall have the right to choose their children's education.

We oppose the Bill which is accredited to Senator Murphy, because either of the parties to a marriage, if the Bill becomes law, will have no defence, i.e., no legal objection, to a divorce which might be desired and instituted by the other party. In this conception of law, there is no justice, no humanity, and no recognition of the traditionally accepted standard of marriage and the Family, but there is a tremendously noticeable backward step in the civilisation of Australian people.

Whilst we oppose the Bill for abovementioned reasons, we see it as expressing the views of an individual, or the views of a minority of citizens or their Representatives, instead of the views of the majority of Australians. Therefore, we beg the rejection, and not the passing of this Bill.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Kevin Cairns.

Petition received.

Human Rights Bill

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully showeth that the Human Rights Bill

- (a) Insofar as it attempts to legislate regarding the exercise of religion and religious observances, is in contravention of Section 116 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia,
 - (b) Will tend to deprive free Australian citizens of religious liberty and freedom of worship, and parents and guardians of the right to choose the moral and religious education of their children in that:
- (1) The Government could introduce regulations as to the time, place and manner in which people may manifest their religion and beliefs.
 - (2) The Bill excludes the recognition of the family as the natural and fundamental group unit of society, and its right to protection by society and the State,
 - (3) The Bill does not explicitly recognise the liberty of parents, and when applicable, legal guardians, to ensure the religious and moral education of their children.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the House not proceed with the Human Rights Bill.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Hodges.

Petition received.

Television and Cinema Programs

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives in Parliament Assembled.

The humble petition of undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully showeth:—

That grave concern is felt regarding the quality of television and cinema.

That many of the films shown are detrimental to the healthy development of the character of the young people of our nation.

That the low moral standards in many films are repulsive to many viewers.

Your petitioners, therefore humbly pray, that the Government will take measures to upgrade the quality of television programmes and ban the undesirable films from our cinemas.

by Mr Lloyd.

Petition received.

Baltic States

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully showeth:

The undersigned petitioners wish to express their concern and dismay at the announced decision of the Prime Minister of Australia to recognize the annexation of the three Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania by the Soviet Union. We submit that these once free and independent States were occupied by force of arms following a secret agreement between Hitler and Stalin and that the Australian Government's recognition of such Soviet annexation amounts to approval of the said agreement and of aggression and beg the Parliament to disallow such recognition as a matter of principle.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.
by Mr Young.

Petition received.

INDIA'S NUCLEAR TEST

Mr DRURY—I ask the Prime Minister whether the Government has received details of the nuclear bomb explosion testing reported to have taken place in India about 3 months ago. As the success of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty depends on the effective containment of nuclear testing, I ask whether Australia has made any protest.

Mr WHITLAM—The Government has been in touch with the Indian Government about the peaceful nuclear explosion which it conducted.

Mr Anthony—What! A peaceful one!

Mr WHITLAM—An experimental explosion to develop the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Needless to say the Government is disappointed that the Indian Government acted as it did. Australia is not the only government which is disappointed that India so acted. In particular, we have been in touch also with the Canadian Government and the American Government about it. I have been in personal correspondence with Mrs Gandhi about it. All I should add is that we do not believe that the long sustained effort which many nations have made to secure acceptance for the nuclear non-proliferation treaty has been in any way assisted. It may, in fact, have been set back by the Indian experiment.

MAINLINE CORPORATION

Mr JACOBI—I address my question to the Minister representing the Attorney-General. It is in relation to the Mainline Corporation. Is the Minister aware of reports that Mr R. T. Baker, Managing Director of Mainline Corporation, has been involved with the Endurance Mining Co. which has been the subject of investigation by the New South Wales Corporate Affairs Commission? Is it a fact that the report of the Commission has been suppressed? Will the Minister request the Attorney-General to obtain a copy of the report, and will he further take steps to ensure that the report is made public?

Mr ENDERBY—I have seen reports such as have been referred to by the honourable member. I think it would not be proper to make comment on them at this stage, but one can only be concerned about the lessons that can be drawn from a situation such as was revealed by the Mainline incident. As was pointed out, I think by the Prime Minister yesterday, in a

speech he made in this House, some of the greatest corporations, some of the most eminent and highly placed businessmen in Australia—

Mr Whitlam—Insurance companies and banks.

Mr ENDERBY—Insurance companies and people, whose solvency and liquidity is just not in issue and never could be in issue, for reasons of achieving their purposes put together a corporate device to extend and further those purposes. When the corporate device failed to serve the purpose to their convenience, they allowed to happen what did happen. I believe it can only be thought and said that there is something quite immoral about corporate behaviour or the use of the corporate screen—the limited liability company—in that way when it brings such hardship on so many people. So far as the direct aspect of the honourable member's question is concerned, I do not know whether the report was suppressed or not, but certainly it is my belief that it was never made public. 'Suppression' seems to be a fair comment and I believe that such reports should be released and made public so that the public themselves can be better protected. I will be happy to communicate with the Attorney-General and put a strong suggestion to him along the lines put by the honourable member.

CAPITAL GAINS TAX

Mr STREET—My question is directed to the Treasurer. When a farm property passes in direct succession to children or a surviving spouse, will the person or persons to whom the property is assigned be liable for capital gains tax in addition to estate and probate duties? If such people are liable, will the amount of capital gains tax levied be allowed as a deduction in calculating estate and probate duties?

Mr CREAN—The other evening when this matter was mentioned in the Budget Speech, I indicated that a memorandum was available that set out in broad detail some of these problems. I think the honourable member will understand that these are matters of some complexity. As far as farm property is concerned, I hope he will appreciate the fact that valuation day was on Budget day. I doubt, listening to the whingeing of farmers, whether any of them anticipate great capital gains on their properties in the immediate future, but I would suggest that when the relevant Bill is introduced somewhat later in the session these matters will be dealt with.

Mr Snedden—What is your intention? Surely you must be able to say whether capital gains tax will be deducted from the value of the property.

Mr CREAN—I am not like the Leader of the Opposition, who makes statements with precision in areas where you cannot be precise. I think the honourable member for Corangamite will acknowledge that he scarcely asked what might be called a precise question.

Mr Snedden—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. If the Treasurer did not appreciate that the question was precise, perhaps the honourable member for Corangamite could re-ask the question so that the Treasurer can hear that it is a precise question.

Mr CREAN—I would be happy if that were done.

Mr STREET—Mr Speaker, I asked: When a farm property passes in direct succession to children or a surviving spouse, will the person or persons to whom the property is assigned be liable for capital gains tax in addition to estate and probate duties? If such people are liable, will the amount of capital gains tax levied be allowed as a deduction in calculating estate and probate duties?

Dr Forbes—Even I can understand it.

Mr CREAN—It must be terribly simple. All I am suggesting is that the question is not as simple as that. The capital gains tax would not be payable by the person to whom the property was assigned; it would be paid by the person who presumably had died.

Mr Snedden—How could a person who has died pay tax?

Mr CREAN—Apparently honourable members opposite find this subject to be a matter of jest. I would submit with all respect that the Leader of the Opposition knows nothing whatever about the matter. As has been indicated, I have merely shown in broad outline what the situation will be. There are going to be some difficulties administratively.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Would it be possible, with the permission of the Treasurer, for the question to be redirected to the Minister for Overseas Trade?

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

Mr CREAN—I took it that when the honourable member for Corangamite, whom I respect, asked the question he asked it seriously. I cannot say that I appreciate the tactics of either the Leader of the Opposition or the honourable member for Wannon in relation to my attempt to answer the question. All I am suggesting is that it is not easy to be precise about the matter. The honourable gentleman referred to a property

which had been assigned. I am not quite sure when the assignation took place. Then he referred to probate, which implies the death of some party.

Dr Forbes—Estate duty.

Mr CREAN—Or estate duty, but not gift duty. The honourable member for Corangamite did not say gift duty; he said estate duty. So at least there has been the death of a party. I am not like the honourable member for Barker; I do not think it is quite as simple as that. From what the honourable member for Corangamite said I am not clear who assigned the farm to whom and at what stage. With all respect I would suggest that it is the sort of question on which the honourable member could have given me some notice or which he could have placed on notice so that I could give him a much more precise reply.

Mr Snedden—But you must know whether any capital gains tax paid is deductible.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Interjections are out of order. The question has been asked by the honourable member for Corangamite.

Mr CREAN—Capital gains tax, if one wants simplicity, is payable on any realised gain from 18 September. I am suggesting that the matter is not clear—at least it is not clear to me. I may be duller than most, and maybe it is my understanding rather than his phrasing that has caused the difficulty, but from the question asked by the honourable member for Corangamite, it is not clear to me at what point and in whose hands the capital gain is supposed to have crystallised. The honourable gentleman went on further to talk about an estate duty, presumably also in relation to the same capital gain. I must say that I am not clear from the question what I am being asked.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Mr ANTHONY—I ask the Prime Minister: What action has he or his Government taken in response to the announcement by the President of the Communist Party of Australia, Mr Mundey, that the Communist Party is planning a national strike next year? Is a close watch being made of the Party's activities?

Mr WHITLAM—My colleagues and I gave the declaration as much attention as it deserved. The communist parties—there are about 3 in Australia at the moment—have never been so politically insignificant and we believe that the trade union movement has never been in better hands.

HOUSING INDUSTRY ACTIVITY

Mr REYNOLDS—Has the attention of the Minister for Housing and Construction been drawn to recent statements by Mr Pietersen of the Housing Industry Association that there is a serious downturn in activities in the building industry? Does the Minister's assessment of the situation coincide with that of this gentleman?

Mr LES JOHNSON—I have seen the statement by Mr Pietersen because he was good enough to send it to me together with a personal letter, which I appreciated. He contended that there is a serious downturn, as the honourable gentleman suggested. In fact he has been contending that for a long time—virtually since this Government came into office. There is a tendency for people to project such dire developments and consequences for the building industry prematurely. The facts of the matter are that we have just recently concluded a financial year in which more houses were built than have ever been built before in one year in Australia's history. That is the fact of the matter. Indeed, the first 18 months of this Government's period of office have been responsible for a very great output of houses.

Mr Snedden—Mr Speaker, the Minister should make a statement about this matter after question time. We would be quite prepared to give him leave to make a statement. Why should he take up question time with false propaganda?

Mr SPEAKER—I have repeatedly made appeals in this House for questions and also answers to be shortened. I ask the Minister to be as brief as possible in his answer.

Mr LES JOHNSON—It is very difficult to be very brief and give a meaningful answer on this matter. I shall certainly make it as brief as I can. I can understand the honourable gentleman's sensitivity. We could take a great range of figures under various headings—approvals, commencements, houses under construction and completions—and under every one of those headings the performance of this Government is superior to that of our predecessors. This is why the honourable gentleman does not like to hear too many facts. Just in regard to completions, in the financial year 1973-74 under this Government 153,000 houses were completed. In the previous year under the previous Government, 143,000 houses were completed.

I believe there is a downturn in the building industry. The Government believes that this is the situation. As a result steps have been taken to stimulate the industry with massive injections of funds. This has been done firstly through the

Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. It has been done certainly in respect of Defence Service, Aboriginal housing, housing in the Territories, aged persons' housing and in many other ways, including the proposal to establish a new housing development corporation. Many initiatives are being taken by this Government to meet the situation as described by—

Mr Snedden—Mr Speaker, clearly the Minister is defying your ruling to keep answers short. I said that he could have leave to make a statement. He can speak for an hour if he wants to after question time.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I would remind the Leader of the Opposition that I did not give a ruling but made a request. No Speaker has had the power to ask anyone answering a question to terminate that answer. I can only appeal to the Minister to keep his answer as brief as possible. I again appeal to the Minister for Housing and Construction to keep his answer as brief as possible and to terminate it as quickly as he can.

Mr LES JOHNSON—As is my custom, Mr Speaker, I will be very pleased to do so. Finally, I draw attention to the announcement made by the Treasurer to the effect that bank lending will be eased as a result of the proposed change in the 60-40 ratio which I understand will release some \$1,200m for home lending over the long term and that in the shorter term still more money will be made available by the reduction from 10 per cent to 7½ per cent of funds required to be held by the Reserve Bank of Australia. So I can see some stimulation coming through these initiatives. If necessary the new housing corporation will have the facility to inject more funds to sustain the buoyancy of the housing industry.

PORT OF NEWCASTLE

Mr O'KEEFE—Can the Minister for Transport tell me whether there has been a considerable and unreasonable delay in loading and unloading ships and tankers in the port of Newcastle? Has this been caused by strike action of key unions involved? Is it a fact that as a result of this action transport and industry in northern New South Wales have been paralysed through lack of fuel, and valuable export income from grain and other produce has been threatened? What future action do the Minister and the Government intend to take to improve the turnaround of shipping in the port of Newcastle?

Mr CHARLES JONES—I have made the statement on numerous occasions that the Australian Government is prepared to accept responsibility for the operation of Australia's ports.

If the honourable gentleman refers his question to his own Party which is in government in New South Wales and which is completely and totally responsible for the operations of port activity in Newcastle and in every other port in New South Wales he might get his answer. Until such time as the New South Wales Government is prepared to transfer its responsibility to this Government I am afraid that it will be responsible for the turnaround of ships and the operation of the ports.

EDUCATION: NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Mr LUCHETTI—Has the attention of the Minister for Education been directed to criticism of the Australian Government in respect of non-government schools and charges of discrimination which should be answered? Are these charges valid and will the Minister make a statement in reply to the criticism?

Mr BEAZLEY—In the last financial year the Australian Government's expenditure on non-government schools was \$70m. In the estimates of the grants to the States—and that is the way in which grants are made to non-government schools—the expenditure for this financial year is \$120m. This is a rise of \$50m, which is an odd way of discriminating against these schools. In addition there is \$20m unallocated as between government and non-government schools in this financial year compared with \$2m in the last financial year—a tenfold increase. The amount going to either sector will depend very much upon innovations. There is also another important non-government sector of education—mission schools. In the last financial year the grants to them were \$295,000. In this financial year they will be \$1,282,000. The honourable member making these criticisms was burking the issue, but I do not want to accuse him of modelling himself on his hero, Edmund Burke.

GEORGI ERMOLENKO

Mr KILLEN—I address my question to the Prime Minister. I ask the honourable gentleman: Does he hold the belief that Ministers in his Government are bound by the rule of law and obliged to respect the processes of the law? If the honourable gentleman holds that belief, what explanation is forthcoming to explain why a person, namely Georgi Ermolenko, was taken out of the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Western Australia when habeas corpus proceedings were before that Court, and Ministers knew it?

Mr WHITLAM—As to the first part of the question, yes, of course I hold that belief. As to

the second part, this matter was very fully debated in the Senate yesterday and a motion expressing the view of the questioner was not carried. The situation is that the Western Australian Supreme Court—I forget all the details—clearly could take any action it saw fit against any person in Australia, including an Australian Government Minister. The Supreme Court of Western Australia has not seen fit to take such action.

MAINLINE CORPORATION

Mr INNES—Is the Minister for Housing and Construction aware of claims by Mr R. C. Baker, Managing Director of the Mainline Corporation, that the Government did not try to save the Corporation because the Government is opposed to free enterprise?

Mr LES JOHNSON—I saw the statement. I resent it because the facts are—

Mr Lusher—I take the point of order, Mr Speaker. The question asked requires a yes or no answer. The question was whether a statement was made.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable gentleman will resume his seat. A Minister may answer a question in whatever way he chooses.

Mr LES JOHNSON—The statement is resented because a number of Ministers, including the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister for Urban and Regional Development and myself took a great interest in this matter. Some of them, with their—

Mr Wentworth—On a point of order, Sir, I draw attention to standing order 145 which is, very succinctly, reads:

An answer shall be relevant to the question.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! All answers by Ministers must be relevant to the questions. I ask the Minister to keep to the relevancy of the question.

Mr LES JOHNSON—Not only those Ministers to whom I referred worked assiduously on this matter but also a number of departmental heads were concerned. The Government had a very great interest in trying to save this company. The view was taken that we should try to rescue the construction part of the company, but the accounts and other factual material relating to the company were kept in such an unintelligible way that it was very difficult to find the information we required to enable us to rescue the construction part of the company. We made a number of proposals.

At one stage the receiver, Mr Jamieson, came to see me and in fact made an announcement to

the effect that he would stave off the date of the company's going into liquidation so that the Government's good intent could be further examined and our efforts could proceed. We actually studied the prospect of making funds available to sustain Mainline's construction industry. All that was offered to us was an open-ended proposition which no government could justify. I regard the statements made by Mr Baker as a very cruel libel in the circumstances where the Government made every possible endeavour to bring about the satisfactory rescue operation. If his own affairs had been more conducive to the rescue of the company our efforts could have been successful.

ACADEMIC SALARIES

Mr CONNOLLY—Did the Special Minister of State issue a Press statement on academic salaries on 14 July last in which he stated that:

... the Government had agreed that Mr Justice Campbell would undertake an interim review of salary levels of academic staff in universities.

Did the Press release conclude with the following statement:

The Minister said that the Government expected to consider Judge Campbell's interim report in the context of its Budget discussion.

Mr SPEAKER—I remind the honourable gentleman that he is not permitted to quote from a newspaper report in asking a question.

Mr CONNOLLY—It is a Ministerial Press release.

Mr SPEAKER—Well, who is going to substantiate whether it is the correct statement made?

Mr CONNOLLY—I have the text in front of me.

Mr SPEAKER—Very well.

Mr CONNOLLY—Would the Minister advise the House why he and the Prime Minister failed to give Mr Justice Campbell specific terms of reference in July last, thus effectively delaying the inquiry? Why did he promise to consider academic salaries in the context of a pre-Budget discussions if this was clearly not his intention? Is the interim inquiry presently considering academic salaries? When does the Minister expect the report to be tabled in Parliament?

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—The significant factor of the whole of the report of the Remuneration Tribunal is that it was disallowed in another House. No doubt the honourable member took part in a ballot in his own Party as to what it

would do in relation to that disallowance. Naturally, when the report was disallowed, Mr Justice Campbell felt it would be improper and inappropriate to proceed with any determination without statutory support. The reason nothing has been done with respect to academic salaries is due directly to the activities of the Opposition. It is because of that, as the honourable member would know if he looked at today's notice paper, that we are to introduce a Bill to amend the Remuneration Tribunal Act, which will allow for academic salaries to be so determined. I am very confident that if the Opposition will give its support and the proposed legislation becomes law His Honour will then proceed with that interim determination.

PROPOSED FUEL AND ENERGY LEGISLATION IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Mr BENNETT—My question is directed to the Minister for Manufacturing Industry who represents the Attorney-General in this chamber. Is the Minister aware of the tragic situation in Western Australia with respect to the proposed provisions of the Fuel and Energy Bill now before the Western Australian State Liberal Government's Parliament which, it is alleged by the Law Society of Western Australia, State politicians and community leaders in that State, will remove civil liberties of Australian citizens? Will the Minister clarify how the provisions of this Bill affect the civil liberties of Australian citizens? Will the Minister clarify what protection is afforded the legal and civil rights of Australian citizens acting in Western Australia in disputes under direction by Federal organisations in respect of national decisions which cause the invoking of the penal provisions of that Fuel and Energy Bill? What protection can be offered to Australian citizens who go to Western Australia to carry out duties on behalf of a national body from the threat of the application of the provisions of the West Australian Act arising from the duties which they perform?

Mr ENDERBY—I have had an expression of concern made by the Council of the Law Society of Western Australia brought to my notice by the honourable member, and I thank him for it. It has also been brought to the attention of the Attorney-General. The facts seem to be that this proposed legislation would have very serious and adverse effects on the whole question of civil liberties were it to become law. The time has not been available to enable it to be analysed or studied in detail, but some aspects can be touched on briefly.

For example, the Bill is drafted in extremely wide and vague terms such as certainly would not survive close scrutiny in our Senate. In addition, it makes provision for inspections of premises without warrant. The questioning of persons is also provided for in it. It has certain unsavoury retrospective elements which would constitute an attack on civil liberties. If it became law in its proposed form some acts done before the making of regulations would be rendered criminal subsequently. I understand that the Bill also contains provisions for declarations of states of emergency. It has to be said, however, that there is talk of amendments, so one can only hope that flexibility and good sense will prevail. As far as national organisations are concerned, the honourable member's fears are quite correct in that those organisations would be caught by the provisions were they to become law. It should also be said that the proposed law would certainly be in breach of many of the provisions of the international covenant on civil and political rights.

ACCOMMODATION FOR THE AGED

Mr HEWSON—I ask the Minister for Social Security whether he has given any consideration to the present plight of committees of management of homes for the aged or institutions which are in the process of building home units for the aged. Is he aware that the upper cost limit is preventing further units being built because of the inflationary tender prices being obtained and that the limit is also making the increase of the government capital subsidy from \$2 for \$1 to \$4 for \$1 of almost no benefit at this stage? Has the Minister made any decision to bring the upper cost subsidy limit up to the realistic figure so that plans and specifications already tendered can proceed? If so, what is that figure?

Mr HAYDEN—I will be even more emphatic that the movement of the subsidy from \$2 for \$1 to \$4 for \$1 is of absolutely no benefit at this stage, because it has not been introduced yet. I released a statement in Perth at the weekend indicating that the Government was considering these matters and that a working party from Treasury and the Department of Social Security was investigating the problems which were confronting voluntary agencies providing this sort of accommodation. When the report comes to hand—I hope it will be quite soon—the Government can give consideration to the assessment that is presented and make a policy decision then.

ELECTORAL ACT

Mr RIORDAN—My question is directed to the Minister for Services and Property. Has his attention been drawn to certain reports criticising proposed or suggested amendments to the Electoral Act dealing with optional preferential voting and redistribution of electorates? I ask the Minister: Is there any substance in the allegations which have been made?

Mr DALY—It is true that the Government proposes to announce shortly that a redistribution of electorates will take place and that there will also be proposals for the introduction of optional preferential voting. It is also true to say that the Leader of the Country Party has criticised these proposals in a most unjustified way. Dealing with redistribution of boundaries, the last redistribution took place in 1968. Another one should have followed the census of 1971, but the Liberal—

Mr Anthony—It should not. He is dishonest, this fellow.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Leader of the Country Party will contain himself.

Mr Katter—Why does he not tell the truth?

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Kennedy will withdraw that statement.

Mr Katter—I withdraw the statement.

Mr DALY—Another redistribution was due after the 1971 census but the Liberal-Country Party, at the instigation of the Deputy Prime Minister at that time, decided to sidestep the redistribution and even denied Western Australia the additional seat to which it was entitled. Western Australia did not get that additional seat until Labor came into office. The situation is that nearly every electorate in Australia is out of kilter. For instance, in New South Wales, Mitchell has 83,000 on the roll and Darling has 47,000; in Victoria, Diamond Valley has 87,000 and Wimmera 49,000; in Queensland, McPherson has 91,000 and Maranoa 47,000. Those figures give an indication of the disparity that exists in electorates. Undoubtedly, because of the failure of the previous Government to take action in this regard, a redistribution is a long time overdue. I might say, in answer to the Leader of the Country Party, that a redistribution commission is to be appointed. The commission will be appointed in accordance with the Act, which has not been changed in respect of the appointment of commissioners since the Liberal-Country Party was in government. Men of the highest personal integrity will

be appointed on the same basis and by the same methods as were adopted by the Liberal and Country Parties. In these circumstances it is strange to hear the Leader of the Country Party rejecting the proposals before they have been announced. This only goes to show that the Country Party will go to any length to maintain the malapportionment of electorates in the interests of political survival irrespective of democratic principles.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There is a widespread understanding that the Minister already has been responsible for draft maps being drawn and if that is so—

Mr SPEAKER—That is not a point of order. The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr Nixon—I take a point of order. My point of order relates to the fact that on his return from Canada the Minister said what the boundaries were going to be.

Mr SPEAKER—The Chair is not in a position to know what is said by Ministers or their departments. No point of order is involved.

Mr DALY—The Leader of the Country Party would be better advised to inform the House how his Party perpetrated the greatest gerrymander in history and elected in Queensland a Country Party Premier whose Party secured only 19 per cent of the votes. He should do this instead of criticising. He could also explain how the Liberal-Country Party Government in New South Wales has maintained itself in office by the gerrymandering of electorates based on the Queensland set-up. I turn now to the question of optional preferential voting. The Leader of the Country Party quoted the case of Great Britain and gave certain figures. Great Britain has a first past the post system.

Mr Anthony—It is the same as you are doing.

Mr DALY—Ah, the same thing! Optional preferential voting means that a person will be called upon to vote only for the number of candidates for which there are vacancies in order to register a formal vote. However, if a person desires to vote for all candidates in order of preference he has that right. The proposal is not to change the system but to simplify the method of voting. The Chief Australian Electoral Officer, a man of the highest personal integrity, assures me that as compared with the present system this will not change the result of elections once in 100 years. That is the answer direct to the Leader of the Country Party.

The Leader of the Country Party should know that between 1919 and 1931 tory governments which his predecessors supported had this system in Australia for Senate elections. In 1958 his Government introduced it for the Advisory Council elections in the Australian Capital Territory, and it is still in force. In addition we have introduced this system for the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory Assembly elections that are imminent. His Party never opposed the proposal. So what is the position? What is the purpose of this hillbilly stuff the Leader of the Country Party is putting to the Australian people?

In the last Senate elections for this Parliament there were 73 candidates in New South Wales. In every State there were massive numbers of candidates. The informal vote throughout Australia totalled about 800,000 or 10 per cent of the votes. So it is necessary for us to do something to make the voting method simpler. In New South Wales there were 332,000 informal votes; in Victoria, 230,000; in South Australia, 82,000; in Western Australia, 60,000; in Tasmania, 26,000; and in Queensland, 65,000. Consequently almost 1 million people had no say in what government was elected, irrespective of their political opinions. They were not unintelligent people. Many intelligent people cannot record votes for 73 candidates without making a mistake. The optional preferential method of voting, far from being introduced to assist any party, is to make certain that by a simplified method of voting every Australian will register a valid and formal vote. The Labor Party seeks by all its electoral proposals only to see that the candidate or Party that secures the majority of votes gets the majority of seats.

I can understand the ill-judged criticism of the Leader of the Country Party. The whole history of his organisation is one of opposition to electoral reform. When in government he insisted on holding this portfolio for his Government for the sole purpose of avoiding democratic elections and majority rule. The Leader of the Country Party and his Party have too many skeletons in their political cupboards on questions of electoral reform to be taken seriously. I believe that the Australian people agree that a simplified voting method is essential in the interests of democratic elections, and that is precisely what the Labor Party is endeavouring to do, both by means of redistribution and the simplification of the voting method. We aim to give the people a say in the government of their country and not deny it to them as the Liberal and Country Parties have done for generations.

CAPITAL GAINS TAX

Mr CREAN—I would like an opportunity to clarify my understanding of the question asked by the honourable member for Corangamite. Had he used the word ‘inheritance’ instead of the word ‘assignment’ I would have understood it better. But I now take the point that he made. I assure the honourable member that this matter is spelled out in paragraph 7 of the memorandum.

Mr Bourchier—Have you not read it before?

Mr CREAN—Yes, I have read it before. Paragraph 7 simply states that if capital gains tax is payable on death on the increase in value of assets, including a farm, then the amount so payable by an executor is deductible from the value of the estate for estate duty purposes. That is spelled out in detail in paragraph 7.

PRICES JUSTIFICATION TRIBUNAL

Mr WHITLAM—(Werriwa—Prime Minister)—Pursuant to section 35 (2) of the Prices Justification Act 1973-74 I present for the information of honourable members the first annual report of the Prices Justification Tribunal 1973-74. Because of the limited number of copies available at this time I have arranged for copies to be placed in the Parliamentary Library for the use of honourable members.

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

Mr WHITLAM (Werriwa—Prime Minister)—For the information of honourable members I present the report of the Australian delegation to the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, Second Session, at Caracas between 20 June and 29 August last.

PRIMARY INDUSTRY REPORTS

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development)—For the information of honourable members I present the following reports and papers:

Summary of resolutions and recommendations of the thirteenth meeting of the Australian Forestry Council held on 28 June 1974.

Interim statement on the activities of the Australian Egg Board for the year ended 30 June 1974.

Interim report of the Australian Chicken Meat Research Committee for the year ended 30 June 1974.

Interim annual report of the Australian Meat Research Committee for the year ended 30 June 1974.

Interim annual Report of the Australian Pig Industry Research Committee for the year ended 30 June 1974.

Pursuant to section 36 of the Canned Fruits Export Marketing Act 1963-1970, the Australian Canned Fruits Board annual report and account 1973.

Pursuant to section 30 of the Honey Industry Act 1962-1973, the eleventh annual report of the Australian Honey Board for the year ended 30 June 1974.

Pursuant to section 28 (1) of the Dried Fruits Export Control Act 1924-1973, the fiftieth annual report of the Australian Dried Fruits Control Board for the year ended 30 June 1974.

SNOWY MOUNTAINS ENGINEERING CORPORATION

Mr LES JOHNSON (Hughes—Minister for Housing and Construction)—Pursuant to section 36 of the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation Act 1970-1973 I present for the information of honourable members the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation fourth annual report 1973-74.

BUREAU OF TRANSPORT ECONOMICS

Mr CHARLES JONES (Newcastle—Minister for Transport)—For the information of honourable members I present a report by the Bureau of Transport Economics entitled ‘Electric Cars’.

HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICES COMMISSION

Dr EVERINGHAM (Capricornia—Minister for Health)—For the information of honourable members I present a report from the Hospitals and Health Services Commission entitled ‘Continuing Medical Education’, dated August 1974.

SUPPLY 1974

Mr ENDERBY (Canberra—Minister for Manufacturing Industry)—For the information of honourable members I present a report entitled ‘Supply 1974’.

WEAPONS RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT

Mr ENDERBY (Canberra—Minister for Manufacturing Industry)—For the information of honourable members I present the Weapons Research Establishment annual report of 1973-74.

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Mr ENDERBY (Canberra—Minister for Manufacturing Industry)—For the information

of honourable members I table 2 documents relating to the proceedings of Australia against France in the International Court of Justice, concerning the prohibition of further atmospheric nuclear tests at the French Pacific test centre. The documents are, firstly, the written proceedings known as the memorial filed by Australia with the International Court on the questions of jurisdiction and the admissibility of the Australian application instituting the proceedings and, secondly, the verbatim report of the oral arguments presented by the Government of Australia on these questions at public hearings held by the International Court at the Hague on 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11 July 1974.

NATIONAL ESTATE Ministerial Statement

Mr UREN (Reid—Minister for Urban and Regional Development)—by leave—I join with my colleague the Minister for the Environment and Conservation (Dr Cass) in tabling the report of the Committee of Inquiry into the National Estate.

Before outlining to the House the noble concept of the National Estate which is enshrined in the report, I want to express my personal pride and satisfaction in its contents. It was a concept which I devised and publicised in the days when I was the spokesman on the environment and urban and regional affairs for the Labor Party in opposition. During the years between 1969 and 1972, I put particular stress on indentifying the National Estate and promoting it as a key part of Labor Party policy. In the policy speech of the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) in December 1972, he promised that a Labor Government would enhance and preserve the concept of the national estate. As a Government, we have acted swiftly to discharge the mandate given to us to identify, conserve and preserve the National Estate.

In April last year, Dr Cass and I announced the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry into the National Estate, with Mr Justice Hope as Chairman. The other members of the Committee were Reginald Walker, the Federal Executive Member of the National Trust; Milo Dunphy of the conservation groups; Judith Wright-McKinney, a poetess and a great environmentalist; Mr Len Webb, of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation; Mr David Yencken, a progressive builder from Melbourne; Mr Keith Vallance, a Tasmanian businessman; and Judith Mary Brine, a university lecturer from South Australia.

The Committee began its work at the end of May last year. It considered more than 650 submissions from Government, community and professional bodies, and from individuals. The Committee travelled widely, looking at important parts of our national heritage and so enriching its insights into the concept of the National Estate and how it should be identified and preserved. Its report was received by us in April this year, and its findings and recommendations were announced by the Prime Minister at the end of April. Now the full report has been printed and we are glad to be able to put it before members of the Parliament. The central theme of the report on the National Estate is set out in this extract from its findings and recommendations:

The Australian Government has inherited a National Estate which has been downgraded, disregarded and neglected. All previous priorities accepted at various levels of Government and authority have been directed by a concept that uncontrolled development, economic growth and 'progress', and the encouragement of private as against public interest in land use, use of waters, and indeed in every part of the National Estate, was paramount

The report goes on to confirm that this Government is the first Administration to make a commitment to charting the National Estate and conserving it, particularly for younger people and Australians of the future. I cannot stress too strongly that the Australian Government is determined that our National Estate will no longer be degraded and despoiled

The Committee has devoted a great deal of work to defining with precision the things that make up the National Estate. It has opted for a very wide ranging definition of the National Estate which can be summed up in this way: Elements of such outstanding world value that they need to be conserved, managed and presented as part of the heritage of the world; elements of such outstanding national value that they must be conserved, managed and presented as part of the nation as a whole; and elements of such artistic, social, historical, cultural or other special value to the nation or any part of it that it should be conserved, managed and presented for the benefit of the community as a whole. This very broad definition of the National Estate includes elements of remarkable diversity and richness. The range of the National Estate extends from great national parks and awesome rain forests to a simple stand of trees or patch of coastline. It includes the remaining treasures of our colonial architecture and such homely parts of the national heritage as paddlesteamers and even a Chinese joss house.

A pleasing feature of the report is its rejection of the widely held notion that conservation and

preservation of the environment are a 'middle class' issue. The Committee affirms this is just not true and that preserving the National Estate concerns us all. It shatters once and for all the illusion that the national estate is the preserve of the better-off members of the community. The forces which threaten our National Estate often bear most heavily on the less privileged. Poorer people suffer more intensely from the loss of parkland, familiar city and country scapes, and even dwellings. Deprived community groups have not the same access as the wealthy to other sources of personal enjoyment and fulfilment. That is why it is often the less affluent who are most active in working to protect the best features of our heritage. That is why the trade union movement has been active in trying to protect and enhance our National Estate. The pillage and neglect of the National Estate diminishes us all in equal measure. I also want to make it plain that I seek the support of people of goodwill whatever their background in protecting the National Estate and passing it intact to future generations. We will work with all those who want to protect those parts of our heritage that have been created by man or nature and are unique or are things of beauty.

I want to make it clear that the Government has not been idle while it waited for the report of the Committee of Inquiry. In the last financial year more than \$2m was provided to help the State governments and other organisations preserve the National Estate. In the Budget now before the Parliament, for 1974-75, this has been lifted to \$8m. We have also announced our intention to establish a National Heritage Commission to administer our policy on the National Estate. This was one of the more important recommendations of the Committee. This Commission will be responsible to the Minister for the Environment and Conservation and myself. We expect that legislation to set up the Commission will be put to the Parliament in this session or early in 1975. In the meantime a 17 member interim committee has been set up to help bridge the gap between the Committee of Inquiry and the proposed Heritage Commission. The Committee is headed by Mr David Yencken who performed valuable services as a member of the Committee of Inquiry.

I refer honourable members to the attention given by the report to the role of the Australian Government in fostering the national estate. A number of new roles have been suggested for the

Government. The Committee's broad recommendations cover land use planning, conservation and reservation techniques and the principles of national parks. They extend to the impact of mining, forestry and coastal development on the national estate. The report also proposes a national register of sites of historic and scientific interest, and measures to protect and preserve important Aboriginal sites. No future Government will be able to ignore the impact of the report and its implications for the careful planning of future public policy to safeguard the national estate. The work of Mr Justice Hope and his Committee deserves the highest praise of this Parliament and all Australians. We are also grateful for the help and co-operation given by State and local government authorities, by a host of voluntary organisations, and by hundreds of individuals. All have helped in the great task of developing and refining the concept of the National Estate. The report of the Committee is a symbol of the great physical and cultural heritage we have been fortunate enough to inherit. Now we must act with firmness and vision to ensure that future generations will not lead their lives satisfied with a National Estate which we have spoilt.

Finally, it gives me some personal pride that an idea drawn from my own philosophy and personal feelings, and reflecting the ideals of great socialists of the tradition of William Morris, should bear fruit in this noble concept and this fine report. In the spirit of the report we will strive to create and preserve things and places of great beauty for all Australians and for the Australians that follow us. Such a great sharing of beauty and culture among all of our people is firmly based on the contents of this outstanding report. I urge honourable members to give it detailed study and assure them that the Government will act positively on its recommendations.

Mr HUNT (Gwydir)—by leave—I rise to welcome the tabling of this report. I am sure that all honourable members will look forward to studying it in depth. In passing, I take the word of the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) that it was he who gave the lead to the Australian Labor Party, to the Government and to the nation. It is certainly not a modest observation but one which could well be true. If it is true all credit must go to the Minister. The report is a monumental document and appears to be beautifully illustrated and is certainly printed and published in a manner that is not usually evident in such reports. I join the Minister in congratulating Mr Justice Hope and others on the Committee.

I am glad that the Government is acting to establish a National Heritage Commission. The National Estate report not only recognises the need for the preservation of historic buildings and things like the Chinese joss house that was mentioned in the Minister's speech, but also the natural environment. I refer to the recommendations in the land use planning section. I quote this part so that it will be incorporated in Hansard. The Committee recommends:

To protect and conserve the natural environment requires conservation to be part of the normal planning and development process. A proper land-use inventory and over-all regional land-use plan, keyed in with the inventory, are vital. Therefore we recommend:

that the Australian Government give its full support to, and discuss with the States possible help to them in setting up procedures for land-use inventories and regional land-use planning.

Second, planners, designers, construction authorities and developers generally should accept the principles of 'design with nature' and act accordingly. We recommend:

that the Australian Government seek to ensure as far as possible that land-uses are planned and decided in harmony with natural forces and conditions and not against them.

I think that is probably one of the keys to the recommendations of the total report. I have felt for some time that too often in the environment protection field we have been treating the causes of abuse rather than trying to establish an inventory so that proper land use decisions can be made. I do not think that any political party can accept the blame for what has happened. I know that in New South Wales, for instance, after the last war it was the Australian Labor Party Government that introduced closer settlement to the western areas of New South Wales and carved up blocks of land that were far too small for adequate pastoral activities. We have seen great areas of western New South Wales virtually rendered a desert.

It appears that several Departments have a responsibility and also a responsibility to liaise with each other in order that many of these recommendations can be achieved. One recommendation that I think is worthy of note is the composition of the 17 member interim committee. It is composed of Federal public servants and other interested persons. If it is to exclude State public servants I think a great mistake is being made. The report itself spends a lot of time in dealing with the constitutional constraints. I quote a section of the report which states:

Some parts, and indeed important parts, of the National Estate are in the Territories, or, although within the States, are owned by the Commonwealth, but the greater part of the National Estate is within the States and so is subject to the general legislative control of the States.

So it would be a great pity if the interim committee did not have State Public Service representation. If we are to make any real impact on this problem we need the co-operation of the States.

The Minister exalts his own socialist philosophy and assumes that socialists have a monopoly of the concern for the National Estate. He quoted that great capitalist who had socialist beliefs, William Morris. William Morris had one great advantage in his writing days; he was writing in a cosy provincial environment which had been man-made for more than 400 years. I make that significant statement because it was the desire of all political Parties in Australia and indeed of the Australian people after the last war to develop Australia at an undreamed-of pace.

Mr Uren—The William Morris I am talking about is an Englishman.

Mr HUNT—I know. I am not talking about an Australian. The William Morris the Minister talked about was a very wealthy socialist and he lived in an environment where 400 years of man-made effort enabled him to assume the sort of statements and writings that he was able to produce. I relate this to the Australian scene. We have witnessed a great era of growth that has generated the wealth that has improved the general living standards of the Australian people. It is against that background that we can afford now to protect and conserve our environment.

Perhaps one of the most unfortunate parts of the Minister's speech was that in which he singled out a section of the report to quote. It states:

The Australian Government has inherited a National Estate which has been downgraded, disregarded and neglected.

It is very easy to say these sorts of things. But what that report did not say was that the Australian people, during this period of growth, had their living standards lifted to equal the best in the world. It is only because of that situation that we can now turn our attention to preserving and conserving the environment and the national estate. So let us keep our ideas in perspective. We should not hesitate to respect and protect our great national heritage for future generations. This report and its recommendations should give us the lead. We are one of the last developed nations to have a large part of our environment left virtually in its natural state and it is up to all men and women, not just the socialists, to preserve as much of it as is economically and socially possible. That is the key to the whole approach. There has to be a balance. I am sure that

the implementation of the recommendations against that background of consideration will be to the long-term benefit of the Australian people.

ALLEGED INDEMNITY PAYMENTS INVOLVING MARITIME UNIONS

Discussion of Matter of Public Importance

Mr SPEAKER—I have received a letter from the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser) proposing that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely:

- (1) Charges that the Minister for Transport had approved the indemnity payments 12 months ago.
- (2) The silence of the Minister for Labor and Immigration and the Minister for Transport from 26 July to early September when publicity was given to indemnity payments.
- (3) The failure of both Ministers to take appropriate action under the law.

I call upon those members who approve of the proposed discussion to rise in their places.

(More than the number of members required by the Standing Orders having risen in their places)—

Mr MALCOLM FRASER (Wannon) (11.12)—This debate is taking place today because of the Government's determination to gag the debate yesterday on the same matter. I say without any equivocation that if there were any propriety in this Government, and if the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) were concerned for the name and integrity of his Government, he would widen the terms of reference of the Royal Commission which is investigating alleged indemnity payments involving maritime unions; he would give the Royal Commission an overriding mandate to pursue every aspect of this matter. The Royal Commission should be permitted to examine every one of the unions that might be involved so that the good name of the Government and of the overwhelming bulk of the union movement can be cleared from the charges and the smell of the incident created by the alleged activities of Mr Elliott and the Seamen's Union. As part of that process of purging itself there would be no honourable course open to the Minister for Transport (Mr Charles Jones) other than to offer to the Prime Minister his resignation which could be held in suspense until the matter had been cleared, proved or disproved one way or the other. But that is not the practice of this Government. That would not be the practice of this Minister who will try to cover this matter up just as significantly as other matters have been

covered up in other places. But I only suggest that the matter will be pursued in one way or another and that one day the facts will become plain.

Charges have been made by Mr Elliott against the Minister, and the charges are very clear. He said that the Minister produced the idea of the levy on ships and the way in which it is being collected and that this came out of a discussion in the Minister's office over a year ago. On the one hand we have the word of the Minister who sought to deny that and the word of Mr Elliott who said that that is what had happened. But there is information and it is my understanding that Mr Elliott believes he can prove that charge against the Minister.

There is other circumstantial evidence to indicate that Mr Elliott is indeed correct. When questioned on 5 September by James Ramsden of the 'Australian Financial Review' the Minister said that in his office in that discussion with Mr Elliott he had himself tentatively raised the idea. If he had tentatively raised the idea and admitted that much there starts to be circumstantial evidence in support of Mr Elliott's charge. But the Minister's statements seem to be odd and contradictory, because 5 days later in front of the same correspondent on 10 September, in discussing matters relating to the Waterside Workers Federation, the Minister first of all said:

What I know has been going on, and I indicated to Charley Fitz—

For the uninitiated, the Minister was referring to Charley Fitzgibbon of the Waterside Workers Federation—

. . . that so far as I was concerned he has no risk of me taking any action against him, or his union . . .

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I should like to remind the honourable member that, as I explained yesterday, in my opinion the terms of reference of the Royal Commission cover matters pertaining to the Waterside Workers Federation. Paragraph 1(b) of the terms of reference state:

The circumstances under which and the persons, including corporate bodies, by whom or to whom any such payments or demands have been made.

The Waterside Workers Federation is a corporate body. It is my contention and my ruling that a discussion of matters relating to payments being made to the Waterside Workers Federation would be out of order.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Mr Speaker, I was speaking to point No. 1 of my motion which states:

Charges the Minister for Transport had approved indemnity payments 12 months ago.

Indemnity payments do not relate only, as you very correctly said, to the maritime unions. The terms of reference, as I hope you correctly say, cover the Waterside Workers Federation as well. Point No. 1 of my motion is that the Minister for Transport had approved indemnity payments 12 months ago and that this matter ought to be examined. You have ruled discussion on this matter to be in order. The point that I was making was that there is significant evidence in Mr Elliott's statement of the activities of the Seamen's Union and in other published reports that the Minister had approved indemnity payments not only concerning the Seamen's Union but also concerning the Waterside Workers Federation. It is that point that I was seeking to demonstrate by this quotation and no other.

The Minister there would indicate a knowledge and an approval of what was happening in the Waterside Workers Federation just as Mr Elliott claimed that he had approved what was happening in relation to the Seamen's Union. But at a later point in the same interview the Minister said:

I repeat, I am unaware of any levies that have been struck. That was about 3 minutes after he said that he had approved what in fact had been going on. The Minister has virtually condemned himself out of his own mouth. There is evidence from his own mouth that he has been involved and that he knew about these matters. He took no action and there was implicit approval therefore for what was happening.

That is the first point that I sought to demonstrate. Then we have the question of the silence not only of the Minister for Transport who is principally culpable in this matter but also of the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron). It needs to be pointed out that the Minister for Transport chaired a meeting late in May where a number of problems in relation to this industry were discussed. Significantly there is a letter that was sent to the Minister for Labor and Immigration on 26 July. As a result of that letter there was no evidence of any kind of action or activity by the Minister for Transport or by the Minister for Labor and Immigration until the matter inadvertently appeared in the Press in Melbourne about six or seven weeks later. The letter clearly drew attention to the fact that since April this year the unions led by Mr Elliott had made attempts to disrupt arrangements agreed between the Minister for Transport and the executive of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. The letter then describes the activities of

the Seamen's Union, which have been widely reported, and the demands of the Seamen's Union. I would like to quote 2 paragraphs. The first is:

Elliott has now made a new demand that the difference in money amount between ITF rates and Australian rates be paid proportionately into the funds of the seafarers union and not to the ship's crew. He also stated that the money will not be returned to the ship's crew, but retained by the unions 'so as not to undermine the national economy'.

The letter also states:

I have informed Mr Ray Taylor of the Federal Transport Department, and Mr John Limbrick of the Department of Labor, about the matter. They cannot see any practical alternative with relation to the present incident . . .

That refers to making indemnity payments to allow the ships to sail. This letter is signed by Mr Henry and addressed to the Minister for Labor on 26 July. It directly implicates the Departments of both Ministers. Officers of the Departments of both Ministers had said that there is no alternative. That means that officers of the Departments, against whose integrity I would not put a slur for one moment, knew that both their Ministers would do nothing about this particular matter. Those officers knew that the Minister for Labor and the Minister for Transport would not be prepared to act under the law as they ought to act, and they therefore had to say that there was nothing that could be done except to pay the extortion. This is part of the price of the cover up of the two Ministers and part of the price of silence of the 2 Ministers.

No doubt they hoped that they might be able to get over this particular matter by the statement of having an ACTU inquiry, but that was not to be enough. The matter was running too deep for that. To prevent the inquiry running wild, they then sought to have a restricted royal commission with restricted terms of reference which certainly and positively would direct matters away from the activities—inactivity in the case of the Minister for Labor—or the Minister for Transport. Therefore we had an inquiry, with inadequate terms of reference, which makes no mention of the three points which are brought to the notice of the House on this occasion. Both Ministers ought to act under the law in matters of this kind. They did not do so. They tried to hide the matter with the ACTU inquiry, but the law would seem to have been broken. It would seem also that the silence of the Ministers condoned what in fact had occurred.

In a statement that the Minister for Labor did make about this matter he condemned the action because of the direction of the funds, because they were going to a special fund. He did not condemn the extortion or the indemnity payments. He only condemned the direction of the

money. I do not suppose he condemned that part of the direction of the money which put \$5,000 into the election campaign funds of the Australian Labor Party. Let us look at the charge that the Ministers did not take appropriate action under the law and that this is a matter which ought to have been examined. Three laws are involved in this particular matter. The first is the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Under section 152 of that Act unions are required each year to make an accurate statement of all receipts and expenditure and put in that statement to the Industrial Registrar. It is quite clear that that has not been done and that action ought to be taken under the Act, under the hand of the Minister for Labor and under the hand of the Industrial Registrar.

Secondly we have the Crimes Act which, one would think, *prima facie* has been breached. Section 30K of the Crimes Act is designed to protect interstate trade and make it possible to lay charges against the persons or organisations that obstruct or hinder the transport of goods or the conveyance of passengers in trade or commerce with other countries or among the States. Again there are words in that Act which would seem to imply that the activities of the Seamen's Union have been quite unlawful. Thirdly we have the Navigation Act which requires that seamen involved in the coastal trade be paid proper rates and not rates less than those normally paid to Australians operating in Australian ships. Sections 288 and 289 of the Navigation Act spell out very clearly that every seaman employed on a ship engaged in any part of the coasting trade shall, subject to any lawful deductions, be entitled to and shall be paid for the period during which the ship is so engaged, wages at the current rates ruling in Australia for seamen employed in that part of the coasting trade.

Quite plainly, on the evidence that has been made available to the Ministers, the Seamen's Union has said to the companies concerned that the money is going to come to it. The money is not going to go to the seamen concerned. The unions and Mr Elliott have exhibited utter callousness in relation to people on low rates of pay and they have conspired and extorted to make sure that those parts of the Navigation Act are in fact broken and not held. Therefore there were three possible courses of action that the Ministers jointly could have taken. They could have launched normal police action because of a violation of laws. Much of what the Minister for Labor has done has sought to put above the law certain militant unions—not all, but certain ones which are most concerned to use their strength

mercilessly against their own members and the people of Australia. By their failure to act in these particular instances, by their failure to uphold the law as it stands, by their attempts to cover this matter with an inadequate inquiry—not inadequate because of the Commissioner but inadequate because of the terms of reference and because of the attitude of the Ministers and of this Government—the two Ministers have done great harm to propriety in government. They have destroyed their own reputations, particularly the Minister for Transport who clearly, on the evidence available has been involved in these matters in one form or another for significantly more than 12 months.

On this basis one would have hoped that the Prime Minister might examine the evidence and take the course which I suggested at the outset. There is no other way in which the Prime Minister can preserve integrity for his Government. This matter runs through and into the Departments. It involves the two Ministers. They were given evidence. Laws are available. They have ignored the law. They have brought the law into disrepute allowing unions to operate outside the law. If that is to happen and it is to increase control of this government by people like Mr Elliott industrial anarchy will become rampant throughout the Australian community.

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

Mr CHARLES JONES (Newcastle—Minister for Transport) (11.27)—First of all I seek leave to have the terms of the Royal Commission incorporated in Hansard.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

INQUIRY INTO ALLEGED PAYMENTS TO MARITIME UNIONS

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To inquire into and report on—
 - (a) Whether any payments (other than those of a normal commercial nature or made pursuant to any law or any industrial award or agreement) have, in recent times, been or are being made or demanded in respect of the use of ships in voyages to or from Australia, or within the Australian coasting trade under permit or licence under the Navigation Act 1912-1973;
 - (b) the circumstances under which and the persons (including corporate bodies) by whom and to whom any such payments or demands have been made;
 - (c) the reasons for and the purpose of any such payments or demands;
 - (d) the subsequent or proposed use or disposal of any such payments;

- (e) the legality of any such payments or demands and their propriety having regard in particular to Australian trade union principles and ethics.
- 2. To recommend in the light of the findings—
 - (a) what action, if any, should be taken in respect of such payments; and
 - (b) what legislative or administrative changes are necessary or desirable in relation to these matters.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I thank honourable members. We have listened to a lot of garbage this morning from the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser). I wish to draw attention to the report from the Select Committee Appointed To Inquire Into And Report Upon Payments To Maritime Unions dated September 1958. This Committee was appointed by the Liberal-Country Party Government. If honourable members wish the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee to be incorporated in Hansard I shall be quite happy to do so. I wish to draw attention to paragraph 66 which states:

The Committee's general conclusions are that the evidence discloses acts of a highly improper character in the nature of conspiracy, extortion and intimidation.

The Liberal-Country Party—the then government—had a majority on that Committee. What did it do about that report? The answer is a very simple one. It did nothing, notwithstanding the Committee's general conclusion that the evidence disclosed acts of a highly improper character in the nature of conspiracy, extortion and intimidation. The Liberal-Country Party Government did nothing about it. Liberal-Country Party members should not come in here with all this pious humbug about what the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) and myself have allegedly done. I deny most emphatically that I have been involved in anything improper. I have not been involved in anything like, for example, Jetair. The honourable member for Wannon was a Minister of the Cabinet that was involved in that stinking, rotten episode called Jetair. He was a Minister of the Government which—

Mr McLeay—You are a disgrace as a Minister.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I know members of the Opposition do not like it. It hurts them.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I ask the Minister to keep within the terms of the motion before the Chair. The honourable member for Wannon was received in complete silence; I ask that the Minister for Transport be afforded the same courtesy.

Mr CHARLES JONES—Mr Speaker, I will endeavour to keep to the points to which you have referred. But, you know, Alexander Barton,

Jetair, Billy McMahon—and all that crowd who are going to speak on this—the honourable member for Wannon and the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon)—don't talk about anything that is putrid and rotten; you still stink from the smell of Jetair.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—I rise on a point of order. The remarks of the Minister for Transport are quite offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn. The charges that I made were precise and based on evidence and on the Minister's own words. He cannot hide behind a stream of abuse.

Mr SPEAKER—I ask the Minister to keep to the point before the Chair. If my memory serves me correctly, the honourable member for Wannon also used the words 'it smells', which I do not think are quite parliamentary either.

Mr Staley—'It stinks'.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I ask the Minister to moderate his language in regard to these matters and to use parliamentary phrases.

Mr CHARLES JONES—Mr Elliott has made a statement—the honourable member for Wannon repeated it—which is not true. It is perfectly true that I did meet a delegation of seamen's representatives including the State secretary for New South Wales, Mr Benson, in my office some time last year, perhaps August or September of last year. I saw him there. I met that delegation about 10 months ago. It is perfectly true that I said that I was contemplating imposing the condition, as the Navigation Act—seeing that the honourable member for Wannon has mentioned it—permits me so to do, under which a single voyage permit can be issued. I indicated to that delegation that I contemplated doing this. Honourable members opposite say that they want to see facts. I am not afraid of the facts. I was pleased for one simple reason that this discussion did not come on yesterday. That reason was that my file was in the hands of the Royal Commission in Sydney. All of this information that I now show to honourable members is in the hands of the Royal Commission. I am quite happy with the inquiry, however it goes. But the time available to me today is very limited, so I had better get stuck into what I have to say.

The facts are that on 30 July 1973 I approved the issue of a single voyage permit for the carriage of detergent alkali by the 'Allied Trader'. One of the conditions of that approval was 'approved subject to Australian rates'. Do honourable members want to have a look at that document? There is a photocopy of the original which I show to honourable members opposite. I am

quite proud of the fact that I imposed this condition that Australian rates of pay were to be paid. Not only did I impose that condition on that approval but also I did the same thing with respect to another ship a little later. The carriage of a cargo of pyrites from South Australia to the north-west shelf was involved. Unfortunately, this permit was not taken up. It was issued to the 'Lady Vivian'. That was a condition on which approval was granted. I required that Australian rates should be paid and Australian conditions apply with respect to that approval. Those 2 incidents occurred prior to the September meeting.

Because I was not satisfied that these moneys would be paid to the crews and that they could retain these sums, I discontinued that practice of imposing the condition that Australian rates of pay had to be paid to the crews of the ships to which permits for single voyages were issued. I tell honourable members opposite today that if I could be certain that the crews being paid that money could retain it, every single voyage permit that I issue would be subject to that condition. Do not let us have any qualms about that. I emphasise the point that the money would be paid to the crew and not go into any funds. My colleague, the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) has made a similar statement. If you fellows opposite believe in cheap labour conditions, I hope the honourable member for Gippsland will come out and substantiate that view.

There is nothing illegal in what I have done. The Navigation Act provides that I can impose conditions, and I do impose them. I repeat: When I am certain that the money will be retained by the crew, permits will be issued with that proviso. Do not let us have any illusions about where I stand in respect of issuing such permits. I do not believe that this money should be paid into any secret fund to be administered by individuals. All of the money that I am talking about would be paid to the crew. Either that would be done or the Government would impose a levy which would be subject to public audit. If there is anything wrong with that proposal, get up and say so, and just say what—

Mr Malcolm Fraser—This is what happened.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I am not concerned with what has happened.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—That is just it; we are.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I repeat that the honourable member for Wannon was heard in complete silence. I am going to ensure that the Minister for Transport is treated with the same courtesy.

Mr CHARLES JONES—Thank you. I do not mind them interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER—I do.

Mr CHARLES JONES—You might do. The facts are that, when I say that I am not concerned with what has happened, I am saying that I am concerned about matters with respect to which I give approval. I do not approve of all that has happened in the course of recent events. I did not approve of that and I took the appropriate action as I will show honourable members in my remarks in the next couple of minutes.

An incident was brought to my attention on approximately 12 November last year. I was asked to issue a single voyage permit for a ship, the 'Manchester Viga' which was loading containers ex Discovery Bay at Fremantle for Melbourne. I was asked to issue a single voyage permit for this ship on the advice of my Department that it was an onward movement where cargo had been taken off some ship, dumped, and then was to be picked up later on and carried on. I was advised—I have the full advice here—that a single voyage permit was not necessary, and I did not issue one. Let me explain how events turned out later after my involvement in the whole situation ceased. I received verbal advice which I believe was of a confidential nature from the ship owners to the effect that they had paid money to the Seamen's Union, which was then to be paid into the 'Noonga' fund. I had nothing whatever to do with that. It was not my responsibility. It was a matter between the ship owners and the unions. I repeat that it was nothing to do with me; the issue of a single voyage permit by me was not involved.

I know and honourable members opposite know that for years shipping companies and the unions have been making all sorts of deals. I know from my own experience that members of my own union have been given extra time in order to get ships out of the road, and to complete work on them and to get repairs done. Those are matters, as far as I am concerned, between the ship owner and the unions.

The next incident which came to my attention occurred immediately I returned from my visit overseas in July. This matter involved the issue of a single voyage permit for the carriage of oil. As far as the permit being issued was concerned, it was recommended to me that I issue a permit. The union had insisted on full Australian rates of pay being paid to the crew of this particular ship. We were led to believe that by arrangement between the union and the Ampol Company that company had agreed to pay the union one per

cent which would go into union funds. That matter had nothing whatsoever to do with me. It was a matter between the union and the company. The company was making no complaint whatsoever about the matter to me.

The first matter which was brought to my attention in this respect was the case of the 'Sloman Alstertor'. I received a telex in my office at Newcastle from the agents for that ship. They sent me the telex which I now hold in my hand. I will give the House the details of it. If honourable members wish I will incorporate it in Hansard as I have not time to read it. I ask for leave to do so.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

To Minister, c/- Department Transport Canberra

Hon. C. K. Jones
Minister for Transport
9/8/74

Our agents in Fremantle have received demand from Australian Seamen's Union representative in Fremantle claiming that he represented Head Office Seamen's Union, Sydney, say that because M.V. Sloman Alstertor under charter to our company carries a cargo of motor vehicles from Portland, Victoria to Fremantle, West Australia, this week the vessel will not be permitted to sail with her cargo for the Libyan Government from Fremantle until we pay into the Seamen's Union in Sydney a sum of money equal to the difference between Australian wages for Australian flag coastal container ships and the German wages on our first class modern fully refrigerated conventional cargo liner. We understand this amounts to between 1,500 and 2,000 Australian dollars being for the period of approximately six days coastwise. No indication has been given concerning the disposal of the funds after they have been received by the Seamen's Union.

As the vessel will shortly complete loading your reply today is respectfully requested to the following questions:

- (A) Can you give us any guidance in this matter from Government point of view.
- (B) Should we pay this money and if so to whom.
- (C) Does a legal basis exist for such a claim by the Seamen's Union who have so far refused to put their claim in writing.

For your guidance the vessel requires the use of linesmen, tugs and pilot to clear the port of Fremantle. There has been no involvement of WWF in this issue as yet.

Coastal Permit No. 22899 issued in Melbourne 31st July, 1974 refers to the cargo concerned.

Thanking you in anticipation

Peter N. Dent

Refrigerated Express Lines (A/asia) Pty Ltd

37 Pitt Street, Sydney

Telephone 241 1396

Mr CHARLES JONES—I thank the House. This telex, from a Mr Dent, asked me a series of questions. Among the questions, were these:

- (a) Can you give us any guidance in this matter from the Government point of view?
- (b) Should we pay this money and if so to whom?
- (c) Does a legal basis exist for such a claim by the Seamen's Union who have so far refused to put their claim in writing?

For your guidance, the vessel requires the use of linesmen, tugs and pilot to clear the port of Fremantle. There has been no involvement of the WWF in this issue as yet.

The telex asked for a reply that day. The reply was provided that day. This is the reply which I gave:

I refer to your telegram dated 9 August concerning 'Sloman Alstertor'. Prior to issuing permit for 'Sloman Alstertor' I notified the Secretary ACTU on 22 July of the proposed lifting of motor vehicles.

In the absence of any response or objection from the ACTU I find it surprising that the action now reported by you should have been taken by the Seamen's Union.

You will be aware that the Navigation Act requires that seamen on ships licensed to engage in the coasting trade should be paid wages at the current rates ruling in Australia but no such stipulation is made in relation to unlicensed ships for which permits may be issued to carry coastal cargo.

There is therefore no legal basis under the Navigation Act to support the demands alleged to have been made by the Seamen's Union.

In the circumstances I feel your company is justified in seeking to have the union's demands documented.

Whether the union's request is acceded to (with or without a written claim) is, I believe, a matter for you to decide.

In the event of an industrial dispute arising the normal arbitration process would involve notification of the dispute to the appropriate industrial tribunal either State or Commonwealth depending on the award under which the union or unions involved are operating.

In view of the nature of your representations I am referring a copy of your representations to my colleagues the Minister for Labor and Immigration and the Attorney-General.

That was on 9 August and there was no hesitation as far as I was concerned. I informed those people of my attitude, Mr Speaker, and where I stood on the issue. I gave them the advice I have just read to you, and it is on record. A few days after that I met the writer—

Mr Malcolm Fraser—I do not want to hold up the Minister, and if he wants an extension of time I am sure he would get it.

Mr SPEAKER—You cannot move for an extension until the speaker's time has expired.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—That was not the point on which I was rising. Could the Minister have the complete text of the letter he has just read incorporated in Hansard?

Mr CHARLES JONES—Yes, I have already incorporated the telex from Mr Dent and I will incorporate my reply of the same date to him.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—That is the one you read?

Mr CHARLES JONES—Yes, I will incorporate it. I have got nothing to be ashamed of in this matter. I ask for leave to incorporate the document in Hansard.

Mr SPEAKER—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

To Peter N Dent
Refrigerated Express Lines Pty Ltd
From C K Jones
Minister for Transport Canberra

I refer to your telegram dated 9 August concerning 'Sloman Alstertor'. Prior to issuing permit for 'Sloman Alstertor' I notified the secretary ACTU on 22 July of the proposed lifting of motor vehicles.

In the absence of any response or objection from the ACTU I find it surprising that the action now reported by you should have been taken by the Seamen's Union.

You will be aware that the Navigation Act requires that seamen on ships licensed to engage in the coasting trade should be paid wages at the current rates ruling in Australia but no such stipulation is made in relation to unlicensed ships for which permits may be issued to carry coastal cargo.

There is therefore no legal basis under the Navigation Act to support the demands alleged to have been made by the Seamen's Union.

In the circumstances I feel your company is justified in seeking to have the union's demands documented.

Whether the union's request is acceded to (with or without a written claim) is, I believe, a matter for you to decide.

In the event of an industrial dispute arising the normal arbitration process would involve notification of the dispute to the appropriate industrial tribunal either State or Commonwealth depending on the award under which the union or unions involved are operating.

In view of the nature of your representations I am referring a copy of your representations to my colleagues the Minister for Labor and Immigration and the Attorney-General.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I thank honourable members. Might I say also that within a few days of sending Mr Dent this telex I met him, in company with the honourable member for Parramatta (Mr Ruddock). I was looking at ferries in Sydney Harbour and during the inspection and a tour up the Parramatta River—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable gentleman's time has expired. The honourable member for Gippsland.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Does the Minister want an extension?

Mr Charles Jones—I would accept an extension of time.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! If a proposition is put to me for an extension of time I must put it and the House will decide.

Mr NIXON (Gippsland) (11.44)—I move:

That the time of the Minister for Transport be extended.

The Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) is shaking his head. He does not agree with the extension of time for the Minister.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Mr SPEAKER—I would remind the House that this is grievance day and there are 4 speakers waiting to go on to grievances.

Mr Nixon—I am sure that every member on this side of the House is prepared to give the Minister the opportunity to explain his position. It is a very serious charge and his own Minister will not even assist him.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Minister will contain himself. The motion has been carried.

Mr Daly—A point of order, Mr Speaker. An allegation has been made that I will not assist the Minister for Transport. The situation is that this is grievance day. The Opposition has brought in a resolution taking away all the rights of private members this morning. There is a general arrangement for me to protect the rights of private members and I do not see why extensions should be granted to either side in that case.

Mr Nixon—I rise on a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The motion has been carried and the Minister's time has been extended.

Mr Wentworth—I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Leader of the House is perfectly capable of extending grievance day. We heard a prime bit of hypocrisy from him a moment ago.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I call the Minister for Transport.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I regret very much having taken 7½ minutes of the time of back bench members for grievance day but it is I who is under challenge. As far as I am concerned, if anybody challenges my honesty I must answer the challenge. On 12 August I met Mr Dent, who had sent me the telex on 9 August. During that meeting and the inspection of the ferries he expressed to me his appreciation for the promptness of my reply and the attitude which I had adopted. That is an indication of the attitude of people who are involved in these matters. On 15 August I also forwarded to Mr Souter all the information which I have just tabled, namely, the telex from Mr Dent dated 9 August and my reply dated 9 August.

On 19 August Refrigerated Express Lines advised me that the 'Sloman Alstertor' was subject to industrial dispute prior to sailing and that only after the line had paid a figure of \$1,074.92

by cheque to the Seamen's Union had it been allowed to sail. On 20 August I authorised the sending of a telex to the Prime Minister, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Labor and Immigration, enclosing a copy of the telex from the line. Unfortunately that was not despatched by my Department until the next day. On 21 August I went to the Prime Minister in the middle of the Budget discussions—

Mr Malcolm Fraser—A point of order, Mr Speaker. I ask that the Minister also have these documents incorporated in Hansard.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! That is a matter for the Minister.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I seek leave to incorporate the documents in Hansard.

Mr SPEAKER—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The documents read as follows)—

From Peter N. Dent, Rel Sydney

To Hon. C. K. Jones

Sloman Alstertor at Fremantle

Further to our telex of 9th August we regret to advise the vessel was subjected to industrial troubles prior to sailing from Fremantle. Principally these include absence of tug crews/linesmen on 15 August.

Only after paying \$1,074.92 by bank cheque to Seamen's Union account No. S090091 for which obtained S.U.A. receipt from Mr Elliott the vessel was permitted to sail on 16th under Libyan Government charter.

We suggest a meeting with officers of your department the Department of Labor and Immigration and the Attorney General's Department in Sydney when convenient so that after studying the sequence of

(1) your advice on how to proceed on this matter.

(2) your opinions of the legal situation involved.

(3) your suggestions for this company obtaining return of the abovementioned \$1,074.92 plus demurrage and other charges resulting from the illegal interference referred to.

For your guidance we expect to have the detailed documentation available from our Fremantle agents in Sydney within one week.

If you deem that other departments are involved in this matter we invite you to pass the contents of this telex to your ministerial colleagues in these departments.

Thanking you in anticipation,
Peter N. Dent

Refrigerated Express Lines (A/Asia) Pty Ltd.

To Prime Minister

From C. K. Jones, Minister for Transport

I have received today representations from Peter Dent, Refrigerated Express Lines (A/Asia) Pty Ltd, 37 Pitt Street, Sydney. In view of nature of these representations I am forwarding you a copy of the telex received and my reply.

Furthermore I understand that a similar demand was recently made by the Seamen's Union of the Australian Newsprint Mills in respect of a shipment of newsprint on M.V. 'Thunderbird' from Hobart to Sydney. In this case it has been alleged that the amount involved is approximately \$18,000.

To Minister, C/- Dept Transport Canberra

Hon. C. K. Jones
Minister for Transport
9/8/74

Our agents in Fremantle have received demand from Australian Seamen's Union representative in Fremantle claiming that he represented head office Seamen's Union, Sydney, say that because m.v. Sloman Alstertor under charter to our company carried a cargo of motor vehicles from Portland, Victoria, to Fremantle, West Australia, this week the vessel will not be permitted to sail with her cargo for the Libyan government from Fremantle until we pay into the seamen's union in Sydney a sum of money equal to the difference between Australian wages for Australian flag coastal container ships and the German wages on our first class modern fully refrigerated conventional cargo liner. We understand this amounts to between 1,500 and 2,000 Australian dollars being for the period of approximately six days coastwise. No indication has been given concerning the disposal of the funds after they have been received by the seamen's union.

As the vessel will shortly complete loading your reply today is respectfully requested to the following questions:

(a) Can you give us any guidance in this matter from government point of view.

(b) Should we pay this money and if so to whom.

(c) Does a legal basis exist for such a claim by the seamen's union who have so far refused to put their claim in writing.

For your guidance the vessel requires the use of linesmen, tugs and pilot to clear the port of Fremantle. There has been no involvement of WWF in this issue as yet.

Coastal permit No. 22899 issued in Melbourne 31 July 1974 refers to the cargo concerned.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Peter N. Dent
Refrigerated Express Lines (A/Asia) Pty Ltd
37 Pitt Street, Sydney.

To Peter N. Dent

Refrigerated Express Lines Pty Ltd

From C. K. Jones, Minister for Transport, Canberra.

I refer to your telegram dated 9 August concerning "Sloman Alstertor". Prior to issuing permit for "Sloman Alstertor" I notified the secretary ACTU on 22 July of the proposed lifting of motor vehicles. In the absence of any response or objection from the ACTU I find it surprising that the action now reported by you should have been taken by the seamen's union.

You will be aware that the Navigation Act requires that seamen on ships licensed to engage in the coasting trade should be paid wages at the current rates ruling in Australia but no such stipulation is made in relation to unlicensed ships for which permits may be issued to carry coastal cargo.

There is therefore no legal basis under the Navigation Act to support the demands alleged to have been made by the seamen's union.

In the circumstances I feel your company is justified in seeking to have the union's demands documented.

Whether the union's request is acceded to (with or without a written claim) is, I believe, a matter for you to decide.

In the event of an industrial dispute arising the normal arbitration process would involve notification of the dispute to the appropriate industrial tribunal either State or Commonwealth depending on the award under which the union or unions involved are operating.

In view of the nature of your representations I am referring a copy of your representations to my colleagues the Minister for Labor and Immigration and the Attorney-General'.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I thank honourable members. On 21 August I was concerned that there had been no action. I want honourable members to understand the state of the political scene at that stage. The Government was in the middle of the Cabinet discussions on the Budget and honourable members on the other side should know what is involved in the weeks leading up to the Budget and in particular that week, when we sat for 6 days, including a special sitting of Parliament. On 21 August I saw the Prime Minister and told him that there was an important matter with which I was concerned. I asked him had he seen the letters and he admitted to me that at that point he had not seen them. The moment I outlined the issue and the facts to him in relation to the way I saw them and what was happening he said: 'We are not going to tolerate this. Give me a letter to our colleagues the Attorney-General and the Minister for Labor and Immigration'. I had a letter prepared which was submitted to me on 23 August. I was not satisfied with it and had it redrafted. I seek leave to incorporate in Hansard the letter setting out the position as I saw it.

Mr SPEAKER—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600
24 August 1974

My dear Prime Minister,

I recently spoke to you about representations I received from Mr Peter Dent, Refrigerated Express Lines (Australia) Pty Ltd, Sydney, regarding demands allegedly made by the Seamen's Union of Australia in respect of the German registered vessel 'Sloman Alsterort'.

Mr Dent first brought this matter to my attention on 9 August. On 19 August he indicated to me that the vessel was delayed by industrial action at Fremantle. Only after payment of \$1074.92 had been made to a bank account nominated by the Seamen's Union was the vessel permitted to sail. For your convenience, copies of the correspondence are attached.

On 23 August, I received a message from Mr A. C. Rose, Director of P and O Australia Ltd that the vessel 'Sevillian Reefer' was being delayed at Sydney in similar circumstances. A copy of this message is also attached.

I might add that these are not isolated cases. Officers of my Department have been advised verbally of other demands having been made by the Seamen's Union under the threat of industrial action. In recent weeks payments to the Seamen's Union have been made by Ampol Petroleum Ltd and Australian Newsprint Mills in respect of coastal voyaging by the 'Prima Maersk' and 'Thunderbird' respectively which had been issued with single voyage permits for the carriage of interstate coastal cargo.

In the case of 'Thunderbird', the vessel is at present waiting to berth at Melbourne to discharge newsprint from Hobart but, according to the Shipper, the Seamen's Union has indicated that tug assistance will not be made available until further payment is made.

In each of the cases which have come to my notice the payment sought by the Union has been related to the difference between the wage rates normally payable to the crew and the rates which would apply if the crew were on Australian Articles. Although a receipt is held by Refrigerated Express Lines and Australian Newsprint Mills for the payments made to the Union there is no indication that the crews of the vessels have received any additional remuneration during the period of employment on the Australian coast.

In relation to the attached representations from Mr Dent, my own view is that he should be guided by his legal advisers on the course of action he should pursue in seeking to recover the payment made to the Seamen's Union. I would not propose to offer any advice on how he should proceed on the matter.

I would propose therefore that we should examine urgently the measures available to the Government to prevent a repetition of the Seamen's Union demands. You may feel that, in the first instance, perhaps it would be appropriate for officials of our two Departments together with officers of the Attorney-General's Department, Department of Labor and Immigration and the Department of Treasury to meet next week with a view to preparing a report on the possible courses of action open to Government.

If you agree, I suggest you write to the other Ministers I have mentioned in the terms of the attached draft letter.

Yours sincerely,
C. K. JONES

The Honourable E. G. Whitlam, Q.C., M.P.,
Prime Minister,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

Mr CHARLES JONES—I thank honourable members. On Saturday, 24 August, after the Cabinet Budget discussions had concluded I sent the letter and recommendations to the Prime Minister. He was then away for a week and I was away for 4 days. When I returned to my office on Monday, 2 September, at about 9 a.m. my colleague the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) rang me in Newcastle in relation to this matter and put to me the proposition that we should have a royal commission. I immediately agreed to this proposition and the result is that today you have a royal commission. It is the wish of the Prime Minister, the Minister for Labor and Immigration and myself that this matter be fully investigated and exposed. Evidence will be taken at the inquiry, unlike the inquiry set up by the Liberal-Country Party Government in 1958 when people who tendered evidence were not subject to cross-examination by those affected by their evidence. The first paragraph in the recommendations of that committee states that fact.

As far as I am concerned personally, I have never stopped moving on all this information. As

I receive the letters I refer them to people who are there to give the necessary legal advice on what can and should be done and what the recommendations are. I am not a lawyer and I cannot give you that legal advice. When these papers are produced for public inspection and cross-examination at the royal commission it will be shown that at no time have the Department of Transport and its Minister accepted and tolerated payments of this type being made into any fund. To the crews of the ships, yes. And I ask the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) to say that he is opposed to the crews being paid this sort of money. I agree that International Transport Federation rates should be paid to all crews of international ships. It is part of the policy of the Labor Party and the trade union movement. It is true that I told Charlie Fitzgibbons, who is a personal friend of mine, both being Newcastle men, that there was no risk of any interference by me or any prosecution or action being taken against his union while it was insisting on the crews of foreign ships being paid ITF rates of pay. I challenge the Opposition to dispute that, to say that I was wrong and that they should not get ITF rates of pay. That is the situation as far as I am concerned. I have no evidence, no proof and no knowledge of any money having been paid into secret funds—that is, as far as ITF rates of pay are concerned. I have been completely truthful and above board. Never for a moment have I tolerated a situation where money was obtained by means that could be referred to as blackmail or anything else.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Minister's time has expired.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Minister for Transport has said that the indemnity payments to the Waterside Workers Federation will not attract any action so far as he is concerned. Sir, you ruled that the Waterside Workers Federation was included in the terms of reference of the royal commission. Is it not necessary for the Minister to clarify for the House whether the Waterside Workers Federation is included in the inquiry especially as there is evidence, by Mr Fitzgibbon's own words in some newspapers, that \$125,000 of the money collected did not go to ships' crews?

Mr SPEAKER—The Chair is unaware of what took place outside this House with respect to any payments.

Mr Charles Jones—I am unaware of what Mr Fitzgibbon has said to the Press.

Mr NIXON (Gippsland) (11.51)—I will go into the details of the last point in a moment but firstly I shall deal with something that the Leader of the House (Mr Daly) said when we moved for the Minister for Transport (Mr Charles Jones) to have an extension of time in which to finish his remarks. The Leader of the House made the most miserable excuse possible for curtailing this debate by suggesting that we were cutting into private members' time on Grievance Day. The fact is that he would not enable a censure debate to be held on 23 August when we sought it nor would he bring it on on Tuesday. He permitted that debate yesterday which forced us to raise this matter of public importance today, so cutting into private members' time. The fact that he is not prepared to support the Minister for Transport in answering the serious charge made against him is a disgrace.

The Minister for Transport commenced his speech by referring to a 1958 report and making various allegations about what the Liberal and Country Parties may or not have done as a government. The honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser) made specific allegations. This case cannot rest on what the Minister has put before the House today. The allegations have not been answered in sufficient detail. He has not explained the tardiness of his approach to the question or the tardiness of the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron). Let me explain to the House what this matter is all about. The facts are that extortion payments have been demanded and made. This is clear from all the evidence available to us from newspapers over a period of time. In fact I can quote from the chief extortionist of all, Elliot V. Elliott, who said that they had demanded that the difference between the wages paid to each member of the crew of the 'Thunderbird' and the rate that would have been paid for Australian crews, including leave entitlements for the period, be paid. The point is that Elliot V. Elliott did not demand that those payments go to the crew. The Minister for Transport supports the idea that such payments should go to members of the crew. Elliot V. Elliott asked that these payments be paid into a certain bank account of the Seamen's Union. As the honourable member for Wannon rightly pointed out, a letter from the Australian Newsprint Mills Limited goes so far as to name the number of that Seamen's Union bank account. It is S090091. The Australian Newsprint Mills paid \$18,000 into that account. There are allegations in subsequent newspaper articles of amounts up to \$70,000 being paid.

Mr Charles Jones—I take a point of order, Mr Speaker. The honourable member is referring to Mr Henry's letter of 26 August.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—No, July.

Mr Charles Jones—The letter the honourable member for Wannon mentioned was dated 26 August and I received that on 29 August.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—The letter I quoted was written on 26 July.

Mr Nixon—The letter to which I am referring is dated 30 July and is entirely different. It is addressed to Mr H. Souter of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. I will have it incorporated in Hansard if the Minister so desires.

Mr Charles Jones—All right.

Mr Nixon—It is included in Hansard.

Mr SPEAKER—The honourable member must have it incorporated in the correct manner. He must seek leave. I ask him not to forget the Chair.

Mr Nixon—I seek leave to have that letter incorporated in Hansard.

Mr SPEAKER—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

Dear Mr Souter,

Further to our conversation on 30 July concerning the vessel 'Thunderbird', I enclose copy of a letter written to the Federal Minister, Mr Clyde Cameron, on 26 July and telex sent to him on Monday, 29 July. These, I think, are self explanatory.

Later on Monday, 29 July, Elliott advised Mr Deane of Hetherington-Kingsbury of a resolution by the Seafarers Unions that the difference in money amount between Australian rates and leave provisions and ITF rates and provisions applicable to crew members of the 'Thunderbird' whilst engaged on the Australian coast be paid weekly into account No. S090091 of the Seamens Union by bank cheque.

In doing so Elliott rejected a suggestion by Deane that, in any event, this should not apply for the seven days during which berthing of the vessel had been held up by Elliott's actions.

A payment of \$18,000 by means of a bank cheque was made by Hetherington-Kingsbury to Elliott on July 30, accompanied by a letter reading somewhat as follows:

Further to our conversation on Monday, 29 July 1974, we enclose a bank cheque for \$18,000. This amount is paid without prejudice and on the understanding that the vessel 'Thunderbird' will be released immediately to enable it to discharge newsprint.

The cheque relates to portion of the difference in money amounts between Australian rates and leave provisions and ITF rates and provisions applicable to crew members of the vessel 'Thunderbird' whilst engaged in the carriage of newsprint between Australian ports.

Your receipt is requested.

We understand Elliott has now advised firemen and deckhands that it is in order to berth the 'Thunderbird' and

the vessel is expected to discharge newsprint in Sydney on 31 July.

Deane has been unable to obtain from Elliott any confirmation of the reasons for his demand and he has in fact refused to do so. Whilst Hetherington-Kingsbury's letter protects them to some extent, the action by Elliott is, in my opinion, one of the most unsavoury I have yet encountered for the following reasons:

1. As arranged several years ago with the Waterside Workers Federation, representing the ITF, if a request is made to augment ITF rates to bring them up to Australian rates, the amount has always been paid to the ship's crew.
2. On this occasion the crew of the 'Thunderbird' could make such a request and this would lead to double payment by Hetherington-Kingsbury unless all sums paid to the Australian Seamen's Union are recovered.
3. In the absence of any written statement or acknowledgement by Elliott the payment to the Seamen's Union could be regarded as a bribe, a Christmas present, or whatever they like to call it.

I have never heard of any similar demand, but understand it is not unusual for the Seafarers Unions to be paid 'slush money' when overseas vessels are engaged in the carriage of Australian goods between Australian ports and amounting to 1 per cent of the freight rate.

Yours sincerely,
R. W. Henry
Managing Director

Mr Nixon—I thank the House. I might say, Mr Speaker, that there is no way by which I could forget your presence. You remind me of your presence every time I make a speech in this House.

Mr SPEAKER—I think it is always needful that I do.

Mr Nixon—I do not wish to debate that, Sir. The fact is that there have been worse allegations involving higher amounts. One such allegation was made by Mr Fitzgibbon himself. It appeared in numerous newspapers throughout Australia but I quote from the 'Sydney Morning Herald' of 11 September wherein the following appears:

The Waterside Workers Federation has collected at least \$370,000 from ship companies paying wages below international rates.

From what Mr Fitzgibbon has said the money seems to have been split. Some of it went to the crews—\$125,000 is in doubt—but the remainder is not explained. Where does that money go? That is the point the Minister for Transport has not explained.

Mr Hunt—Does it go to the Labor Party?

Mr SPEAKER—It is true that the Minister for Transport made some passing references to some matters but I do not want the honourable member for Gippsland to debate them. As I ruled earlier, reference to any matters covered by the terms of reference of the royal commission is

out of order. If the honourable member examines the contents of this matter of public importance he will see that it does not include anything that touches on those terms of reference. I ask the honourable member for Gippsland not to refer to payments made to the Waterside Workers Federation because that matter is covered by paragraph (b) of part 1 of the terms of reference.

Mr NIXON—I accept your assurance that the Waterside Workers Federation is covered in the terms of reference. I am delighted to hear it. However, it runs contrary to what the Minister for Transport said. This is the point I am trying to bring out. The Minister said that the Waterside Workers Federation has nothing to fear from him as Minister; in fact, he is setting out to protect it. I refer now to an article by James Ramsden which appeared in the 'Australian Financial Review' and which the Minister has not denied. The Minister has not denied the accuracy of that article in which it is claimed that the Minister said he would protect the Waterside Workers Federation. We need clearly to know that the terms of reference are as you, Mr Speaker, have indicated.

Mr Charles Jones—Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The honourable member for Gippsland is distorting what I said. What I said to Mr Fitzgibbon, the Federal Secretary of the Waterside Workers Federation, is that whenever his union takes action to insist on ships' crews being paid ITF rates of pay he can expect no attack from me.

Mr SPEAKER—I think every honourable member should read what appears on the blue program sheet. They would then be satisfied what the letter the honourable member for Wanton submitted to me is all about. The subject matter of this matter of public importance should be adhered to. I have explained why. The honourable member should not refer to anything that may prejudice the hearing of this matter before the royal commission. After long consultation with other people I have ruled that paragraph (b) of part 1 of the terms of reference covers the Waterside Workers Federation because it is a corporate body.

Mr NIXON—I do not want to intrude on the actions of the royal commission. What I am trying to get is clarification from the Minister of various points. The Minister has not satisfied the Opposition as to his own actions or his tardiness. The Minister for Labor and Immigration apparently knew of this letter at the same time—the letter from the Australian Newsprint Mills—yet he did nothing about it. Perhaps we will hear from

him what action he proposes to take. The Minister for Transport has explained what he did on one or two ships. He lost interest in the levy after that point of time. The fact is that by losing interest in the levy which was to go to the crew he removed the one salutary thing that may have allowed the Seamen's Union to keep those conditions operative, namely, that any levy raised would go to the crew. The Minister for Transport has said that on 2 ships he made sure that the money went to the crew. But then he seemed to lose interest. From that point of time the Minister has been tardy in his responsibility. He has explained his actions in relation to only 2 counts. He has a lot to account for. That is why we are interested to know whether the terms of reference of the Royal Commission will clearly bring out the whole of the facts relating to all of the ships that have been involved in this issue of indemnity payments. It is a plain extortion racket. They are no more or less than bribes. This is one of the worst examples that we have heard of in Australian maritime history of such actions. This matter is under the direct responsibility of the Minister, but he has not been informative enough in telling us all the details about it.

The fact is that the Seamen's Union gave \$5,000 to the Labor Party's slush fund. We have seen a photograph of Senator Murphy collecting the cheque. But that is not the only point. The point is that 7 or 8 other unions are involved apart from the Seamen's Union. The other unions are the Marine Cooks, Bakers and Butchers Association of Australasia, the Federated Marine Stewards and Pantrymen's Association of Australasia, the Federated Shipwrights and Ship Constructors Association of Australia, the Merchant Service Guild of Australia—it shocks me to see that union included—the Professional Radio Employees Institute of Australasia and the Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers. How much money have those unions been paid? How much money did the Labor Party get out of them? We want to know whether the terms of reference of the Royal Commission will bring to light the reason that the Minister for Labor and Immigration has been so tardy in his action in handling this matter. Is it because of the money paid to the Labor Party's slush fund that the Government has been so tardy and loath to move?

(Extension of time granted.)

One other point needs to be made. We on this side of the House allege that the terms of reference which have been drawn up for this inquiry are too narrow. The Australian Council of Trade Unions wanted to hold its own inquiry

into this matter. I am not at all convinced that the Government did not elbow the ACTU to one side so that the Government would then control the inquiry. This is not a reflection on Mr Justice Sweeney. I have the greatest respect and regard for him. I am concerned about the limited terms of reference under which he is allowed to work. Why the ACTU was elbowed to one side, the interplay of union rivalries and the dislike for the Minister for Labor and Immigration are all matters which could be brought to the fore and we would be able to obtain a certain amount of information. But the narrow terms of reference of the Royal Commission may not allow that information to come out. For that reason I am not sure whether one of the reasons for elbowing the ACTU to one side was so that the Government itself could control the inquiry by limiting the terms of reference.

Mr Clyde Cameron—What additional terms of reference would you suggest?

Mr NIXON—I would like a term of reference that specifically goes into the reasons for the tardiness of the Minister for Labor and Immigration in handling this matter. Almost every newspaper in this country has printed a leading article to the preaching of the immorality of this affair by the Minister for Labor and Immigration. Yet it took him 7 or 8 weeks to move on it. He did nothing. Yet his own Department was informed about it on 26 July by means of the letter by which the Department of Transport was also informed. I have grave suspicions about the limited terms of reference of the inquiry which will not give the Royal Commission the right to look at the tardiness of the Minister for Labor and Immigration in relation to this matter and the performance of the Minister for Transport and the narrow actions that he took. I accept the explanation given by the Minister for Transport for what he has done. What I do not accept is what he has not done and what he has not explained to this House. That is why the terms of reference ought to be drawn on a much broader and wider basis.

What has happened to this slush fund money that has gone to the Labor Party? We have seen only one public example of a fat cheque going to the Labor Party? It is a serious allegation that I am making but the proof is there. The fact is that a photograph was taken of the representative of the Seamen's Union handing a cheque to the Australian Labor Party to be used for the last election campaign. How much more money went to the Labor Party election campaign? How much money did the other unions put in? How

wide is this total extortion racket? There is no way in the world that this Royal Commission, with the terms of reference that it has, can get a picture of the total extortion rackets that are going on under this Government. For all the vague allegations that might have been made by the Minister for Transport about the activities of the last Government, there is nothing to equal the specific charges that have been laid in this debate. The Minister for Transport is as culpable as the Minister for Labor and Immigration. When he replies let us not have from the Minister for Labor and Immigration one of those glib speeches in which he says nothing. We want answers to the charges.

If the Minister does not answer the charges he will be found guilty by the Australian people. I have no doubt that one of the grave reasons that the shipping companies did not complain was that the Minister for Transport shrugged his shoulders and said: 'This was a deal between the ship owners and the unions and I have nothing to do with it.' He shrugged it from his shoulders. The ship owners were unable to complain because they knew darned well that under this Minister nothing would be done, that their ships would be tied up at the wharves and that this Minister would do nothing but protect the unions. The Minister has a great habit of protecting the unions. He is prepared to take on the Qantas hostesses and growl about their salary rises and make all sorts of allegations about how they got them. He is prepared to take on the Qantas pilots. He is prepared to support the use of Royal Australian Air Force aircraft to take a Russian back to his commie friends. But he will not use an RAAF aircraft to break a strike in Tasmania.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I have allowed a little latitude in making passing reference to matters that have nothing at all to do with the matter before the Chair.

Mr NIXON—The Minister was prepared to indulge in strike breaking in relation to the Ermolenko affair but he would not help his starving Tasmanian friends.

Mr Bennett—I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. Is it right for a person in this place to speak of a person invited by an Australian organisation to this country with such disrespect as has the honourable member in relation to Mr Ermolenko?

Mr SPEAKER—That is not a matter for the Chair. The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr Nixon—I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I said nothing whatever about Mr Ermolenko. I was talking about the Minister's commie friends in Russia.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. I have given a ruling on the point of order, which actually finishes debate on that point.

Mr Nixon (Gippsland)—Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr SPEAKER—Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr Nixon—Yes. The honourable member for Swan said that I referred to Mr Ermolenko as a commie friend. If I did, that was a mistake. The point I was making was that the Minister was prepared to see Mr Ermolenko carried back to his commie friends in an RAAF aircraft but he was not prepared to carry food to the starving Tasmanians in a time of strike.

Mr CHARLES JONES (Newcastle—Minister for Transport)—Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr SPEAKER—Does the Minister claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr CHARLES JONES—Yes. Out of justice to a trade union official whom the honourable member for Gippsland implied was involved in this matter—I refer to the Acting Secretary of the Marine Cooks, Bakers and Butchers Association of Australasia—I seek leave to have incorporated his telegram to me dissociating his union from the alleged involvement in the levies and my reply to him of 9 September.

Mr SPEAKER—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The documents read as follows)---

C K Jones MP
68 Alfred St
Milsons Point NSW

The executive of marine cooks union of Australia emphatically refute any involvement in levies on foreign ships as per media

Acting Secretary Carrington

Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600
9 Sept 1974

Dear Mr Carrington,

Thank you for your telegram of 5th September concerning levies on foreign ships. I was pleased to receive your advice that the Executive of your Union refuted the suggestion that it was involved in these levies.

Yours sincerely,

(C. K. Jones)

Mr C. Carrington,
Acting Secretary,
Marine Cooks, Bakers and Butchers' Association of Australasia,
4 Goulburn Street,
Sydney, N.S.W. 2000.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Mr Speaker, would it be possible, with your indulgence, to ask the Minister—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! When the honourable member rises he must address the Chair to get the call. What are you asking? Are you seeking the indulgence of the Chair to ask a question of the Minister?

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Yes.

Mr SPEAKER—That is all right. Ask your question.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—The Minister has been good in incorporating a number of papers in Hansard. Would it be possible for him to allow the honourable member for Gippsland and me to examine the departmental files relating to this issue?

Mr SPEAKER—That is up to the Minister.

Mr Charles Jones—Yes, I am prepared to make available to members of the Opposition all of the information which has today been made available to officers of the Royal Commission in Sydney.

Mr Nixon (Gippsland)—Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr Nixon—Yes, it is on the point—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! This is not an opportunity for the honourable member to express a point of view. He must say where he has been misrepresented.

Mr Nixon—If I may just explain to you, Sir, the Minister tabled a letter from one of the unions that I named. I want to apologise to that union. The information I used came from Eliot V. Elliott.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON (Hindmarsh—Minister for Labor and Immigration) (12.12)—I will not get very excited about this proposition. It surprises me that a product of the Melbourne Grammar School did not know that it is quite improper to raise in the Parliament matters that are sub judice.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Oh, sit down, you big—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I am pleased the Minister did not finish that sentence.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Mr Speaker, the Minister for Labor and Immigration has just challenged your ruling concerning the propriety of the letter to you submitting for discussion this matter of public importance. It was not a criticism of me, Mr Speaker; I suggest it was a criticism of you because you clearly ruled that this matter was not sub judice.

Mr SPEAKER—There is no substance in the point of order. I ask honourable members not to keep raising points that are not points of order. Many honourable members are rising on the pretext of a point of order just to express an opinion. I will not accept such an expression of opinion as a point of order. A point of order must relate only to the general practices and procedures or the Standing Orders of the House.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I want to say quite firmly now that if I am interrupted any more by points of order or by interjections that I find unpalatable, I shall at once resume my seat and the pearls of wisdom that would otherwise have fallen from my lips will be lost for ever. I received the letter from Mr Henry in my office on 29 July. My secretary spoke with my central office in Melbourne the next day. On 31 July my secretary recorded a telephone advice that a copy of the letter received from Mr Henry was being sent by my secretary to my Department requesting that the facts contained in Mr Henry's letter be checked. A telex message was sent from my office with the text of the letter from Mr Henry dated 26 July, which included the text of the letter sent to the Australian Council of Trade Unions by Mr Henry on 17 July—it will be noticed that it was 9 days after Mr Henry wrote to the ACTU that he decided to write to me—and advice that he had contacted the Department of Transport about the matter. There was a telex from the Department to my office on 2 August outlining the Department's knowledge of events and comments on matters raised by Mr Henry in his letters to me. This telex also included advice that the ship's agents had confirmed that the ship had been cleared. On 12 August another telex was sent from my office setting out details of the reply that I had received from the Minister for Transport (Mr Charles Jones) with whom I was in touch about the matter. On 21 August there was another telex from my office with a copy of a telex from the Minister for Transport outlining

the text of a telex which he had received concerning this matter. On 3 September I issued a Press release which I now ask leave to incorporate in Hansard.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Leave is granted if the Minister incorporates in Hansard all of the documents from which he has quoted.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—The Minister will not. You either let me do it unconditionally or not at all.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I remind the honourable member for Wannon that this is a request to incorporate one particular document in Hansard. Leave is either granted or not granted. There is no qualification about other documents.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I ask leave to incorporate this document.

Mr SPEAKER—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

3 September 1974

The Minister for Labor and Immigration, Mr Cameron, today condemned the practice of maritime unions demanding payments to allow the movement of ships around the Australian coast, and then paying the money into union funds rather than to the crew members of the ships involved.

'I consider this action highly improper and I am gravely concerned,' Mr Cameron said.

'It is contrary to all union principles that anyone should appropriate from a worker any of the money due to him as wages. Organised labour has fought such practices for more than a century,' he said.

'The gravity of the principle involved is not lessened by the fact that in this case it is not employers, but unions, that are in effect confiscating portion of other workers' earnings.'

'No self-respecting Australian unionist would want to benefit from money gained in this way,' Mr Cameron said.

Mr Cameron said that since he had received a complaint from the managing director of the Australian News Print Mills, Mr R. W. Henry, he had requested his department to investigate the matter. He had also had discussions with the secretary of the ACTU, Mr H. J. Souter.

These investigations had established that some maritime union officials had immobilised the vessel 'Thunderbird' in Sydney until a sum of about \$17,000 had been paid to the unions.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—May I ask the indulgence of the Chair?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—No, you cannot. Sit down. I am on my feet. Mr Speaker, I wish to announce that I do not propose to take any further part in this debate.

Motion (by Mr Daly) put:

That the business of the day be called on.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

Ayes	62
Noes	52
Majority	10

AYES

Armitage, J. L.
Barnard, L. H.
Beazley, K. E.
Bennett, A. F.
Berinson, J. M.
Bowen, Lionel
Bryant, G. M.
Cairns, J. F.
Cameron, Clyde
Cass, M. H.
Child, G. J. L.
Clayton, G.
Coates, J.
Cohen, B.
Collard, F. W.
Connor, R. F. X.
Cross, M. D.
Daly, F. M.
Davies, R.
Dawkins, J. S.
Duthie, G. W. A.
Enderby, K. E.
Everingham, D. N.
FitzPatrick, J.
Fulton, W. J.
Garrick, H. J.
Gun, R. T.
Hayden, W. G.
Hurfurd, C. J.
Innes, U. E.
Jacobi, R.
Jenkins, H. A.
Johnson, Keith
Johnson, Les
Jones, Charles
Keating, P. J.
Keogh, L. J.
Kerin, J. C.
Klugman, R. E.
Lamb, A. H.
Luchetti, A. S.
McKenzie, D. C.
Martin, V. J.
Mathews, C. R. T.
Morris, P. F.
Morrison, W. L.
Mulder, A. W.
Oldmadow, M. W.
Patterson, R. A.
Reynolds, L. J.
Riordan, J. M.
Scholes, G. G. D.
Sherry, R. H.
Stewart, F. E.
Thorburn, R. W.
Uren, T.
Wallis, L. G.
Whan, R. B.
Willis, R.
Young, M. J.

Tellers
James, A. W.
Nicholls, M. H.

PAIRS

Fry, K. L.	Garland, R. V.
Whitlam, E. G.	Snedden, B. M.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE**Care of the Aged—Proposed Fuel and Energy Legislation in Western Australia****Question proposed:**

That grievances be noted.

Mr WILSON (Sturt) (12.25)—There is an aged care crisis in the community. There is an urgent need for something to be done in the aged care area. Many of the people in the community who are operating organisations concerned with care for the aged expected that in the Budget, there would be some recognition of their needs, but they were disappointed. It is true that the supplementary benefit in respect of nursing home care was increased on 1 August. But all that did was enable patients in nursing homes to afford the fees that then reflected the cost of operating those nursing homes. My concern today is for the patients. Those patients are going from one financial crisis to another because of the Government's failure to recognise in the Budget the need to announce that nursing home benefits should be index related. A study of the figures on nursing home fees since 1 August indicates quite clearly that, as a consequence of rising costs, fees are getting beyond the level that a pensioner can afford to pay for proper nursing home care.

Whenever one hears that nursing home fees have risen it is very easy to think that those who are operating the homes are putting up the fees in order to make a substantial profit. I draw the attention of the House to the fact that nursing home fees are controlled. Nursing homes can raise their fees only if the increase is approved by the Department of Social Security. That Department has been examining many claims by nursing home operators—some private and some combined charity and benevolent organisations—to justify increased fees and it has granted the increases because the fact is that over recent months the costs of operating nursing homes have escalated at a rate far in excess of the consumer price index and there are still further increases in the pipeline.

Many of the nursing homes run by charities and benevolent organisations were nearly bankrupt in July. Because of their plight, the Government took temporary action. But all it did was to release a tourniquet that had been tightening to strangulation point. The Government gave no indication of when nursing home fees would be again increased. Many nursing homes expected something to be done in the Budget. But if we look at the Budget we find that there is talk about deficit budgeting. If one studies the words and

the papers attached to the Budget documents one will find that the Government expects to spend a mere \$1.8m over and above the figure it anticipated spending on 1 August when nursing home benefits were increased to bring them to a realistic level. It is quite clear that the Government does not intend to increase nursing home benefits between now and August of next year. I challenge the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) to deny that that is so. If he is able to deny that it is so, why did he not include in the Estimates contained in the Budget a provision for greater funding of nursing homes? The provision of a mere additional \$1.8m in funds for nursing home care for the aged will go nowhere. The Minister has said that he wants to enable the charity and benevolent organisations which are operating nursing homes to provide greater facilities. It is not a question of their being able to provide greater facilities; the crisis is that they will not be able to provide the facilities that they now offer to many thousands of needy people. He speaks about deficit budgeting as though the non-profit organisations are the only nursing homes that provide for pensioner patients. The facts is that 80 per cent of all patients in nursing homes are pensioners.

The former Liberal-Country Party Government set in motion machinery that was designed to update nursing home benefits so that a patient with a pension income could not only afford reasonable accommodation but be left with some spending money equivalent to one-quarter of the standard rate pension plus supplementary assistance. What has this Government done? It has reduced the amount of spending money available to the pensioner from what it should be today—from \$8.75 to \$4. That \$4 is now insufficient to cover the costs of the large number of nursing homes that are forced, because of wage claims, to charge fees in excess of what is commonly regarded as the standard fee—a fee calculated by adding the nursing home benefit and the proportion of pension income supposedly allocated to the cost of nursing home care.

The figures show quite clearly that since 1 August a large number of nursing homes have sought fee increases and have been granted them. To imagine that they are the only fee increases that will be granted between now and next August is to bury one's head in the sand. It is clear therefore that the Minister is showing a lack of care for the financial wellbeing of the aged. I am constantly telephoned by people in great distress. As a result of the fact that people cannot afford the cost of adequate care in nursing homes many are driven into unlicensed boarding houses

where they pay their pensions for poor accommodation, inadequate food and inadequate medical care. In the meantime the nursing homes, whether they be privately run or charity run, are endeavouring to keep their heads above water financially. Many of these organisations which hope to expand the facilities that they can offer to the community and to offer accommodation and care to the people now in the second grade boarding houses are not willing to go ahead with their building programs. They are unwilling to take the financial gamble of being forced into a situation of near bankruptcy.

Today many of these organisations are confronted with the knowledge that further wage increases are in the pipeline. For example, in South Australia under a recently negotiated award for domestic staff the domestic staff are to be paid an additional \$4.15. Applications for an additional week's leave for certain nursing staff are before the court. A new sister's award is to be handed down. Inflation in other cost areas is rapidly forcing up prices. I urge the Minister in the interests of the patients and in the interests of humanity to announce that he will index relate the benefits so that they can be increased automatically as approval is given for fees to rise. If the fee rises are approved those fees are justified by the evidence and the Minister should be able to announce that additional benefits are available to meet them.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin)— Order! the honourable member's time has expired.

Mr BENNETT (Swan) (12.35)—I rise to draw attention further to the tragic circumstances in Western Australia where legislation which has been sent from the Lower House to the Upper House proposes to take from Australian citizens their basic freedoms at law and to give to an elected government powers which were not mentioned during that government's election manifesto. I refer to the Fuel and Power Resources Act Amendment Bill which was introduced by the Western Australian Liberal Government. It is alarming that there is no suggestion of a referendum to find out from the public whether they accept the concept involved in the legislation. The Law Society of Western Australia, trade union leaders, State Opposition members and community leaders are expressing their abhorrence of the proposals which take from citizens the right to trial by jury, which gives the Government the power of summary arrest, and which enable searches of homes without warrant to be carried out at a Minister's direction.

I have said in this House in regard to similar legislation which was proposed here at one time by the previous Government that, even if one were to accept the concept that the existing administration is soundly based—in this case I do not think that the people who could propose such legislation are soundly based—once these laws are made they will be used in the future, perhaps by someone who is not of the same political beliefs, to suppress the public for other reasons than industrial ones, that is, for purely political ones. I have been dismayed to find that not one word of criticism has been uttered by the Federal Liberal Party representatives in this House to protect the freedom of their constituents—a freedom which once lost perhaps will be impossible to regain without bloodshed.

It is appalling that there has been such neglect by those responsible for putting forward such extreme legislation which could be ascribed only to the worst types of government such as dictatorships or fascist administrations. These people should have been persuaded that the legislation should be withdrawn. It is a pity the Federal Liberal representatives have not approached their State counterparts to have the legislation completely redrafted, if not withdrawn. The legislation is sinister in its intent. It is not impossible to think of political candidates at a forthcoming election finding themselves in prison for activities or statements of support for workers' actions. Such things happen in countries not far from our shores.

Even more restrictive amendments could be moved during an emergency session of Parliament called during an emergency declared by a Minister to give himself wider powers. If the Press and other media were suppressed during such sittings of the Parliament no reports of the proceedings would go forward to the public. This is possible within the terms of the Bill. In fact, if all the people, including those in the Law Society, who are protesting today were to protest during a declared emergency they would be subject to arrest and penalties. I would venture to say that today's protest outside Parliament House in Western Australia would be impossible under the terms of the Bill which suspends our proud West Australian heritage, our democratic constitution in that State.

It is useless for a Minister or a member of any Party to say that they would not use the power in this way. Let us face it; politicians and political parties come and go but the statutes they create remain to be used by yet unknown people in the future. This is the tragedy of the situation.

Instead of examining all the old, restrictive, unnecessary laws carried on from the unenlightened English anti-working class laws, which still apply unless repealed by a State, or requesting this national Parliament to examine and withdraw any anti-worker or anti-freedom laws instituted by previous national Parliaments, the Western Australian Liberal Party continues to support and perhaps even to suggest more repressive laws. The amazing situation is that there is no existing need for such legislation. The reason for the introduction of the legislation can be only political. The Bill has been brought forward perhaps to avoid future elections by suppression of political Parties and their supporters. If that is not so these provisions should not be in the Bill.

As the legislation is retrospective in its nature, what will happen in the future when it is amended and when an emergency is declared to include the current protestors as offenders? These State people are obviously power crazy. They are prepared to suppress all opposition at all costs. How will they finance their special police force appointed privately by the State Minister? How will they finance the prisons specially established to hold the thousands of people who could be arrested on the accusation only of someone opposed to their beliefs? The money must come from somewhere, and perhaps this is where the answer lies to the real reason for the legislation. It appears that this scheme is to be sponsored by some overseas force looking to control our fuel and energy resources. Will this force provide the finance needed, because no responsible national government—even a Liberal one, I hope—would supply funds for a government to arrest people without charge or to hold them without trial. The Australian Constitution would not allow funds to be provided for such repression. Such finance could never come from national funds.

To whom is the Western Australian Liberal Government actually beholden? This is something that everyone in Western Australia would like to know because no responsible freedom-loving Western Australian could dream up so much repression or in fact support it. Perhaps the legislation will be amended at this time but the fact will remain that the total repressions were initially introduced and withdrawn or amended only as a result of public pressure. This pressure could take place only before the Bill becomes law because when it is law no person will be able to protest for fear of an emergency being declared. In fact many people who are about to demonstrate today outside the State Parliament

House have asked me what protection they have from retaliation by State Liberals. All that I have been able to tell them is that if the present State Government fails to act in a reasonable manner and invokes penalties they will be in very real danger. So the fact that they are prepared to defy any dictatorship shows the depth of their revulsion at the proposals and their fear for the future.

I have never known such public accord to such repression which most people describe as fascism. If this proposed law has done one thing it has united large sections of the community behind the State Labor Opposition in the need to root out this evil. People are demonstrating today and they will demonstrate in the future because they believe that this legislation will be used, and used viciously. They are frightened, and rightly so. Today I asked the Minister for Manufacturing Industry (Mr Enderby) who represents the Attorney-General (Senator Murphy) in this chamber, what protection could be offered to Australian citizens who go to Western Australia to act on national decisions? It is possible that during an emergency lasting some 6 months they could be gaoled. It would appear that there is a possibility that no protection from a Minister's decision is available to them. It is frightening to think that people could in the normal course of their employment travel interstate and lose the protection of the law normally afforded them in their own State which would allow them to appeal to the High Court of Australia. This protection will be denied them. All Australians should interest themselves in what is happening in Western Australia because they could be the next to lose their democratic rights. They should realise, as Western Australians have realised, that the threat to freedom is not in Canberra but much closer to home.

We have a situation in which there is the obvious collaboration of outside interests who wish to create something similar to what happened in Chile and in other nations where freedom has been suppressed. One only has to look at countries adjacent to Australia where Parliaments are closed or where truly free elections fail to take place, to realise that we do not have some sacred form of immunity from the international forces which affect the internal politics of other nations. Let us recognise that when some State authority has sold its principle for power and personal gain. I believe that this has happened in Western Australia. I believe that some people in Western Australia would be prepared to seize all power and even secede, no matter how illegal such action would be, from the federation to establish a totalitarian system of some sort without giving

Western Australians the opportunity to express their opinions on the matter by way of referendum or election. For what other reason would the State Government push forward with such ruthlessness this type of repressive legislation which the highest judicial authority in Western Australia is—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member's time has expired. It is now 15 minutes to 1 o'clock and in accordance with standing order 106 the debate is interrupted. I put the question:

That grievances be noted.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRICES

Report

Mr HURFORD (Adelaide)—On behalf of the Joint Committee on Prices I bring up the Committee's report on prices of household soap and detergents together with the minutes of proceedings taken in connection with this inquiry. I ask for leave to make a short statement in connection with the report.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

Mr HURFORD—This report on the prices of household soaps and detergents, which has just been tabled, is the first report of the Joint Committee on Prices established in this Twenty-ninth Parliament. The report was tabled on 15 August in the Senate because this House was not sitting at that time and obviously it was necessary to have the report tabled as soon as possible, particularly as there had been a long delay caused by the double dissolution of the Twenty-eighth Parliament. After the report was tabled I issued a statement on the report. Rather than take up the time of honourable members I shall, at the conclusion of these remarks, seek leave to have parts of that statement already given in the Senate incorporated in the Hansard of this House.

I am delighted to observe that the Government has taken quick action to implement some of the Committee's recommendations on this soaps and detergents report. The Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) has referred the question of the level of protection to be afforded the household soaps and detergents industry in Australia to the Industries Assistance Commission. This is in direct response to the last recommendation of the Committee. The Minister for Science (Mr Morrison), in response to the third recommendation, has asked his Department to assist consumer organisations to draw up questionnaires which

would ask companies to substantiate the advertising claims they make.

I am hopeful that the Government periodically will inform the Parliament of the action it has taken or proposes to take in respect of each of the recommendations made in the Prices Committee reports. There is such a follow-up in respect of the reports of the Parliament's Public Accounts Committee.

The Report has received wide coverage in the Press. Most of the publicity is complimentary and therefore pleasing to the Committee. There was, however, one adverse comment with which I want to take issue. Dr Donald Hendon, the head of the School of Marketing Services at the New South Wales Institute of Technology, has described as 'demagoguery' the Committee's recommendation that the major manufacturers cut back on their advertising. This was reported in the 'Australian Financial Review' of 27 August 1974. No reasons were published for such a view which is in complete contrast to the detailed reasoning by the Committee on all aspects of its conclusions and recommendations. In point of fact the suggestion of voluntary restraint on advertising was something which the major manufacturers in the United Kingdom undertook of their own volition. Paragraph 106 of the report refers to this. If Dr Hendon associates such a recommendation with demagoguery—that is, unprincipled behaviour, if the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is any help—his criticism must also apply to the United Kingdom industry. I am disappointed that a person in his position should make such an unqualified and baseless criticism without studying the facts more closely. If there is argument against the reasoning in the Committee's report, let us hear it; but useful debate is not assisted by meaningless 'nonsense' which is of the same poor quality as that which we see in some advertising slogans.

Furthermore, I am bound to point out that this recommendation for a voluntary cut-back on advertising is only a first step; if not implemented, the second recommendation that the Prices Justification Tribunal examines the question of excessive advertising becomes very pertinent. Since writing the above, I have seen a further article by Dr Hendon in this week's 'Bulletin'. It is an emotional effort spilling crocodile tears concerning how misunderstood is advertising. It does not in any way answer the detailed reasoning of the Committee's report. The Committee has not attacked advertising per se. It has drawn attention to the particular waste in the soaps and detergents industry.

The soaps and detergents report is virtually on the first reference chosen by the Prices Committee since it was formed in the last Parliament. Most of the previous references have been given to us by the Parliament. This report underlines the usefulness of inquiries that study an industry and seek to assess the amount of useful competition in that industry. From such an investigation can come, among other things, recommendations which have as their main purpose the improvement of competition in that industry.

However, the Parliament should be informed that the Committee is severely restricted in the volume of work it can perform. A staff of eleven headed by a Class 10 Third Division officer cannot 'take on' the whole of the Australian economy. Furthermore, expertise in this difficult area of concern is not abundant and we have severe competition for that expertise from the Industries Assistance Commission, the Prices Justification Tribunal, Prices Branches in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, the Office of the Commissioner of Trade Practices and so on. In just over one year of existence, the Committee has lost all three of its Class 9 Third Division officers on promotion. I repeat—in spite of commendable efforts by our secretariat there are severe limitations to the volume of work the Committee can perform in this important area of concern.

I now seek leave to incorporate in Hansard the remaining parts of my statement on the report which has already been read in the Senate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin)—Is leave granted? There being no objection leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

The Inquiry on which this Report is based was conducted by the Committee established in the Twenty-eighth Parliament. The views, conclusions and recommendations, however, are those of the present Committee.

Briefly, the Report underlines the value of price investigations that encompass an industry rather than the individual companies that constitute that industry. Thus, the industry examination shows that the starting point for analysis is the domination of the market by the two major manufacturers who between them control over 80 per cent of the market. Interestingly enough, where their market power is reduced, as it is in the dishwashing/liquid detergent part of the market (where they control less than 45 per cent), cost increases have been absorbed with the result that the rate of price increase has been less frequent than in other sections of the market.

With the above exception, the Committee has found that this industry exhibits an absence of real or effective competition. Incidentally, this conclusion is not very different to the one arrived at by the United Kingdom Monopolies Commission that examined the household detergents industry in that country.

The absence of real or effective competition has been reflected in—

- (i) the absence of price competition (with the exception of dishwashing detergents referred to previously);
- (ii) the unnecessary proliferation of brands;
- (iii) an excessive amount of advertising (which also misleads the consumer);
- (iv) unduly high profits.

It is against this background that the Committee drew up its recommendations. The first two recommendations deal with reducing the level of advertising by the two major manufacturers. The Committee has asked the Attorney-General to inform the major manufacturers of the Committee's wish to see them enter into a voluntary agreement to reduce the amount of advertising so that the consumer could benefit from lower retail prices. The Committee is convinced that such an agreement would confer a specific and substantial benefit to the public which would not be available without the agreement (see Section 90 (5) Trade Practices Act 1974).

The Committee also asks the Australian Government to invite the Prices Justification Tribunal to examine the question of excessive advertising in this industry. This would be particularly appropriate if the major manufacturers are reluctant to enter into a voluntary agreement.

The other recommendations could be divided mainly into two sections. The first deals with the establishment of standards and the testing of products against these standards. These recommendations are made to the Minister for Science who is responsible for the Interim Commission on Consumer Standards. A second set of recommendations directly benefit the consumer. The Committee has recommended that some financial assistance be given to consumer organisations to assist them publicise the results of the tests. In another recommendation the Committee has asked the Minister for Science to assist consumers to draw up questionnaires that would ask manufacturers and others to substantiate the claims made in their advertising.

These recommendations could assist the consumer to make a more informed choice by reducing consumer exposure to meaningless messages such as 'whiter than white' and also by increasing consumer awareness of the quality of competing products. This in turn could lead to greater purchases of good quality, lower priced products and thereby hopefully permit price competition rather than competition based mostly on advertising and brands.

Finally, once again as a means of encouraging competition in the domestic market, the Committee has recommended that the question of the level of protection given to the industry be referred to the Industries Assistance Commission.

To sum up then, the view of the Committee is that the adoption of these various recommendations would have a twofold impact. First, there would be a major reduction in retail prices if the level of advertising were reduced. This would constitute visible benefits to the consumer. Second, the other recommendations could increase the efficiency of the industry by stimulating a more meaningful type of competition. This would result in prices being at a lower level than they would otherwise be and would accrue to the consumer in the longer term.

Mr HURFORD—I thank the House. I commend the report to the House.

Mr KING (Wimmera)—I ask for leave to make a short statement on the same subject.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

Mr KING—On behalf of honourable members on this side of the House and in particular those honourable members who have served on the Committee for the first time, I believe it is only right and proper that I should make a very brief comment. I say right at the outset that my comment is not in the form of a report disagreeing from that presented by the honourable member for Adelaide (Mr Hurford). In actual fact only 2 members of the Joint Committee on Prices were members of the Committee when it studied the question of soaps and detergents. The 2 members I refer to are the Chairman, Mr Hurford, and the honourable member for Gellibrand (Mr Willis). This meant that all the new members had to operate under great difficulty in trying to keep abreast of what was going on. We did not have the opportunity of being present, naturally, when evidence was being received on this matter. However, later on we did, of course, study the transcript.

As I said earlier, members on this side of the House do not want to oppose in any way the report that has been presented; rather we agree with it. I am quite confident that some of our members made worthwhile contributions to the report. They certainly amended it in some places and, I believe, improved it. We support the report in principle with the slight reservation and in the full knowledge that we did not have quite the same opportunity as did the original members to hear the evidence received on this subject.

NITROGENOUS FERTILISERS SUBSIDY BILL 1974

Bill presented by Dr J. F. Cairns, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Dr J. F. CAIRNS (Lalor—Minister for Overseas Trade) (12.53)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill now before the House seeks to extend the Nitrogenous Fertilisers Sudsy Act 1966-1973 for a period of 12 months to 31 December 1975 pending inquiry and report on the subsidy by the Industries Assistance Commission. This intention was announced by the Prime Minister on 10 June 1974.

The Commission is required to report on the reference by September 1975 after which the Government will decide on assistance beyond 31 December 1975.

The Government recognises the regional importance of nitrogenous fertilizers to sugar

producers, horticulture and other rural industries. Because many materials used in the manufacture of these fertilizers are imported and subject to price increases outside the control of local manufacturers, it is desirable to cushion the effects on Australian users until the Commission has reviewed the situation. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

Debate (on motion by Dr Forbes) adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12.54 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr SPEAKER—Order!

Mr Drummond—Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

(Quorum formed)

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I think it is incumbent upon the Opposition that there should be a representative of the Opposition sitting at the table. One of my predecessors in the office of Speaker, the late Archie Cameron, used to insist on this. I suggest that somebody from the Opposition Parties should be sitting at the table.

(Mr King having taken a seat at the table)—

Mr SPEAKER—I call the Treasurer.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA LOAN (INTERNATIONAL BANK) BILL 1974

Bill presented by Mr Crean, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr CREAN (Melbourne Ports—Treasurer)
(2.17)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks the approval of Parliament to the guarantee by the Australian Government of a US\$10.8m—A\$7.3m— borrowing by the Government of Papua New Guinea from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The proceeds of the loan will assist in financing the development and expansion of the operations of the Papua New Guinea Electricity Commission during the period 1974-79. This loan follows a loan for US\$23.2m—A\$15.6m—to the Electricity Commission in 1971 to assist in financing a major hydro-electric project on the Upper Ramu River in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. The loan documents were signed by authorised representatives of the Australian Government on 12 June following negotiations in Washington which were attended by representatives of the International Bank, Australia, the Government of Papua New Guinea and the Electricity Commission. The Government of Papua New Guinea

will onlend the proceeds of the loan to the Electricity Commission which, under an associated project agreement between the Commission and the Bank, is responsible for the project.

The project consists of three parts: Firstly, technical assistance for the Electricity Commission's in service training program for indigenous staff; secondly, financing to cover the shortfall of funds available from the 1971 loan for the Upper Ramu River project attributable solely to exchange rate movements and, thirdly, the expansion of electricity distribution facilities. The total cost of the project is estimated at US\$17.25m—A\$11.6m—and the loan will cover the foreign exchange component of the total cost. Borrowings by the Government of Papua New Guinea automatically carry an Australian Government guarantee by virtue of the operation of section 75A of the Papua New Guinea Act 1949-1973. However, with loans from the International Bank, a formal guarantee agreement is required from the Australian Government and this must be authorised by specific legislation. The guarantee agreement for this loan, which is shown as the First Schedule to the Bill, follows the form of the 4 guarantee agreements previously approved by Parliament in connection with a telecommunications loan made by the International Bank to Papua New Guinea in 1968, a highways loan made in 1970, the first hydro-electric project loan in 1971 and a second telecommunications project loan in 1972.

The present loan carries an interest rate of 7.25 per cent and is for a period of 20 years, with repayments commencing after 5 years. A commitment fee of three-quarters of one per cent per annum is payable on undrawn balances until the loan is fully drawn. The Bill provides for parliamentary approval of the guarantee agreement. It makes consequential provision to ensure the effectiveness of undertakings in the guarantee and loan agreements regarding freedom of payments from Australian taxation or restrictions imposed by Australian law. It also includes an appropriation of moneys required for the Australian Government to make any payments under the guarantee. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

Debate (on motion by Mr Adermann) adjourned.

STATES GRANTS BILL 1974

Bill presented by Mr Crean, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr CREAN (Melbourne Ports—Treasurer) (2.23)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to authorise the payment of additional financial assistance grants to the State of Tasmania. It provides for the payment of an amount of \$15m in addition to the financial assistance grants otherwise payable to the State in 1974-75 and for the incorporation of this amount into the 'base' for purposes of calculating the grants payable to the State under the formula in 1975-76 and subsequent years. The decision to provide an additional financial assistance grant to Tasmania followed a request by the Premier of Tasmania at the June Premier's Conference this year for discussions with the Australian Government to consider the possibility of this State withdrawing from the special grants system. Following such discussions it was agreed that the revisions to the State's entitlement under the financial assistance grants arrangements which I have outlined would be appropriate to enable such a withdrawal. It was also agreed with the State that the Grants Commission would be asked not to recommend final adjusting payments—known as completion grants—in respect of the 'advance' payments of the special grants made to the State, on the recommendation of the Commission in 1972-73 and 1973-74. This request has been conveyed to the Commission.

Turning to the details of the Bill, the first three clauses are of a machinery nature. Clause 4 of the Bill provides for the amendment of the States Grant Act 1973—the legislation which at present authorises the payment of financial assistance grants to the States—by the insertion of a new section 6A to follow section 6. The first sub-clause of the new section 6A specifies that during 1974-75 there will be payable to Tasmania an amount of \$15m in addition to the amount payable under section 6. The second sub-clause of the new section provides for the additional amount of \$15m to be included in the base amount for calculation of grants payable to Tasmania in subsequent years under the formula laid down in section 6. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr Adermann) adjourned.

WOOL MARKETING (LOAN) BILL 1974

Bill presented by Mr Crean, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr CREAN (Melbourne Ports—Treasurer) (2.26)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Honourable members will recall that in the Budget Speech I indicated that I would shortly introduce legislation to appropriate funds to enable the Government to make loans to the Australian Wool Corporation in addition to the \$13m provided for in the Budget. The purpose of this Bill is to enable me, on behalf of the Australian Government, to make loans of up to \$150m to the Corporation. Proceeds of such loans would be available for financing purchases of wool at auction (including tender) and for the making of advances to growers whose wool is withheld from the market by the Corporation. My colleague, the Minister for Agriculture, announced on 27 August that the Corporation would operate a minimum (floor) price equivalent to 250 cents per kilo clean for 21 micron wool during the 1974-75 season, and that the Government would guarantee sufficient funds for this purpose.

The Minister and I agreed that, in the first instance, the Corporation should explore the possibility of the consortium of trading banks augmenting their current line of credit of \$34m. In the event, however, it has become clear that the trading banks are not well placed at this time to commit funds of the order necessary to put beyond doubt the Corporation's capacity to sustain the floor price. Honourable members will appreciate that, from the standpoint of maintaining confidence in the wool market, it is of the utmost importance to ensure that the Corporation's capacity to do this is beyond question. The Government has also recognised that the provision of large amounts of bank finance to the Corporation would have meant a substantial reduction in the amount of such finance available to meet other essential needs in the rural and other sectors of the economy.

These considerations led the Government to the view that the only really practicable way to provide the Corporation with the finance required is by means of a special appropriation of funds by the Parliament. Honourable members will be aware that, in addition to purchases at prices equivalent to the floor price, the Corporation may at times acquire wool at prices above the floor price, under its flexible reserve price scheme. Also, as indicated earlier, the Corporation's operations in 1974-75 may entail not only substantial purchases of wool but also arrangements for the withholding of wool from

market at times when demand is weak. It will be apparent to honourable members that, should the Corporation withhold wool from sale for a time pending an improvement in the market outlook, some growers would be temporarily disadvantaged and, indeed, could be faced with considerable financial difficulties, if the banking system and other traditional sources of finance for wool growers were unable or unwilling to carry growers for the additional time involved. The Government has therefore decided to provide the Corporation with sufficient funds to enable it also to make advances of a proportion of the floor price to growers experiencing such difficulties. The total amount of funds likely to be required for the Corporation's purposes is difficult to establish, depending as it does on the extent to which the trade supports the market. It is considered that the amount available to the Corporation should be sufficiently large to cover its requirements for a reasonable period ahead. Insofar as it is possible to predict at this stage, we judge that an amount of \$150m should be fully adequate for this purpose, and the Bill seeks an appropriation of that amount. We shall, however, keep the position under close review.

Having regard to the difficulty of forecasting with any precision either the timing or amount of the Corporation's requirements, the bill proposes that the Treasurer be empowered to make advances up to the amount indicated, in such amounts and such terms and conditions as he approves. I shall, of course, exercise these powers in full consultation with the Minister for Agriculture. The Bill provides for the advances to the Corporation to be made either from the Consolidated Revenue Fund or the Loan Fund, and authorises me to borrow the moneys concerned if I consider that desirable. I am sure that honourable members will appreciate the need for expeditious action in this matter, to put the Wool Corporation in funds and demonstrate beyond all possible doubt the Corporation's capacity to sustain its floor price operations. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

Debate (on motion by Mr Adermann) adjourned.

STATES GRANTS (BEEF CATTLE ROADS) BILL 1974

Bill presented by Dr Patterson, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Dr PATTISON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory) (2.33)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to make a minor amendment to the States Grants (Beef Cattle Roads) Act 1968 in order to extend the period of application of the Act to the State of Queensland from 1 July 1974 to 31 December 1974. Under the terms of that Act, financial assistance in the form of grants totalling \$39.5m was made available by the Australian Government to Queensland over the seven-year period from 1 July 1967 to 30 June 1974 for the construction of an approved program of beef road works. The devastating floods in Queensland earlier this year delayed progress on some of the works in the final year of the program with the result that by 30 June there was a relatively small shortfall in the expenditure under the approved program. The amendment of the Act is necessary in order to provide finance to the State to the extent of the shortfall in the original program of approved works. The amount involved is only \$279,000 and an appropriate provision has been made in the Budget. I would explain that the works in question have already been carried out. The Australian Government has pledged its assistance to Queensland in its flood restoration efforts and has consistently adopted a positive and constructive approach in this matter. This Bill is in keeping with that approach and I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr Adermann) adjourned.

UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION BILL 1974

Bill presented by Mr Beazley, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr BEAZLEY (Fremantle—Minister for Education) (2.35)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill has 2 main purposes. First it provides for an additional full time Deputy Chairman of the Universities Commission. This will bring the membership of the Commission to eleven. At present the Commission has a full time Chairman, Professor Karmel, and Deputy Chairman, Professor Bull, and 8 part-time members. There are now 17 universities, and the Wollongong University College will achieve full university status in 1975. In addition the Government has approved in principle the establishment of new universities at Albury/Wodonga, Campbelltown and Geelong. Members will be aware, through the legislation which has been before this House, of the successive initiatives which the Government has taken in relation to universities—the

abolition of fees and the assumption of full financial responsibility by the Australian Government, provision for needy students, new and expanded medical schools, and support for new programs in social work, special education and community practice. Altogether the workload on the Commission has increased markedly in recent years and, given the major tasks of the universities in teaching and research, will not diminish in the years to come.

Professor Karmel himself has been heavily engaged in a number of special inquiries, quite apart from his historic work with the Karmel Committee on Schools, and is at present bringing to a conclusion the report on open tertiary education. The Government has therefore decided that an additional Deputy Chairman of the Commission should be appointed to assist with aspects of university programs which warrant special inquiry. He would have a particular responsibility for scientific developments and the establishment of new universities, and would provide high level representation for the Commission on committees concerned with these matters. The appointment would be at the same terms and conditions as for the present Deputy Chairman.

The second main purpose of the Bill is to amend the definition of 'university' in the principal Act to restrict the meaning of the word to institutions established by the Australian and State Parliaments. Some self styled 'universities', which are in fact private coaching or teaching organisations, have been established from time to time, some of them with questionable educational standards and offering degrees and awards of doubtful content. The proposed amendment places no restriction on the activities of such organisations but makes it clear that the Commission will not make recommendations in respect of them; and this means they are not accepted as universities by the Government or the Commission. The Bill also includes 2 machinery measures. In accordance with the Government's practice, the word 'Australian' will be deleted from the Commission's title and it will become the Universities Commission. Provision has also been made for the remuneration of members of the Commission to be determined by the Remuneration Tribunal. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr Adermann) adjourned.

REMUNERATION TRIBUNALS BILL 1974

Bill presented by Mr Lionel Bowen, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr LIONEL BOWEN (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister in Matters Relating to the Public Service) (2.40)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I present a Bill to be known as the Remuneration Tribunals Bill 1974. This Bill, which will amend the Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973, has 4 major purposes. First, the Bill expands the formal jurisdiction of the Remuneration Tribunal beyond the limits set in the present Act, to give full effect to the Government's policy that the Tribunal should fix the remuneration for all senior public offices in the Australian Government area. At present the Act provides for the Tribunal to determine the salaries of statutory office holders but does not give it power over many similar positions which have in the past been dealt with by the same salary fixing procedures as statutory office holders. Examples are the various offices which were included in the indicative determination which formed part of the Tribunal's 1974 review. They included, amongst others, the General Manager of Qantas, the Chiefs of Staff and the heads of several interim bodies for which statutory provision was to be made.

Second, besides expanding the jurisdiction of the Tribunal the Bill lists several groups with which the Tribunal is not intended to deal as they do not form a part of the higher salaries group and their remuneration has been fixed by other procedures. These groups include, for instance, the Trade Commissioner Service, which ought not to be in the Tribunal's jurisdiction but which falls within it at present. Thirdly, the Bill clarifies a number of miscellaneous issues which have so far arisen from the application of the principal Act. Finally, the Bill inserts a new part in the principal Act providing for the establishment of an academic salaries tribunal along the lines announced by the Government in April. The Tribunal will have the power to determine salaries for universities and colleges of advanced education established by law in the Territories and will recommend the rates of salaries which should be used as a basis for grants to the States.

I turn now to the detail of the Bill. Clause 6 amends section 3 of the principal Act to expand and clarify the jurisdiction of the Remuneration Tribunal along the lines I have described. It lists the various categories of public office with which the Tribunal is to be required to deal, in addition

to offices in the First Division of the Public Service, under section 7 (3) of the principal Act. Besides setting out these categories the Bill makes provision for additional offices or appointments to be prescribed by regulations. Clause 6 goes on to list offices for which the Tribunal will not have power to determine remuneration. In general these are less senior appointments. There is also provision for prescription by regulation of any other offices which should be excluded from the Tribunal's jurisdiction.

Clause 7 amends section 4 of the principal Act. It relaxes the very stringent conditions governing eligibility for membership of the Remuneration Tribunal. As the Act stands at present, a person cannot be appointed to the Tribunal if he has at any time served in one of the offices within the Tribunal's jurisdiction. The Bill provides that a person should be disqualified for membership only if he has served in a relevant office within the previous 7 years. Clause 7 also provides that a member of the Tribunal shall not be appointed as Chairman if he has in the past 7 years been a member of the full time staff of a university or college of advanced education. This provision is included because the Chairman of the Remuneration Tribunal will be constituted as the Academic Salaries Tribunal.

Clause 8 amends section 6 of the principal Act which deals with judges and Ministers of State. Its purpose is to include with judges, persons who have the same status by virtue of an Act. This means that the Tribunal will report on the remuneration of such persons rather than determine it. This provision has been introduced to cover the case of the President and Deputy Presidents of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. There is no constitutional obstacle to the Tribunal having power to determine salaries for these people but it is desirable for the sake of consistency that they should be considered by the Tribunal in conjunction with judges. Clause 8 also revises the existing provision in section 6 of the principal Act dealing with matters 'significantly related to remuneration'. It authorises the Tribunal to inquire into matters which are, or which it considers to be, significantly related to the remuneration of Ministers and judges either on its own initiative or at the request of the Minister.

Clause 9 amends section 7 of the principal Act which gives the Tribunal power to determine remuneration for parliamentarians, First Division officers and statutory office holders. It introduces a revised provision dealing with 'significantly related' matters similar to that in clause 8. It also provides that where a body has

funds available for the payment of remuneration they shall be used for this purpose. The principal Act at present provides that remuneration in every case be paid from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and this is inconsistent with long standing arrangements for a number of companies and statutory corporations.

Clause 9 also provides that members of Parliament or candidates for election will not be entitled to any remuneration for holding a public office, that persons in the full-time service of Australia will not receive payment for holding a part time office except as prescribed, and that the holders of judicial offices in the States and other countries will not receive remuneration except as prescribed. Clause 10 amends section 8 of the principal Act to make an exception from the general rule that the Tribunal must deal at the one time with all the offices in its jurisdiction. It provides for the Tribunal to make individual determinations for new offices and offices whose functions have substantially changed since the Tribunal last reported.

Clause 11 amends the principal Act by the insertion of a new Part establishing the Academic Salaries Tribunal. As I said earlier the Academic Salaries Tribunal will be constituted by the chairman of the Remuneration Tribunal. There is provision for appointment of assessors. The Tribunal will deal with academic staff in universities and colleges of advanced education. As I indicated earlier it will determine salaries for academic staff in institutions established by the laws of Australia in the Territories. It will also report on the rates of salaries for academic staff in other institutions of tertiary education and recommend the rates to be used for making grants to the States.

Besides considering academic salaries, the Tribunal may report on the salaries of vice chancellors, principals, other chief executive officers, and other senior officers such as registrars and bursars in universities and colleges of advanced education. The procedures relating to the Tribunal's determinations will be the same as for the Remuneration Tribunal. The Minister will arrange for a copy of each determination to be laid before each House within 15 sitting days of receipt by him and either House will be able to disallow any determination within 15 sitting days after a copy has been laid before it. The Tribunal itself will have power to decide when to make reports and determinations. The provisions relating to methods of inquiry by the Tribunal are the same as for the Remuneration Tribunal. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr Adermann) adjourned.

POST AND TELEGRAPH RATES BILL (No. 2) 1974

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 17 September (vide page 1437), on motion by Mr Lionel Bowen:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State)—May I have the indulgence of the House to raise a point of procedure on this legislation? Before the debate on this Bill is resumed I would like to suggest that it may suit the convenience of the House to have a general debate covering this Bill and the Post and Telegraph Bill 1974 (No. 2) as they are related measures. Separate questions will, of course, be put on each of the Bills at the conclusion of the debate. I suggest therefore, Mr Speaker, that you permit the subject matter of both Bills to be discussed in this debate.

Mr SPEAKER—Is it the wish of the House to adopt this procedure? There being no objection, I will allow that course to be followed.

Mr NIXON (Gippsland) (2.48)—The first thing I want to do is to lodge a protest on behalf of the Opposition that this very important Budget Bill should be introduced into the House for consideration in detail by the Parliament before the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) has had a chance to present to the Parliament his analysis of the Budget as a whole. It is an improper practice. I am quite sure that we could have facilitated the passage of this legislation, both through this House and the Senate, had the Government been prepared to co-operate. The legislation could have been passed through the House by the due date, 1 October. I understand that that is the point of time at which the Government wants to start collecting the exorbitant charges which are provided for under this legislation.

The legislation is of major importance to the Australian people. The Post Office, as an effective monopoly, provides services to the community which affect the quality of life of the Australian people. What that in turn means is that increases in the prices of these services will have a major impact on both the rate of inflation and the people's awareness of the rate of inflation. The proposed increases are very substantial. They include an increase of 43 per cent in the basic postage rate, an increase of 33 per cent in

the telephone service connection fee for new applicants, a 30 per cent increase in the local telephone call fee, and an overall increase of 50 per cent in telegram charges. They are just a few examples. These increases will have a direct inflationary impact and, as their justification is not required before the Prices Justification Tribunal, it is the duty of this Parliament to scrutinise them carefully.

A scrutiny of these charges must be looked at in the light of approved broad criteria, including economic circumstances. It is therefore quite reasonable that the Opposition should wish to wait for the presentation of the Budget before approving these proposals. I call the attention of the House to the fact that on 23 July the Opposition opposed similar measures both in this House and in the Senate. They were not these measures but lesser measures, I might say. We believed at that time that it was improper for the Government to introduce such measures prior to the introduction of its total Budget package. The postal services have run at a consistent loss since 1964-65. This loss is estimated in the Budget papers to increase from \$21m in 1972-73 to \$55m in both 1973-74 and 1974-75, even assuming that these increased charges will be put into effect. The Postmaster-General (Senator Bishop) estimates that if these increased charges are not approved the postal service will incur a loss in this financial year of \$100m. This is no less than five times the loss of only 2 years ago.

Because the postal service is labour intensive it is vulnerable to wage increases. The telecommunications service, on the other hand, has a high capital content and is consistently and increasingly profitable. Clearly, the overall problem rests with the postal service. From a study of the accounts it is quite clear that a very alarming deterioration is occurring in the financial condition of the Post Office. The Vernon Commission in April estimated that postal service expenses in 1974-75 would rise by 10 per cent on the 1973-74 level. Now, only 4 months later, we are told that the increase will not be 10 per cent but a whacking 18 per cent, and this is in spite of severe restrictions on staff growth.

This Parliament is clearly entitled to a detailed explanation of this situation. I believe that the Postmaster-General has been derelict in his duty in that the second reading speech presented to this House by the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen), who is at the table, says nothing on this point. In April the loss for postal services during 1974-75 was estimated at \$65m. Now, with an increase in tariffs of the order of 43 per cent for basic postal charges, this loss of \$65m is

reduced by a mere \$10m. One does not have to be a mathematical genius to draw a pretty frightening conclusion about the sorts of charges that would be necessary, in theory, on the basis of the Minister's assumption for that loss to be eliminated.

Back in April the Vernon Commission thought that postal charges would need to increase at an average rate of 15 per cent. The Commission explained that this would mean that the cost of posting a letter would rise from 7c to 10c in less than 3 years. It has happened in less than 5 months. The Parliament is entitled to an updated projection of postal charges in the light of the recent cost data. We are entitled to a full explanation of the reasons for this deterioration. Clearly wages are rising, but one would have thought that productivity was rising also. What the Minister has failed to say is the extent to which industrial disputation may be contributing to the problem. It should be a cause of national concern that the Vernon Commission reported that in the 6 months to June 1973 there were no less than 28 black bans imposed in the Sydney Mail Exchange; in other words, about one a week. Measured by articles handled per man hour, productivity at the Sydney Mail Exchange fell by about 10 per cent absolutely between 1964-65 and 1972-73. We are entitled to some explanation of what the Government intends to do about this. It is very simple to talk of the need to increase charges to meet expenses. It is even more simple, and probably misleading, for the Budget documents on the Post Office to say:

The record demand for telephone services in 1973-74 indicates that the present level of charges for that service is relatively low.

There is no evidence to support that bald assertion. Indeed, there is no evidence to support the assertion of the Minister that these increased charges will yield the revenue estimated. The Vernon Commission itself admitted that it would not be possible to calculate accurately the tariff increases necessary to offset trading losses, since changes in tariffs affect demand. The crunch—it is a most important, indeed critical, crunch—is that we do not know and we are not told to what extent they affect demand. The Commission admitted that it was not able to work out the elasticity of demand for postal services; yet we are asked to approve increases of 40 per cent to 50 per cent without any estimate by the Minister of their impact on demand for postal services. Discussion over revenue and outlay really begs the question. The central issue is the Government's economic philosophy and its social guidelines for the postal services. The Minister

asserts that they must pay their way. The problem is that we are never really told clearly why. One explanation is contained in the second reading speech, in which the Minister said:

The Government is not prepared to allocate more from the Budget to the Post Office because this could only be at the expense of our priority programs in the fields of education, welfare and health.

Are we therefore to assume by this process of reasoning that it is more equitable in principle for low income earners to pay increases of 43 per cent in basic postage rates than it is for this program to be financed from the progressive taxation scale? The situation is even more puzzling when we are told by the Treasurer (Mr Crean) that the national broadcasting and television service is a service to the community as a whole and the Government believes that the cost of the service should therefore be met out of general taxation receipts rather than through a licence fee. Why? It is because these flat charges bear more heavily on the less affluent. The Minister should tell us what is the distinction in principle between these charges and the other charges I have mentioned.

The political opportunism of the Government is plain for all to see when it adopts such a callous approach to financing public activities. I am not advocating that a rapidly deteriorating loss situation should be permanently and totally met from public revenue. What I am saying is that we should expect some statement from the Minister as to the social role envisaged for the postal and telecommunications services. Contrary to what the Minister said in his second reading speech, the Vernon Commission did not unilaterally choose a self-sufficiency role for these services. It said instead that it was reasonable to suggest that if an uneconomic service is necessary for reasons of public policy the corporation providing the service should receive a subvention from the Government.

What I am saying then is that we do not really know what the public policy of this Government is. This is a matter of prime importance because we are not considering a normal free market situation. On the contrary, we are considering a situation where a publicly entrenched monopoly is in the comfortable position of imposing its own charges. To explain that a little further—it is able to charge the community for personnel, installations and services which are selected not by the public through competition but by bureaucratic decision. As the Vernon Commission rightly says, we should not be too rigorous in the light of those factors in applying normal commercial criteria. What we should be rigorous in doing is

examining these increases in the light of our present economic circumstances. For example, in a total economic context, is it less inflationary to meet these losses for a limited period from public revenue than to add them directly to the consumer price index?

The thrust of my approach, Mr Speaker, has been a call for greater information and greater clarity of policy. An example of this is the proposed increases in telecommunications charges. Telegram charges are to increase by 50 per cent in all cases, due to the substantial losses incurred by this service. Yet it is by no means certain that increases of 50 per cent are the answer to this problem. The decline in telegram usage is, in fact, the principal reason for these increases due to the rapid growth in the use of telephone and telex services. Telex charges themselves are to increase, but once again we are not told what the total effect on demand for telex as against telegram services will be. We can only assume that the purpose is to make each individual component of the telecommunications sector self-supporting. Yet this policy of increasing the charges for unprofitable services ignores the overall profitability situation of telecommunications, and the consequent fact is that if the services listed need such large increases then there must be other services which are highly profitable indeed. Are we to see the charges for those services reduced? As it is, with these increased charges telecommunication charges will earn a profit this year of \$110m, although in relation to the assets this is less than 4 per cent. Yet once again we are told by the Minister that the criterion is supposed to be a revenue sufficient to meet trading costs, depreciation and capital requirements. The criterion is not supposed to be a return on assets. The Minister made a great play on words in his speech because the Opposition refused to pass the increases proposed in late July. We said then that the proposals were inflationary and I quoted as support no less a source than the Treasurer himself, who took a similar stand in September 1971. Talking as Shadow Treasurer about postal charge increases, he said :

To us this seems to run contrary to what is described as the overall strategy of the Budget, that is, the halting of inflation. Many of these charges can only aggravate inflation . . . It increases charges the impact of which will be felt not only by individuals whose purchasing power will be reduced unless they can increase their incomes but also by business undertakings which have the ability to pass on the increased charges. To say the least, this Budget will accelerate inflation.

This is the Treasurer who the other night introduced a Budget foreshadowing increased

business charges to an extent greater than was thought possible. But he is still in good company, because he was supported in 1971 by the then Leader of the Opposition, the present Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) who, it will be recalled, during the last election campaign had this to say: 'I am the only man in Australia who can reduce inflation'. We have seen the greatest height in inflation since 18 May that has ever been known in the history of this country. Let me quote what the Prime Minister said when he was Leader of the Opposition. How the horse can change its colour. He said:

Postal and petrol increases in the current Budget will inevitably produce an identical effect, as will payroll tax . . . There will be immediate rises in costs to all consumers and there will be an inevitable flowthrough as these charges are passed on later in the year. All these rises could and would have been avoided by a government which genuinely sought to hold prices down. How can we take seriously the rhetoric of Ministers on inflation when the Government makes so consistent and comprehensive a contribution to the rapidity with which living costs increase?

We are now living in times of highest inflation which he and his Ministers have caused. How can this nation take seriously the statements that these economic managers or mismanagers now make? The course they have adopted is the course of which they were critical 3 years ago. In July, the mini-Budget was supposed to deal with inflation but it contained not one item that would help correct the course inflation was taking. Indeed quite to the contrary, it was totally inflationary in effect. That has been seen, of course, in the very way in which inflation has heightened since then. In the last debate on postal charges on 25 July I quoted from a number of industry sources that very clearly showed the inflationary hike that would be created by increased post and telegraph charges at that time. I quoted the words of Mr F. J. Darling, Executive Director of the Employers Federation of New South Wales, Mr K. D. Williams, President of the Australian Chamber of Commerce, Mr C. F. Sullivan, the Acting Director of the Victorian Chamber of Manufactures, and Mr J. B. Griffin, of the Retail Traders Association of New South Wales. Each of those individuals described the proposals of 25 July of the Minister to increase postal charges as being inflationary. The Minister, in justification of his stand at the time, quoted during his speech last Tuesday night from a couple of newspaper articles which supported his stand. But he was very selective in his approach. I wish to quote from a newspaper which should be particularly well-known to one honourable member who is present in the House, that is, the 'Geelong Advertiser' of Saturday, 27 July 1974. I have not heard the honourable member to whom I am

referring stand up in this House and proudly quote from the same leading article as the one from which I am about to quote. It reads:

The suggestion made by Mr Nixon (Country Party, Victoria) in the House of Representatives that the proposed increases in postal charges should be deferred until their effects on inflation could be determined is one of the few sane suggestions which has been made in Canberra with regard to the current economic crisis and the shock mini-budget designed to deal with it. But of course, Mr Nixon's motion was defeated on Party lines.

The one thing of which the readers of the newspaper were not made aware was that the honourable member for Corio (Mr Scholes), who is a resident of the area in which the newspaper is printed, voted against the proposal I put forward. The article continues:

Pointing out that the new postal charges would impose a burden of \$140m on the public, Mr Nixon said: 'The rationale for this, they claim, is the problem of inflation. I would be one of the last to deny that inflation in Australia is serious, but the real concern is whether the proposals are anti-inflationary or whether they are simply measures to raise funds for a bankrupt government.'

That is what I said. I was accurately reported. That is slightly different from the selected pieces of newspaper material that the Minister chose to use in his speech on Tuesday night.

Mr Ian Robinson—That was propaganda.

Mr NIXON—It was propaganda. The article continues:

That, indeed, is the real concern. Announcing the mini-budget proposals last Tuesday, the Federal Treasurer, Mr Crean, said: 'I say, without exaggeration, that the Australian economy now faces a highly dangerous situation. The whole community will have to suffer for a while to beat inflation'.

Yet, the next day, his colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Cairns, in a radio broadcast, said it was very difficult to see what could be anti-inflationary in the mini-budget, and he repeated that statement later in the House of Representatives amid raucous laughter from the Opposition. The President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Mr Hawke, also expressed a pessimistic view with regard to the anti-inflationary prospects of the various proposals.

That article was written at the time the Minister introduced the previous Bill. He is now sitting at the table in charge of a Bill which compounds the situation—indeed, which has increased the charge for postage stamps by 1c more than the amount set on 23 July. So he is compounding the situation and making it even worse. The leading article to which I have referred and which I think is an excellent one goes on to say:

Instead, numbers of country post offices have closed, mail deliveries have been curtailed, telegraphic services have been restricted and complaints of inexplicable delays in effecting delivery of letters are legion. This situation has led to the establishment of hundreds of private courier services. This practice is illegal as, by law, the Post Office has a monopoly on mail delivery, but all it can do about the matter, apparently, is to complain that it is being robbed of the 'cream' of postal business. This is entirely its own fault, and if the

'customary' decline in service follows the latest proposal to increase postal charges, it will lose still more cream. Then, presumably, it will become necessary to raise charges again; and so, ad infinitum.

What has happened only 8 weeks later? The Minister has proposed that the charges be increased again. The article continues:

As the Government has declined to hold the inquiry requested by Mr Nixon, it now rests with the Opposition strength in the Senate to make a move. If it would see its way to rejecting the enabling legislation, as it has done in the case of members' salary increases, it could be doing a service not only to the economy of Australia, but to the Postmaster-General's Department itself.

That is an occasion on which the 'Geelong Advertiser' recognised the value of the action taken by the Senate.

Mr Bourchier—It must be a good newspaper.

Mr NIXON—It is a good newspaper. It presents a sensible, sane and balanced point of view. It has quite clearly recognised the importance of the Senate, which the Government is setting out to destroy by its claims of obstructionism.

I have already said that the Minister's second reading speech is totally inadequate in its explanation of the financial expectations. For example, the previous Bills were said to be Bills which would raise an extra \$140m; yet in his second reading speech the Minister said that the loss of funds as a result of the Opposition's refusal to pass the previous Bills would amount to \$30m over a period of 8 weeks. Surely that figure should be only \$22.3m, which is one-sixth of \$140m. It is plain that by increasing postal charges from 7c to 10c, the local call fee from 4.75c to 6c, the telephone connection fee from \$60 to \$80, business rentals from \$30 to \$85 and household rentals to \$65, the Government is intent on making a further profit out of the increased charges now being proposed. The simple fact of the matter is that the Postmaster-General's Department has lost only 8 weeks revenue as a result of the Opposition's actions and will gain an extra 44 weeks at least at the higher rates. There is no doubt that the Government is proposing to make a profit out of the delay. In July the Minister claimed that the proposals would have given a profit of \$60m to the Postmaster-General's Department. The loss in the 8 weeks period, as I have said, was \$22.3m. So a greater profit will accrue from the further increases proposed. It is totally outrageous that the Government should proceed to increase profits further for this reason and it is both stupid and irresponsible to assert that the higher increases now being proposed are a result of the delay.

In his second reading speech the Minister stated that he did not propose, indeed he found it inequitable, to require the residential telephone subscriber to pay more because of the delay. How he can state that there is less equity for a telephone subscriber than a poor pensioner who has no telephone and who must use the mail and therefore who must pay the increased price of 10c for postage stamps beats me. That assertion is as inequitable as it is not to charge for television and radio services but to charge more for the necessary services of the Post Office. The whole approach of the Government to this Bill shows once more its lack of credibility in general financial management.

I started out by saying that I am disappointed that the Government is forcing this Bill through this House today before the Leader of the Opposition has been given an opportunity to present to the Parliament and the nation his attitude and approach to the whole of the Budget Papers. The Opposition is not opposing this Bill on this occasion. It has given the Government an opportunity to withdraw it. The Opposition has forced the Government to withdraw a similar proposition and to reconsider the position. The Government not only has not taken into account the Opposition's suggestion, but also has been silly enough and stupid enough to increase the charges further. I do not think the people of Australia will forget that.

Mr SCHOLES (Corio) (3.13)—One of the things that was apparent from the speech by the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) is the ease with which one can oppose while in Opposition and how easy it is for politicians to score political points from any increased charges. It is obvious that all politicians do not like to be a party to increased charges. I think it is also obvious that Oppositions always oppose all forms of increased charges and propose always additional forms of expenditure.

Mr Giles—But we are not opposing.

Mr SCHOLES—That may well be so. The fact of the matter is that the honourable member for Gippsland, on behalf of the Opposition, has made a very strong case against an increase in the charges. That is not a difficult case to make. I acknowledge that it is not difficult to make such a case. The Post Office is not the best example of a cost cutting enterprise and it is not the best example of an organisation in which cost increases can be minimised. I think that the question which has been posed is whether the Government raises the revenue to meet the increased costs of the Post Office from those who use the services, as has

been proposed by the Government, or from the general taxpayer. It is a little unfair to suggest that the major burden of these increases falls on business, farmers and the like. The major cost burden falls on the private user. The private telephone user is not able to claim his telephone costs as a tax deduction. A private person posting letters is not able to recoup the cost of his stamps as a business expense; he pays the total amount. I do not think anyone would seriously suggest that a differential rate of postage should be established, but it is proposed to acknowledge the situation to a limited degree by proposing a lower rate of telephone rental for private users.

Although I think it is true to say that the cost to the Post Office of providing telephone services at most private residences, because of their low usage, would be much more expensive to the community than would be the provision of business telephones because of their higher usage, these proposals recognise the fact that private subscribers meet the total cost of their telephone and postage commitments. Most private people have very few postage commitments. I think the additional postal charges for stamps is more of a nuisance than a substantial cost against their incomes. Some people write a lot of letters but the great majority would make very little use of postage stamps.

I was elected to this Parliament in 1967. The 'Geelong Advertiser', which was mentioned previously, is a fully owned subsidiary of the Melbourne 'Herald', which is not noted for its support of the present Government. I know that its editor does not know the honourable member for Gippsland personally but that paper misguidedly made certain statements about his sanity. I shall not repeat them because I do not like to tell lies in Parliament. The editor said that the honourable member made a sane suggestion. I would suggest that the honourable member for Gippsland have a look at the remarks of the Melbourne 'Herald' and 'Sun' and the 'Geelong Advertiser' when the then Opposition, the present Government, rejected postal charges in the Senate in 1967. I think he will find that that was said to be an irresponsible act which prevented the Government from raising its revenues, even though these newspapers decried the necessity to increase postal charges. I cannot ever remember an Opposition supporting increases in charges, and I do not exclude supporters of the present Government from that. They are always opposed.

Early in his speech the honourable member for Gippsland made play of the problems of the Redfern Mail Exchange, which is most likely the

greatest single problem the Post Office has. The Exchange was not established by the present Government and I do not think that it was established in the initial stages advisedly by the previous Government, even though its advisers may have recommended it. But I do not blame the then Government for establishing the present situation. It was faced with a problem which it sought to solve in a certain way. I think that in fairness to the people who work in the Redfern Mail Exchange I should say that the number of man days lost through strikes in that mail exchange is lower than the national average.

Where inconveniences are involved the magnitude of every day lost is always potentially greater in terms of publicity value than where inconvenience is not involved. The fact of the matter is that there are fewer man days lost in that exchange than is the national average. One of the problems the Post Office faces is a problem which the Post Office itself complains of, that is, that it has lost considerable areas of lucrative business to private enterprise. It lost it during the period of office of the former Government when courier services, red telephones and other operations were allowed to commence in areas which were obviously profitable to the Department and in which the Department had an exclusive right under the postal legislation. The philosophy of socialising losses and capitalising profits, which has always been the philosophy of honourable members opposite, worked in the Post Office as it has in the railways and every other form of industry. The Opposition has always sought to make those sections of commerce which cannot be effectively operated at a profit by private enterprise a responsibility of the taxpayer even though the taxpayer in the main obtained less benefit than do private business operations. This is true of the Post Office. The general taxpayer without business interests obtains less benefit from the operations of the Post Office—even though he obtains considerable convenience—than does the business community. Yet the business community, because it is able to have its costs written off against taxation, pays less for the convenience than does the general taxpayer.

No one likes increases in costs, but increases in costs take place and they continue to take place. A letter cannot be sent on a courier service which is running in direct competition with the Post Office for the same cost this year as last year or the year before. If honourable members opposite are suggesting that they enjoy some sort of purity in relation to increasing charges, I remind them again that I was elected to this Parliament after the then Opposition in the Senate, improperly in

my view—I say that quite advisedly—had blocked increased postal charges, in May 1967, on exactly the same pretext as was used on this occasion, that is, that they should be included as a general budgetary item. One of the first crises—it was a period of crisis in the Labor Party at that time—that confronted Caucus when I was first a member of it was whether we would allow the postal charges to pass in the Budget session. The Democratic Labor Party had the balance of power in the Senate and it was prepared to take the popular stand. No honourable members opposite who were then in government were standing in this place saying that we should block the postal charges then. Of course they were not; they had the responsibility of government and of running things and they had to accept the unpopular decision, just as we have to accept the unpopular decision now. That is what government is all about.

Nr Nixon—Inflation was not the problem it is now. This is a quite different matter.

Mr SCHOLES—Inflation? What the honourable member is saying is that if honourable members opposite increase charges costs are not increased but if we increase charges costs are increased? That is just utter rubbish. The cost of general postage in my first 2 years in this Parliament rose by 40 per cent. To suggest that that did not increase costs is ludicrous. To suggest that to increase postal charges in this way would add any more to costs than would the expansion of the Budget to provide this money out of general taxation revenue is ludicrous. It is money raised from the community whether it is raised in the form of the cost of postage stamps—that costs the average taxpayer less than it would if we put it on his taxation bill—or is raised in the form of general taxation or deficit budgeting.

As I said before, in every area the present Opposition has continually practised the policy of putting loss situations on the taxpayer. Australian Country Party members will be well aware of the regular practice of using the railways for services where the freight rates are kept low because it is the only form of transport which can effectively transport the farmers' goods and of using road transport for those areas of transport which would be lucrative to the railway systems. The result of this is that every railway system in Australia is in great debt. Many services are being maintained only in order to provide a service to communities which could not survive in a free enterprise system without that form of support. I do not object to that one bit because that is what it is all about. We live in a society in which everyone does not live at the

point of sale of products and if we need to subsidise the carriage of some goods then we have to do so.

It is equally true to say that the cost of postal services varies throughout the community. Why should it cost 10c to carry a letter over the road? This is a ludicrous charge for the carriage of a letter over such a short distance. But it also will cost 10c to carry a letter from Melbourne to Darwin or from Melbourne to Perth. No one has suggested that there should be a differential rate and I think it would be quite improper to introduce one. But if we were to carry out the type of policies that a free enterprise operation would undertake we would have differential charges. I have said more than once that people—and politicians especially—do not like increased charges. But I would suggest also that they do not like other people to seek to pretend that they would do anything different. Whilst it may be true that honourable members opposite would change the rentals of telephones of country people to advantage certain people they would still have to raise the revenue one way or another and someone would pay because there is not one cent—I repeat, not one cent—expended by this or any other government that someone in the community does not pay and the only decision which is really made is how much shall be spent and who shall pay the greatest amounts. We have a different philosophy from that of the Opposition and that is why we sit on different sides of the chamber.

It has been said that telephone services are being used to subsidise postal services. I take it that the Opposition uses this argument to justify an increase in the cost of postal services. If the Opposition's arguments were accepted an increased rate of inflation would result from such increased charges. Apparently the Opposition believes that if postal charges were increased telephone services would then be reduced. Rationalised further, the Opposition would then look at some of the services provided for public convenience by the Post Office which are uneconomical and it would then say that those services should be priced at a level which would make them completely uneconomic and as a result it would discontinue their operation. Some services have already reached this stage. I believe that postal orders are hardly competitive with bank cheques. They are far too expensive and would seem to me to be an inefficient form of transfer of money. This is especially so where postal orders for some reason have to be reclaimed when uncollected. One can cancel a cheque and one's loss is almost nil. But if one

tries to recoup a postal order, especially one that has been sent to another country—and this has been the case for a long time—one can wait up to six to eight months to get one's money back. There are plenty of instances of this happening. These are services which could be and most likely should be examined to see whether or not they are worth continuing, and whether or not the Commonwealth Bank could possibly carry out the service at a lower rate and with greater efficiency. But whilst there is a need for these services and while the services are being used, the Post Office must provide them. The Post Office also provides many agency services which have nothing to do with the Post Office and on which I doubt that the Post Office makes any profit whatsoever.

Finally, the honourable member for Gippsland referred to a newspaper in my electorate. He did not quote what was said by that newspaper when he was supporting increased postal charges in exactly the same circumstances as exist now. He quoted the situation at the time which suited him. The opinions of honourable members in this place on matters like this are more related to which side of the Speaker's Chair we sit than they are to the actual passage of the legislation. But the Opposition is acting in this matter in exactly the same way as the Opposition of the day did in 1967. Having rejected the legislation in July the Opposition is now facilitating its passage with verbal opposition in September.

The argument was put forward that the Government should have waited until after the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) had made his Budget speech before introducing this legislation. Whilst this argument may be valid it is less valid than it sounds because the Bills were introduced previously. One of the reasons given for the rejection of the legislation when it was previously before the House was that the Opposition believed that the changes proposed in the legislation should have been introduced in the Budget. As I said before, I do not like increased charges but I realise that they are necessary.

Mr BOURCHIER (Bendigo) (3.31)—I listened with interest to the honourable member for Corio (Mr Scholes), particularly to the comments which he made about which side of the Speaker's Chair he sits before he makes up his mind. I agree with the assessment made by my colleague the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) that while the Opposition is not opposing this Bill it is certainly prepared to offer some comments on it. One well recalls the Treasurer (Mr Crean) when introducing his

mini-Budget mentioning that the measures introduced were designed as anti-inflationary measures. The proposal to implement increased postal charges at that stage was defeated in the Senate because those increases were considered to be inflationary. Government supporters took great delight in saying that this was a lot of rot and that the Opposition's attitude on this matter was the result of bad organisation. But let me inform the House who supported the view taken by the Opposition. I refer, as did the honourable member for Gippsland, to the Deputy Prime Minister (Dr J. F. Cairns), that man of great moment who supported the view that the increases were not anti-inflationary but would be inflationary. The Deputy Prime Minister was also supported in that view by the Leader of the Government in the Senate (Senator Murphy). Obviously the Government did not believe in the measures that it was introducing. This shows the hopeless mismanagement from which we suffer under this socialist Government.

The Post and Telegraph Rates Bill proposes several areas of increase. Firstly it proposes to raise the postal charge from 7c to 10c instead of from 7c to 9c as was proposed previously. The increased charge is designed to reap the same amount of money as would have been collected over a longer term if the charge had been 9c. The Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen) might perhaps agree that these increases should be made. But it appears to me that this Government which is steadfastly on the side of the poor, the under-privileged and the low income-earner, is directly attacking those who have less money. A pensioner will have to pay 10c to post a letter. Perhaps the Minister in his kindness and wisdom might look at the possibility of creating a second stamp for pensioners. But the Government is making an attack on the low income-earner and the pensioner. It is typical of all the actions which the Government has taken. We find that the Government has introduced measures in the recent Budget, the mini-Budget and on other occasions over the last 12 to 18 months that have amounted to some liability for people on the lower end of the income scale.

In the last 12 months under this Government we have seen the Post Office discontinue to deliver mail on Saturday mornings. This was followed by the then Postmaster-General's agreeing with the trade unions and closing post offices on Saturday morning. Also, the Government is applying pressure to try to close non-official post offices which are privately run and which are prepared to provide a necessary service to the public. Let us face the fact that it is the ordinary

citizen who uses the post office on a Saturday morning, and not big business. So we again see this slanted attack on the lower income and pensioner level. Surely it is possible now for the Special Minister of State who is at the table, and the Postmaster-General in another place to look at the effect of the increase of nearly 50 per cent in postal charges. In this event the Government might even consider re-opening post offices on Saturday mornings and giving us a little service, something which is terribly lacking. However, I doubt that the Government would achieve that success and provide that service to the public.

I refer now to bulk postage rates for periodicals. Again we see an attack on those who cannot afford it. The people who use this service and the people who need it are mostly charitable organisations that operate on a non-profit level and whose only means of communication with the public and their members is by posting periodical newsletters. These organisations have always been able to enjoy a measure of low-price postage. In the next 12 months the rate for material of this kind will rise by 50 per cent and from 1975 it will increase a further 33½ per cent, which in total effect means that in 12 months there will be an increase of about 100 per cent. Telephone rental charges have increased for the ordinary person from \$55 a year to \$75 a year. For business people the rental has increased from \$55 to \$85. One can understand that there is a need for an increase considering the present economic situation, the cost of living increases and so on. It seems to me that a 50 per cent increase is a bit steep, even in this day and age. Perhaps the Government has anticipated that the rate of inflation will be as high as 50 per cent.

The Minister stated in his second reading speech that it was inequitable for the private individuals, the residents, to bear the added cost increases due to the actions of the Opposition in rejecting the postal charges in July. The Government has decided, in its undoubted desire to attack the private sector, that it is to be the industry sector that will pay the added cost to make up the amount that is claimed to be lost. What a ridiculous situation we have. A Minister says it is inequitable for the residents to carry the cost. Does he really believe that industry will carry all these charges? Wage costs rise almost weekly. Industry has had increased costs slanted at it from every direction. Industrial operations have to try to remain in business because after all, as I have pointed out before often enough, without industry there is no employment.

The situation is that a proportion of the costs will have to be passed on. History shows over

and over again that if the cost of a single article is increased by a very low percentage, by the time the article passes through the various sectors of the industry, the retailers or any other organisation, the price of it multiplies immensely. The end result is that in order to protect itself, as it must if it is to survive, the charges incurred in carrying these costs are passed on to the public which will be far worse off overall. The obvious thing is that any cost factor must increase the level of inflation. It does not matter what small percentage of inflationary level is achieved, it is still adding to the growing burden. We know that the Government's action towards the decentralised industries is definitely a joke. The Government has no real desire to decentralise industries.

Mr Lusher—Absolutely not.

Mr BOURCHIER—Absolutely not, as my colleague says. It is a joke with this Government.

Let us look at the 1972 election. Members of the Labor Party made very guarded statements. They covered themselves fairly carefully, but that is understandable because they are a crafty lot. They made pseudo promises that there would be standard telephone charges throughout the country. They said they would look into this matter. They said that this would be the greatest thing for country people and industries. What did we find? They did not carry out that promise. Instead they lifted the country differential on telephone rentals, which meant that not only industries but also the poor people the Government is supposed to protect, including the pensioners, copped an extra blast. The Government has now increased rentals with no differential for people in the country. Country telephone charges are so much higher because country people have to make trunk-line calls more often than their city competitors, but they will be caught up also in the web of higher telephone rentals. I suggest that the Government should look at the situation and try to do something for industry.

The cost for calls from public telephones has risen from 5c to 10c—a mere 100 per cent increase. It is not a bad sort of increase. I think I heard the honourable member for Robertson (Mr Cohen) complaining about a 100 per cent to 200 per cent profit being made on imported goods. He should ask his own government how it justifies the sort of cop now proposed. After all, who will pay that great charge? Surely not the so-called rich person who has a telephone in his own home; it will be the poor people and the low-income earners who will be slugged. In his

second reading speech the Minister points to an agreement with the United States and the United Kingdom which will enable us to have a faster postal service. This will be great, because the quickest way to get a letter from Bendigo to Melbourne will be to post it through the U.S. It now takes two or three days to get a letter from Bendigo to Melbourne, so it will be a great bit of service. I am sure the people in my area will be delighted. It takes the people who live 40 or 50 miles out of Bendigo a day or two to have letters delivered. Perhaps we will be able to send letters through the U.S. It might be a bit more expensive but we will be able to get a bit of service.

Mr Lionel Bowen—You are just hostile with employees.

Mr BOURCHIER—The employees are forbidden from giving service because the Government has cut it out. The proposed improved service is great news. Perhaps we will find some service boost to our local area.

The way we are heading reminds one of the situation in another country where one is lucky if his letter is delivered at all after posting. Recently there was a train travelling from town to town loaded with baggage cars, each totally stacked with mail, because the postal authorities under that particular socialist government were so lax and disorganised that the easiest way of getting rid of mail was to put it on the train and send it off. A lot of that mail was lost completely because it was on that train. I hope that the Postmaster-General's Department does not get to this tragic stage. Let us hope it takes some positive steps to promote something that the people in this country need—an efficient service—instead of driving them to outside services. The Government always wants to attack industry. I think it was the honourable member for Corio (Mr Scholes) who mentioned something about the private industry sector taking business away. Do honourable members blame industry for going to private organisations when they will give service?

People in the major areas of Melbourne and Sydney are paying considerably more to use the private service to distribute their document exchange because they can get service when they want it. They are prepared to pay for it. This is a great loss to the postal organisation. Service is something that unfortunately this Government seems to lack. The increases proposed will lead to a 0.3 per cent increase in the cost price index. It is not a very great percentage, but as I said

earlier it will build up and will add to the growing amount of inflation. If automatic wage indexation were introduced—the Government seems to be a little partial to that—the result would be a 0.4 per cent increase in wages. Who bears that cost? The public, again, or industry, which in turn passes it on. What about the possible and probable demand by unions for extra wages over and above indexation? It is unbelievable that the Government will put up charges without there being an immediate demand by all the unions concerned with the Post Office for increased wages. I would say that a fairly large demand will be made within one week.

Finally I would comment that if this case had been considered by the Prices Justification Tribunal in its existing role it probably would have disallowed that part of the price increase that was based on cost increases which are not yet officially certain. The Minister said that the increases were required to ensure that the rates which customers pay for Post Office services are sufficient to cover costs and also to provide a surplus which can be re-invested to help meet the growing demand for services. He also indicated that the new charges were based partly on likely increases in wage rates and were designed to give an expected profit of \$60m. In other words, the whole exercise has been based on probable increases. Surely to goodness that is a backward approach to the matter. An alternative method may have been to obtain funds for future capital investment by borrowing. I do not know whether this was considered. It would appear to me that there could be some advantage in borrowing funds, covering interest rates and repayments over a period and carrying them at a much less cost to the public in general.

Mr KEOGH (Bowman) (3.45)—Let me explain what would happen if we followed the logic of some of the arguments put forward by the honourable member for Bendigo (Mr Bourchier). In his remarks on this legislation, he suggested that the increased postal charges would contribute very greatly to the inflationary situation in Australia. The obvious consequence is that if the Government could decrease its charges sufficiently it might cure inflation. That is an example of the negative type of thinking which the Opposition constantly puts forward in this chamber.

The honourable member went on to say—he had some agreement from one of his colleagues whom we have come to know quite well in the short period that he has been here for his ridiculous interjections—that this Government had no interest in decentralisation. That remark

was so stupid that it was ridiculous in the extreme. It is a pity that the honourable member has not been in the House on more frequent occasions to hear debate on legislation introduced by the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren). It is a pity that the honourable member did not take the opportunity in the last couple of days to note some of the real development that has been proposed by this Government for the Albury-Wodonga area. It is unfortunate that he did not reflect on the pitiful record of his own Liberal-Country Party Government which, in the 11th hour of its great number of years in office, suddenly found an interest in decentralisation when it realised that that issue would be a real election winner for the Labor Party in 1972.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Drury)—I ask the honourable member to relate his remarks to the Bills now before the House which deal with posts and telegraphs.

Mr KEOGH—I accept what you say, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I might say as justification for my remarks on those matters that I was replying to some of the comments made by the previous speaker, the honourable member for Bendigo.

The honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon), who led for the Opposition parties in this debate, contrasted the attitude of the Opposition on this occasion with its attitude to these proposals when they were last before the Parliament. On that occasion, the Opposition parties in the Senate decided to use their numbers to prevent this Government from obtaining the passage of the legislation proposing increased postal charges as they were detailed in what is commonly known as the 'mini-Budget' which was introduced in July this year. On this occasion the Opposition parties take a different attitude and will allow these measures to be passed.

Members of the Opposition must bear in mind that their decision to prevent the passage of these measures in July is the major contributing factor why some additional charges had to be added on this occasion. The reasons for those increases in postal charges have been explained by the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen). The new ordinary letter rate of 9c, proposed in July, has been increased to 10c in this legislation. I instance that in explanation of what the real situation is.

The action of the Senate in July with respect to these charges is typical of how the Opposition has behaved, particularly since the last election. It operates somewhat as a government in exile.

Its action in the Senate in July in rejecting the measures introduced by the Government showed it was behaving in a rather irresponsible fashion. This was well known and publicly proclaimed in those days not just by speakers from the Government side in this House and in the Senate but in fact by the national Press.

It was well recognised in those days that the decision by the Government was a responsible one. It was in keeping with the statement by the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) at the Premiers Conference on 7 June when he let the Premiers know quite clearly that the attitude of this Government would be to ensure that it made departments providing public services, such as the Post Office, pay their way. He also clearly indicated to the Premiers that he would expect that they would balance their budgets, would make a real effort to see that departments in the various States which were expending large sums of money would adopt a more responsible attitude, and would make sure that they were able to raise revenue to match that expenditure. So, the decision announced by the Prime Minister at that Premiers Conference, when he made it publicly known that the appropriation for the Post Office in the 1974-75 Budget would be held at last year's level of \$385m, was instrumental in ensuring that the legislation came forward as quickly as possible. It was introduced into this chamber in our July sittings.

We have today the need to consider fresh legislation because the Government was prevented in July from enacting the legislation proposing those increased charges. It is all very well for the Opposition to claim that on this occasion it is going to do a great service by allowing the Government's legislation to pass and to become law, while pointing out the injustices of the increase. It is as well to remind the Opposition that some proportion of the charges which were proposed in the July measures and which are repeated in these measures are charges the introduction of which was delayed for over 12 months by the then Postmaster-General—the present Special Minister of State sitting at the table—as those measures were to be associated with the 1973-74 Budget which, I would remind honourable members, was the first Budget of this Labor Government.

The then Postmaster-General clearly indicated to the House that definite proposals had been put forward to the previous Postmaster-General—they were documented and made available to Mr Lionel Bowen as Postmaster-General when he assumed that responsibility; and it was he who made these disclosures—to

provide for increases of between 25 per cent and 30 per cent in postal charges. If the Liberal-Country Party Government had remained in office following the 1972 election, those new charges would have been introduced in the 1973-74 Budget. But the imposition of those charges, proposed for that Budget, were held over by this Government. It is only now that the Government has faced the need to increase the various postal and other charges associated with these charges.

Some of the money problems that confront us today in the administration of the Post Office are shortly to be overcome. This will result from the responsible decision made by this Government soon after it came to power to appoint a royal commission to inquire into the Australian Post Office. The report of that royal commission is well known to honourable members and the decision of the Government following the receipt of that report is well known also. Before very long, legislation will be introduced to provide for the restructuring of what we know today as the various services of the Post Office into 2 separate commissions. While that action will not solve all the problems of the Post Office, it will go a long way towards solving some of the problems that have been commented on by honourable members opposite and also some of the problems that we recognise do exist today. There is no running away from the fact that the charges that have been introduced in these measures have been introduced in an effort to adopt a responsible attitude towards the need of the Post Office to pay its way, to ensure that it is able to meet its commitments from the charges it imposes. We reject absolutely the principle we saw put into operation so often by the previous Government of making the taxpayers foot the bill for some of the very privileged measures that were introduced from time to time. Some of those measures prevented people in electorates such as the one I represent getting what might be referred to as a fair share of the Post Office cake. For a number of years I sat in this chamber and in Budget after Budget saw the situation of my electorate of Bowman—and in general the position in Queensland followed a similar pattern—deteriorate year by year. Year by year the provision of telephone services to people in outlying metropolitan areas clearly got worse and worse. I dealt with this at some length in a previous Budget debate, in 1972 I think. On that occasion the estimated demand in the previous year for telephone services of 33,250 had fallen some 4,000 short of the actual demand of over 37,000. I ascertained from available statistics that this was

a general pattern and it has got worse and worse year by year. When I sought a reasonable explanation for this through various means available to me I found that the obvious answer was that people in these areas were not being given the share of the Budget that they should have been getting. They were not being given the opportunity to have the lines and the services made available to them through the establishment of new telephone exchanges, simply because of the discriminatory policies of the previous Government.

I refer particularly to the famous country line program that was introduced. It was introduced unashamedly by the then Postmaster-General at the behest of the Country Party to provide a measure of service to country areas. I am sure we would all recognise that it was good to be able to provide some service for them but this measure of service was provided in a fashion that discriminated most severely against the people in the metropolitan fringe areas and in many other developing areas throughout the length and breadth of Australia, to the extent that they just could not get telephones. They waited the unreasonable time of 4 years or more for the simple connection of a telephone to their homes.

I am particularly pleased to see that finally, after all the years I have been watching the situation, a point was reached in Queensland where the demand for 1973-74 was just about a line ball with the estimated demand. The estimated demand disclosed in the previous Budget Papers was for 57,000 connections in Queensland—I refer to applications for telephone services involving the provision of new lines or equipment. The actual demand for 1973-74 amounted to 56,151 telephones, so finally, because of the introduction of policies by this Government, the people in these areas are starting to get a fair go. They are getting to a point where they have a reasonable chance of getting a telephone. It is not just my opinion that the reason they were at a disadvantage previously was that the Postmaster-General was prepared to instruct his officers to give preference to very expensive connections of services to remote station properties. This was obvious from the information available to us. I refer to a letter I received from the Director of Posts and Telegraphs in Brisbane dated 13 July 1972 in reply to representations I had made about telephone services in the metropolitan area that had been delayed for a considerable time. The letter said:

It is agreed that the preferred arrangement would be to build-up adequate resources within the Department and this

is being done to the maximum extent possible, within the limitations of available finance.

The Director went on to disclose the realities of the situation by saying:

The position is particularly acute in Queensland in comparison to other States—

And well I knew that from the fact that we were falling further and further behind year by year when comparing demand to estimated demand. He continued:

The position is particularly acute in Queensland in comparison to other States as we have had a relatively high level of demand for telephone service over a lengthy period.

I recognise that also. The letter went on to say:

The recent legislation governing the provision of rural telephone services has also resulted in a huge departmental commitment in Queensland relative to most other States.

Clearly, the representations of the honourable member for Maranoa (Mr Corbett), whom I understand was principally responsible for the introduction of the discrimination in favour of country lines, were successful in respect of the area about which he was concerned at the expense of areas such as those represented by me and the honourable member for McPherson (Mr Robinson), whom I know would readily agree with me about the problems confronting people in the fringe metropolitan areas in obtaining telephone services. I am not saying that the problem has been entirely solved but I am delighted to see that a situation exists now where finally we have caught up with demand. We can look forward now to seeing people moving into homes in the new suburbs of our cities being able to get telephones in the relatively near future with the same ease as they are able to get water or electricity laid on. As far as I am concerned, this essential service should be available to them as readily as other services. There is absolutely no excuse for this not being so.

I do not want to indicate that I am laying the entire blame for the situation on the administration of the Post Office. I recognise that there is a real problem, particularly in respect of some subdivisions that are developed by the types of developers who completely lack any conscience in these matters. I am sure most honourable members, when driving past residential developments, have seen the very attractive billboards as claiming 'All services available—telephone, light, electricity, gas, etc.'. Unfortunate young couples buy these blocks of residential land not thinking that they are buying anything other than what is put forward to them on the attractive brochures they get or on the attractive hoardings showing the alleged delights of the sites they are about to purchase. They do not realise that

they are being hoodwinked by the developers, many of whom have not even bothered to contact the Post Office to find out if these services are available. The developers believe they can mislead the purchasers of the land, who unknowingly take them at their word, purchase the land and find that the services are not available.

I think I mentioned this point to the Minister previously when he held the portfolio. As he now represents the Postmaster-General in this chamber I might suggest it to him again. I ask that he take whatever action it is possible for him to take to see that there is a better liaison between the local authorities and the Postmaster-General's Department. I ask that he explore every avenue available to him to see whether it is possible for the local authorities to lay down some clear and definite terms for developers of new estates to ensure that where it is not possible for the Postmaster-General's Department to provide these services within a reasonable time—I agree that at times it may not be possible—this is clearly indicated to the local authority and some enforcement or restriction is placed on the developers to ensure that they will tell the truth, the factual story, to people purchasing home sites. Purchasers of blocks of land would then know that a telephone connection would not be available. They would know that because of a lack of telephone exchange equipment, trunk line or minor equipment a telephone service might not be available for some years hence. If these details were known to purchasers the Department would be relieved of some burden of blame. Whilst I am happy to hear from my constituents many of them would be saved the trouble of ringing my office to find out that they have been hoodwinked and treacherously tricked by the developers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Drury)—Order!
The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr GILES (Angas) (4.6)—I always admire persons like the honourable member for Bowman (Mr Keogh) and the honourable member for Corio (Mr Scholes) who try to justify a Government decision when it is tough and unpopular. I will, therefore, be far more moderate in my comments about their speeches than I would otherwise have been. It would be wrong, however, if I were to let some of their remarks go without some form of reply. The honourable member for Bowman made a most illuminating remark. Whilst the Opposition was blamed for delaying postal increases for 4 weeks, he explained that the Postmaster-General himself delayed such increases for a period of 12 months. I invite the House to compare the amount of the

proposed increases attributed to the Opposition for the delaying their imposition with the total amount involved. It is almost as much as that for which the Postmaster-General can be held responsible for delaying the increases. So let us have no more nonsense about what the Opposition did or did not do. We are happy that we gave business people and other people a chance to get their houses in order and a lot of their work done in the certain knowledge that increases in various telecommunication and postal facility charges would be introduced in this Budget. Today the honourable member for Bowman complained bitterly about everything the Opposition did and then admitted that the Government also was to blame. The Government has a job to do and we do not oppose it on this occasion.

It is only right that I should do as the honourable member for Bowman did on behalf of his electorate, on behalf of Brisbane and perhaps on behalf of Queensland and make one or two comments in relation to my own area. He said that at long last he feels that his electorate is getting a fair go with respect to telephone connections. Let me instance a case with which I have been concerned and ask him whether his definition of a fair go applies. I have made representations on behalf of a young doctor who has been appointed to a modern hospital in Adelaide. Telephone cables passed through the end of his block which is 4 miles from the centre of the fairly major town of Murray Bridge. He applied for a telephone connection expecting to be charged between perhaps \$200 and \$400 for it. He was asked to pay \$8,000 for the connection. I stress that his block was within 4 miles of Murray Bridge, telephone cables went through the end of it and within a few yards of his house. The honourable member for Bowman spoke of a fair deal for his people. He can hardly blame a Liberal member, not a Country Party member, for asking what is fair. There are people in my electorate which is comparatively close to Adelaide who are being asked for sums in excess of \$10,000 for telephone connections.

Mr James—They have a quid too.

Mr GILES—I know that the honourable member for Hunter is a fair man so I ask him: What is fair? Is it not reasonable that a person who can catch public transport to work in the morning but who may choose to use his own vehicle should perhaps pay a share of the total cost of telephone facility installations? That is the sort of principle that was adopted in the past. The honourable member for Bowman said that at long last he thought that people in his electorate

seeking telephone connections were getting a fair go. Perhaps I may comment on this aspect. South Australia has been wonderfully well served by 2 marvellous Directors of Posts and Telegraphs. The performance in South Australia has been second to none but now, for the first time in my experience of the last 10 years, the fringe areas of Adelaide are suffering. Switchboards do not have sufficient capacity and work has not kept up to programs. I think it reasonable to ask why. I am no expert on these matters and I was not helped on this occasion by discovering from the Parliamentary Library that I could not get the Year Book for 1973-74. The last one I could get was presented in June 1973.

Mr Keogh—There is a shortage of labour.

Mr GILES—I do not know the reason but it makes life difficult for someone like me who wants to debate these measures. From the figures available it is my understanding that the subvention from revenue for the Post Office in 1973-74 was of the order of \$385m. The subvention for 1974-75 is again \$385m. To these figures must be added the internally generated funds of the Post Office as a whole. Then we must ask what performance we can expect from such allocations. I know that the present Government believes that users should pay for facilities. I find it hard to argue against that view. However, according to the Treasury figures in the Budget, which is only 48 hours old, there will be an increase of 42.5 per cent in taxation receipts this year. Notwithstanding this fact, the Government has allowed no more to the Postmaster-General's Department this year. It seems to me that this is inequitable. At first glance it appears that the Department has not been given a fair go.

The whole Budget is based on the assumption that inflation will increase by slightly more than 20 per cent during the next 12 months. How can \$385m plus internally generated funds produce the performance required? It is common knowledge from open discussion in my electorate in the fringe areas of Adelaide that one cannot get performance if one does not have the funds. I can understand the difficulties of the Department. This year there have been enormous increases in wage costs, and I do not object to them, but to have a situation where funds allocated for this Department are the same as for last year seems to me to be letting down the entire system. Obviously the performance cannot be as great as it was last year. People in country areas know very well what the Government is proposing and doing. Let us face it; the previous Government was culpable too. It was too good an idea for the

amount of revenue that the Post Office could attract into that area. This was well understood in country areas. But unless the extra amount which the Government has tacked on during the last 4 weeks, and for which it has blamed us, is going to earn a lot more than any projection that one can find in the Vernon report, we will not have the capital requirements to do the job effectively. That is really the only point I properly wanted to make. I hope that I am not wide in the facts that I have been able to glean but, as I say, I have not been able to get hold of what I imagine is the latest annual report from the Department. This has made it rather difficult for me to draw a proper comparison.

The only other matter I wanted to discuss at all today arises from the remarks of the honourable member for Corio and the honourable member for Bowman. It has to do with what functions the Postmaster-General's Department should undertake and what functions it should not. We have already discussed—I hope we have done it properly—whether or not the Government has the funds to do the job and, if so, where they are to come from.

The next point I wish to make is that if the Department were not so ambitious to protect its role in life I think more funds would be available. Let me make one or two suggestions to the Department. It is not the first time I have commented, for instance, on householder deliveries on behalf of various country newspapers in my area. I have been doing this on and off for some years. All country newspapers look on the competition they get from the Postmaster-General's Department as spoiling their competitive position entirely. From time immemorial stores have advertised in the local newspaper. Chain stores rather altered the situation, but chain stores used to advertise in the local newspaper. With the advent of chain stores came the householder delivery. Some people tended to use that system, which deprived provincial newspapers of a lot of their revenue. I just make the point in passing: Does the Department really need to be in this role or could it save staffing if it were not involved in it? I do not know that I am interested in or that I wish to protect red telephones. They always seemed rather extraneous to me. But I presume that the need for red telephones has arisen because the community does not think that the facilities are being supplied by the Post Office. By and large I think members of the public are prepared to pay if they get an efficient service. I will touch on that matter again in a minute.

We now have the intrusion of the Postmaster-General's Department into the field of courier

services. Why did they arise? They probably arose before the system of 'Priority Paid' mail was introduced. Might I compliment the Department on the efficiency of the delivery times of 'Priority Paid' mail. I use that service quite consistently. It cost me a great deal but it is a very efficient service and it takes a matter of hours for mail posted in South Australia to arrive here. I repeat that I do not think people mind paying when a matter of some urgency crops up if the service is efficient. I do not object to that, but why do we now need sums of money available, which are specified in these documents, to set up a courier service to be administered by the Post Office? My argument here, which touches on householder deliveries to a lesser extent, courier services and other similar services, is that surely taxpayers' funds or loan funds can be saved if some of this side—the fringe side, if you like—of the service of the Post Office were retained in the private sector. If the private sector can do it and if people use it and if it costs the Department money to organise this, I do not think the taxpayer should be strained by providing facilities to set it up. That probably points up the deep philosophical difference between people on our side of the Parliament and people on the other side.

If I might get a little tougher perhaps I would finish by saying that the honourable member for Bowman could not quite see the point made by the honourable member for Bendigo (Mr Bourchier) when he touched on the matter of decentralisation. I appreciate by the look on your face, Mr Deputy Speaker, that I have to keep within fairly close bounds when dealing with the honourable member's remarks. Let us face it; just in my little neck of the woods—in my comparatively unimportant electorate, I suppose—this Government has already taxed the brandy industry out of existence, or very nearly so. It has put up the price of petrol in country areas by taking away the country subsidy, resulting in an increase of up to 27c a gallon in the Northern Territory. The removal of taxation concessions has taken away the liquidity of many farmers on whose back many big country towns are founded today. So that affects the entire economy in towns like Murray Bridge, Renmark, Oodawoopwoop, or wherever else one may go.

The Government has presided over the almost complete ruination of the Australian economy. This does not affect so much those people who are protected in the electorate of my friend from Bowman but it does affect the people who are in private business, whether that business be in the main street or whether it be a rural one, in my

sort of electorate. I will leave aside mentioning obvious things such as superphosphate, because the price has already increased from \$15.50 a ton 4 months ago to \$45.50 a ton now. I will leave that aside but will get to the fact that in my State, anyway, elected Labor Party senators and others in the State field are refusing to attend growers' meetings when they wish to register their protests. Do not let us ever wonder why there is unhappiness with this Government in those areas. It is very real, and people like me are trying to advise the growers not to strike and withhold goods from the city. Anyway, it would be counter-productive. I think we are winning that fight. But they must be allowed the right to protest, and they will protest tremendously when every country investment in a country town is hit by increased telephone charges or, if you like, petrol charges, because people in those areas use those facilities almost entirely for their job—to earn their income.

Mr James—But they have other privileges.

Mr GILES—They do not have the privilege of television in some cases. They do not have the provision of public transport. They do not have the provision of cheapness of commuting from one area to another, and in these areas the majority of their costs of production is involved in this sort of thing.

I think probably one of the silliest remarks I heard—I will not say who made it; it was made a little while ago—came from an honourable member on the other side of the House who pointed to the importance of the telephone to a metropolitan household. I do not deny that but, let us face it, if anyone asked me whether it was more important that Mrs Joe Blow should be able to discuss why she and her neighbour lost 5c at bridge the previous evening or the sorts of costs that an industry has to meet in country areas to carry out its job under these new provisions that we are debating today, I would have to say that there is no comparison. The honourable member for Bowman said that he was glad to see fairness of supply. All we seek is that the Government in the future look at the fairness of all people in Australia, that it ensures that there is fair treatment for all of them instead of what seems to us to be a building up against one section of the community at present.

I hope that I have tried to be pleasant and objective. I hope that the figures I have are not too far off the mark. If they are, I apologise, but it

is due to the fact that the annual report of the Department has not been available from the Parliamentary Library today for me to study the facts and figures as I would like to.

Mr MORRIS (Shortland) (4.25)—I will be brief in my remarks as the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen) has requested. The refusal of the Senate to ratify the proposed postal charges in July last can only be described at best as irresponsible and typical of the course of bull-headed obstructionism that has been pursued by the Opposition in the Senate since December 1972. The Opposition has aptly been described as trying to operate as a government in exile in another place. The editorial of the Melbourne 'Age' of 1 August was appropriate when it said:

Higher postal charges are not so much a part of the Government's anti-inflationary program as a first step towards making the Post Office commercially viable . . . Significantly, the Opposition did not oppose the increased postal charges in the House of Representatives. Their rejection in the Senate must be seen as a tactical manoeuvre based on opportunism rather than a valid objection based on reason or principle.

At the time of the Senate's rejection last July of the Post and Telegraph Rates Bill of 1974, it was anticipated that if rates were not increased then the Australian Post Office could expect a loss of approximately \$134m in 1974-75. Honourable members will recall that a few weeks later when the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) announced the deferment of the Government's child care proposals, the same Opposition set up a phoney outcry against this Government. The total cost of the child care program as promised in the election campaign of May last was almost equal to the loss anticipated to be incurred by the Australian Post Office. It would seem that the Opposition's priorities then were that postal charges should be lowered at the expense of a total child care program because it cannot have it both ways. Whilst good arguments can be put forward that postal services ought to be considered as a social service on the one hand or as a straight business undertaking on the other, the reality is that both points of view are incompatible. It is reasonable that the user of services ought to bear the major share of the cost of providing the services and not the general taxpayer. Hence there is a necessity for increased rates and charges.

The Australian Post Office is the nation's largest business operation. On average, in excess of 5,000 letters are distributed and more than 6,000 telephone calls are completed every minute of every day. As such, the operation of the Post Office is a highly labour-intensive operation and depends much more on the willing co-operation

of many people of differing skills and background. Because about 70 per cent of its operating costs are expended on labour and as community wage levels are rising, increasing costs are inevitable. The financial dilemma facing the Australian Post Office is not unique among the industrialised nations of the world. This is referred to by the Vernon Commission in its report on page 52. The problem in Australia has been that the Australian Post Office for far too long has been administered as a private political preserve of the Australian Country Party. It was managed in line with policies that were based on political motives rather than on sound commercial practice. One does not need to go beyond the highly expensive country telephone program initiated in 1970-71 to find instances where it would have been literally a better proposition for the Post Office to have bought the farm than to have incurred the cost of providing a telephone.

Mention must be made also of the decision in 1971 to increase the Government's share of pensions and the decision of the Liberal-Country Party Government in 1972 to appoint Professor A. H. Pollard to inquire into methods of adjusting Commonwealth superannuation benefits. Resulting from his recommendations was the Superannuation Act 1973. I know that members of the Country Party are not interested. That is why they are leaving the chamber. The Superannuation Act 1973 provided for staff pensions to be adjusted by 1.4 times the percentage increase in the consumer price index. These actions increased future payments to past and present Post Office employees. Accordingly there has had to be a sharp increase in Post Office payments for superannuation liability. Post Office payments for superannuation liability increased from \$49m in 1972-73 to \$104m in 1973-74, and provision for the payment of \$130m has been made in the Post Office budget this year to meet the cost of this item.

The present Opposition, when in Government, refused to initiate steps to place the Australian Post Office on a proper businesslike footing. It took a change in government to see the establishment of a commission of inquiry. (Quorum formed). I thank the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser) for calling some Country Party members to the House. It is interesting to note that it took a Liberal member of the Opposition to call the quorum. Obviously he wanted some Country Party members present to participate in the debate. I ought to remind the House that when post and telegraph rates were altered in 1973 the Country Party endorsed the increase in telephone rates. It was only interested

in objecting to increased postal rates on country newspapers. It is not really concerned about increases in telephone rates. As I was saying, the present Opposition, when in government, refused to take the steps necessary to put the Australian Post Office on a proper businesslike footing. It was the present Government which after the election of 1972 established the commission of inquiry into the operations of the Post Office.

The point that has been largely overlooked in relation to the new rates is that the introduction of a standard postal article is a very worthwhile step forward in the handling of mail. The standard postal article in many instances, as it covers most sized letters, will result in a saving of postal charges. A standard postal article will be any item of mail between the dimensions of 90 millimetres by 140 millimetres and 120 millimetres by 235 millimetres. As there is not any weight limit, no doubt this will result in a substantial saving in postal charges.

The other matter that has been mentioned, the increase in public telephone charges, is again a course that was prescribed by the Opposition when in government. When the telephone equipment was installed in 1963 provision was made for 5c steps only. Because of the mechanism of the telephones, the only step up that can be made from a 5c charge is an increase to 10c. This ought to be brought to the notice of the people of Australia. The increase in domestic telephone rentals from \$55 to \$65 is an increase of \$10 as compared with an increase of \$30 for commercial rentals. I think it is proper that business telephone rentals be higher than domestic telephone rentals. After all the charge for business telephone rentals is a deductible item for taxation purposes because it is an expense item in the profit and loss account of the business. I think it is proper that the householder be not called upon to subsidise business telephone rentals.

I make one final point in referring to the effect that increased telephone costs and increased telephone charges will have on the average householder. It has been completely and conveniently overlooked by members of the Opposition in this debate that the abolition of radio and television receiver licence fees represents a saving to almost every member of the community of \$26.50 a year. If one were to deduct from that the \$10 per annum increase in the telephone rental one would be still left with a saving of \$16.50. I doubt that even members of the Australian Country Party would be writing more than 550 letters a year, which would be the number that would be required to take up the

saving that would result. So, even if the difference is only \$16.50, the non-payment to the Post Office of a television and radio receiver's licence will more than offset the increased postal charges.

The point of all the opposition from, in particular, the Country Party to increased postal charges relates not to domestic mails but to the charge imposed on the carriage of country newspapers. Anybody listening to this debate a little earlier would have heard a number of comments made on this matter. It would be a very interesting exercise to conduct an inquiry into the ownership of country newspapers and the country media to see who benefits most directly from the loss suffered by the taxpayer on the carriage of country newspapers by post. That is the matter of real interest. I for one believe that if newspapers are a commercial operation they ought to be carried at a commercial charge. If they are a business they ought to make their proper contribution towards the cost of providing a service, just as a householder has to do.

Mr KING (Wimmera) (4.36)—I would like to make a few comments in relation to the measure before the House. I would like to commence my remarks by referring to that paragraph of his second reading speech in which the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen) made reference to the fact that as far back as the Premiers Conference of 7 June it was known publicly that the Post Office's appropriation in the Budget would be held at last year's level of \$385m. That is the first point he made. A little later on the Minister said:

After close study, the Government has also decided that it would not be appropriate to cut Post Office capital investment by some further \$30m and let existing telephone applicants increase by 40,000 to 163,000. That would mean a telecommunications engineering construction program 6 per cent below the 1973-74 level of effort.

Why did the Minister want to refer to the cut of \$30m and then decide that he was not going to make a cut? That reminds me of the husband who was praised because he gave up belting his wife. There is no need to mention such a thing. I cannot understand what it all means and why the Minister has referred to it. As for keeping the appropriation at the same level as last year, I challenge the Minister to indicate with what other departments the appropriation has remained at the same low level as the previous year. I do not know of any. Although I have not studied the position I would venture to say that there would be very few, if any. It would appear that the Special Minister of State has been successful in his original goal to make every section of the Postmaster-General's Department pay its way. I

do not agree with the remarks of the honourable member for Shortland (Mr Morris) in this respect. There are certain sectors of the Postmaster-General's Department that must of necessity automatically be a cost against the rest of the Department, or if you like, the taxpayers.

Basically this Bill, like many others, is a slug against users of the telephone and postal services. There is no disputing that. It seeks to increase considerably many charges. I cannot accept the statement by the Special Minister of State that if the Senate had passed the original measure some two or three months ago it would not have been necessary to impose further increases. It seems strange that because the Senate did not accept the proposed increases of a few months ago the cost of telephone connections should go up automatically by 25 per cent. The same thing applies as far as telephone rentals are concerned.

As I said a moment ago, this Bill is a slug against all telephone and postal users. Similar legislation was blocked in the Senate on a previous occasion. There are many people outside this Parliament who would like to see it blocked again, but, being a Budget measure, that cannot be done. Is it possible that the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) or someone else in the Government wants to get the Government into a position where it can go to the people again by forcing another double dissolution? Is that one of the reasons why the Special Minister of State has put forward this proposition at this stage?

Let us have a look at the proposed increases. The postage rate for an ordinary letter is to be increased from 7c to 10c. That is going to be a terrific slug on those people who use the postal service considerably. The cost of telephone calls is to rise from 4.75c to 6c. That is a pretty high percentage rise. I can appreciate the practical side of increasing public telephone charges insofar as the use of coins are concerned, but it is a pretty severe slug to increase the charge from 5c to 10c. That will be done over a period of time, depending on the rate of conversion.

Let us have a look at the telephone rental situation. The rental charged for an ordinary private telephone is to be increased from \$55 to \$65 and for a business telephone from \$55 to \$85. One automatically includes in the business sector the primary producer, unless he can declare that the telephone is used predominantly for social calls, that he does not wish to have his name included in a telephone directory as a primary producer but as Mr Joe Blow, and that he does not make a

claim in respect of his telephone as far as any taxation deductions are concerned. All I can say to the primary producers on this point is that they ought to have a very close look at their financial situation. It may be advantageous to them to declare themselves in such a way. I have spoken to lots of primary producers about making claims for telephone expenses for taxation purposes and I have been told by many of them that the opportunity to make such claims does not mean a great deal to them because they are not paying any tax, thanks to the present Government, as they have not been able to show a profit although they have shown profits in previous years.

When one looks at some of the new charges one will find that a substantial increase is involved in many cases. If one compares the existing rates with the new rates one will find any amount of instances where the increase involved is 50 per cent and in some cases 100 per cent. In certain instances it is 300 per cent. A comparison of some of the present charges with the charges imposed a few years ago by the Liberal-Country Party Government will reveal that many of the people who will now have to pay a telephone rental of \$85 were paying in the vicinity of, I think, only \$27 at that time. That is a substantial increase. All of these things are happening at the same time as the Postmaster-General's Department has been reducing services. I do not want to be personal insofar as individuals in the Department are concerned. I believe, as I have said in this chamber before, that there are many very loyal and sincere members of the Postmaster-General's Department who are prepared to do everything that they are asked to do and do it very efficiently. It is because of the overall policy of the Government that they are directed to follow that they cannot provide the services they used to be able to provide.

The Postmaster-General's Department has become so removed from being a service department that it is almost a second taxation department. That is what it appears to be to many people. The service formerly provided has been whittled away, slowly but surely. I recall what happened not so very long ago when the first move was made against Saturday morning operations. The 3 hours trading that we used to have of a Saturday morning was reduced to one hour. That one hour was vital and important because it gave the personnel an opportunity in many instances to sort mails and to send them on their way. There are any number of illustrations which I can give today of mail being posted as late as Thursday of one week which is not delivered

until Tuesday of the next week within the same State.

I am referring now to Victoria, which is not a very big State. It should not take very long for a letter to get from one side of it to the other. But I can give illustrations today if required of mail being posted on a Thursday afternoon and not delivered before Monday and in some isolated cases Tuesday of the following week. Yet the honourable member for Shortland (Mr Morris) criticised the country people for demanding an adequate postal service. I wonder how many of his constituents would demand something better if they had mails posted on Thursdays and not delivered to their destination until Tuesday of the next week. This is a very poor situation as I see it.

What else has happened? I turn to telephone connections. I regret to have to say that in many instances there have been extended delays. I think of the country automatic telephone exchanges which, as I said, almost came to a standstill. That is not quite right, but it appears that in my area they have slowed down. At the same time the costs for upgrading purposes to many of the subscribers has been substantial. I think my colleague, the honourable member for Mallee (Mr Fisher) or the honourable member for Darling Downs (Mr McVeigh)—it was probably both of them—have referred in this House to the individual cost of installing a telephone in some rural areas.

Mr McVeigh—It is far too high.

Mr KING—Of course it is. It runs into not only a few dollars or a few hundred dollars but in some cases thousands of dollars. The honourable member for Shortland was laughing a little while ago while the previous Postmaster-General referred to the issue and said that in some cases it would be cheaper to buy the farms than to install telephones on them. What a ridiculous situation.

Mr McVeigh—He seems to like his steak for breakfast off the farm.

Mr KING—That may be so too, but he certainly does not have much sympathy for people outside the metropolitan areas. I very reluctantly have to support this Bill. I know that it will have a substantial effect on many people throughout the length and breadth of this country. I think it was the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) who referred to these increased costs being inflationary. The honourable member for Corio (Mr Scholes) tried to pooh-pooh the idea. Anyone who has any business sense at all can see that if costs such as telephone charges are

increased this must of necessity be an extra cost which in turn must be inflationary.

The position is the same with the whole Budget. I know that I am not allowed to speak about the Budget, but the whole Budget, in my mind, because of its increased expenditure, will be a very big factor that will contribute to inflation. If Government expenditure goes up by 32 per cent surely that is heading in the direction of a 32 per cent increase in inflation.

I say again that I reluctantly support these Bills knowing that because they are Budget measures I have no alternative. I know that they will be a terrific slug on many country people as are the previous increases introduced by this Government. I think they are unjust. Despite what the Vernon report might say, it has given little consideration to the all-important issues of inflation and decentralisation. They would be the two vital considerations.

Mr LUSHER (Hume) (4.49)—There are a few things which are important to people who do not live in metropolitan areas. There are a few things which are very important to those people who live in the country. The telephone, the mail and the roads are 3 things which are of particular concern. There is currently a situation in the country where all these 3 services are at the worst possible level in living memory. The Government is introducing the most savage percentage increases in the cost of telephone and mail services in living memory. I do not think that people would mind so much about paying a bit more if they felt they were getting some service. But what is happening in the country areas, particularly in New South Wales, is that services are being withdrawn. We have already seen Saturday mail services go. There is no chance in the world that these services on Saturdays will be restored.

Cootamundra and Young—major country centres with 7,000 and 8,000 people—are receiving mail from the capital cities twice a week. This is an intolerable situation not only for people in their personal lives but also for businesses and for people who are trying to give some sort of service to the community. A lot of these reductions in the mail service in country areas have been put down to the problems with the railways, the fact that we have union difficulties, that fuel shortages exist and that we have to cut down on the rail services and therefore the postal services. Travelling post offices have been taken off trains. I understand that the New South Wales railways department had been unhappy for some period of time about the return that it was

receiving from letting the Postal Department use the travelling post offices. But this is perhaps another area. The fact is that because travelling post offices are being taken off trains and because trains themselves are not running, country people are being done again. They are losing services and now they are being asked to pay more for that reduction in service.

A situation seems to be developing where the Postal Department is taking advantage of the New South Wales Public Transport Commission's difficulties in getting the trains running. It seems as though in the same way as the Saturday morning mail service was discontinued, these cuts in rail services are being taken advantage of to reduce other services to the country. I repeat that there is no satisfactory service from the capital cities. This problem cannot all be laid at the feet of the New South Wales railways. I support the railways. I think that the service should be looked at and that there are ways and means by which it should be improved. I know that the Commonwealth is looking at the situation and is seeking involvement in the railway services. We have towns where the railway is responsible for the basic employment. It must be ensured that this service is improved and that we get a continuation of and an increase of passenger and freight services in country areas where the services can be run on a sound economic basis.

But the Postal Department has to accept the responsibility for getting the mail through. If the railways cannot carry it on a satisfactory basis, then until the services can be restored the Postal Department and the Postmaster-General (Senator Bishop) surely have a responsibility to seek other avenues to see that the mail is distributed through the country areas. Why have they not investigated the possibility of using trucks to carry the mail into the country by road? I believe that the unions will not tolerate private enterprise being employed to do this. I believe that if the mail is to go by road it has to go on PMG trucks. But people in the country do not care what sort of trucks it goes on. We do not care if it goes on horseback as long as it gets through. At this stage the mail is not getting through and we are being asked to pay an increase of from 7c to 10c for a service which is getting worse week by week. People will not accept it. There is a savage enough feeling building up in the country areas now without adding to it and without fuelling the fires with actions like this. People are concerned. There is a ground swell of feeling building up. The Government knows about it and yet imposts like this are being

savagely hung around the necks of country people.

The town of Cootamundra has a population including women and children of about 6,500 people. On Friday night 2 weeks ago it was decided to send around a petition to see what could be done about the rail and postal services. By Sunday evening 2,000 people had signed that petition—2,000 people out of a total population of 6,500 had signed the petition in 2 days over a weekend. This indicates the type of concern that exists in country areas and in smaller communities over the raw deal that is being dished out by government. We have to do something about this. The Government has a responsibility to see that people get their basic and essential services.

We also have to look at the effect that this situation is having on decentralisation—such decentralisation as exists. The increase in postal rates will do nothing to encourage people or businesses to establish and in some cases it will cause businesses to close down. People who live in the cities and who do not venture out into country areas do not have any understanding of the costs that are incurred in trying to get simple things like spare parts out to the people who need them in the bush. A person in business in the country who needs a spare part for a motor car or a truck has to make three, four or five telephone calls to Sydney or Melbourne. That is a ridiculous state of affairs. Each one of the telephone calls costs \$2, \$3 or \$4. A person in Sydney who requires a spare part can ring up for 5c or 7c but it costs dollars to make an equivalent phone call from Young, Cowra or Tumut. That cost is bringing country businesses to their knees. That cost is now to be increased by up to 50 per cent.

We cannot accept a situation like this; it is completely intolerable. The Postal Department and the Government must be seen to be trying to do something about it. I know that the Government has problems. But no effort seems to be made. Suggestions are put up about ways of improving the services. But the Government does not seem to be interested in considering those suggestions. When is something concrete going to be done? When are we going to get a better deal for country people without just asking them to pay more and more through the nose and to get less and less for it.

A chap from Boorowa wrote to me and pointed out that the railways and the Postal Department had frigged up the mail in that town to such an extent that it comes in about once every 10 days. I do not understand and he does not

understand why it is that the mail cannot be put on to a train that will go into a station where it can be delivered to the area. Why is there so much inflexibility? Why does the Postal Department have to keep sending the mail out the same way when the Department realises that it has to be off-loaded and sent back when a train runs? Why cannot they re-route the mail?

No one seems to be aware of the human and economic problems that are being raised by the savage imposts. There are problems for people who live on the fringes of telephone districts. For them a call two or three miles up the road is a trunk call. It seems that consideration is not being given to rationalising the areas within which one can make a call for the basic charge. The people who live on the fringes of these district like everyone else are issued with a telephone book. The people who live in metropolitan areas are issued with a telephone book which covers all of the telephone numbers which they are likely to ring in the next 5 years. But the telephone book issued to people in fringe areas is not adequate in many cases and it could cut out about 5 miles up the road. These people are not entitled to be issued with the telephone directory for the adjoining area which may be as close as a couple of miles away. If a person wants the telephone book for another district he must go out and buy it. I do not understand why the Government cannot give consideration to these people who have a genuine problem. Many of them have services which are being reduced or are being cut out. But the people in these little areas will not receive any assistance from the Government, assistance which would not cost the Government very much at all.

We have to bring about a realisation of the problems which these people face. We have to bring the Government to an understanding of the little people who have to work and slave in country areas. We have to make government aware of the problems. I know that this Government has not been in office for very long and perhaps the situations have not changed much from the time when those on this side of the House were on the other side. But the Government has to take into account the genuine interests of these people. At least we made an effort to take things into consideration. We are now faced with a Government which is allowing industrial unrest to run riot, inflation to accelerate to record levels, and every conceivable economic dislocation to occur, with the consequent increases in costs for basic services which should be available and for the retraction of services in country areas. We cannot just accept the fact that

inflation is causing these problems because we have to get back to the underlying causes of that inflation.

We cannot just sit back and say that this is happening, therefore that has to happen, because it is not good enough and the people will not accept it. Unless the Government wants to aggravate a situation in which people will pick up their scythes and pitchforks and march on cities, it has to be prepared to think more seriously about the problems that these people face. Right at the guts of the problem are the posts and telegraphs, rail, roads and the rest of the essential services which everybody ought to be entitled to as a matter of right and not as a matter of privilege.

I urge the Government to give consideration to these matters and to these people. The Government is running the country in such a slipshod and mishandled fashion that everyone is feeling it. People out in the country feel it twice as badly. If commodities are short they are twice as short in the bush. We have to see that country people get a reasonable go. No one wants to see them get any more than that. They do not expect to get more than that. They elect their representatives to this place in the same way as do city people. It is those representatives who come down here who will continue to call for a fair deal for those people.

I want to conclude on that note. The Government ought to see that a department like the Postmaster-General's Department or the proposed corporation is seen to be making that effort because if it is not seen to be making that effort the Government will continue to generate justifiable unrest and disquiet in country areas and no one, particularly country people, want to see that sort of situation exacerbated.

Mr GRAHAM (North Sydney) (5.4)—I will not speak at length on this matter. However, I want to make a few comments in support of what was said by my friend the honourable member for Hume (Mr Lusher) about the significance of postal services for people in our community. I want to add to that some comments about the future position, as I see it, which is beginning to emerge. I would be indeed happy if I were able to encourage my young friend, the honourable member for Hume, to believe that these problems will be solved in the very near future. I regret to say, however, that I am certain that they will not be solved. The inflation rate in Australia is likely to reach 20 per cent by Christmas and this will have its impact upon the program of development within the Postmaster-General's

Department in a very serious way during the next 9 months of this financial year. We will then face the situation where the programs for 1975 and 1976 to be announced in the 1975 Budget will require enormous increases for the Postmaster-General's Department.

Whilst we are aware of the fact that the trade union control within the Department is very profound and very significant, whilst we are aware of the fact that that great Department is absolutely vital to the economy and to the welfare of the Australian nation, and whilst we are absolutely sure that we know that this great Department can be strangled by industrial action, we must admit that over these next 9 months the most likely scene in Australia will be that of further disruption and further effects of the inflationary process upon the Postmaster-General's Department. I think that this is extremely significant and will affect the plans by the State governments for decentralisation. People are not going to move to country areas with businesses if their costs are going to be correspondingly increased. A quite considerable amount of information revealed by various committees shows that the customers themselves were more anxious about their services than they were in particular about the cost of them. It is not only the cost of outgoing calls but the cost of inconvenience to metropolitan based associates needing to effect trunk line calls which in many cases results in a loss of business. As honourable members will appreciate, this is an operational problem for companies which would seek to move out of the great metropolises to some of the expansion areas that have been defined by the State governments and by the Commonwealth Government. This is an enormous problem for us and I feel that this Department will reflect the problem in the way I have indicated.

At this moment, as honourable members know, there is an added burden throughout the world of something like \$20,000m to \$26,000m which has been put on account with the industrial Western nations. The effect of this will be faced in Australia, not only as a result of the internal inflationary processes resulting from wage increases but also because of this problem that arises on the international scene. We must understand also that at present our balance of payments, our overseas funds, are diminishing at something of the order of \$16m per week and that by the time the Budget of 1975 comes along we will be in a situation in which I doubt very much that one will be able to encourage the honourable member for Hume to believe that

there will be a substantial improvement in this service.

Finally I should like to make an appeal to the Minister and ask him whether he can do something about second class mail. If he will be kind enough to have a word to the Postmaster-General it might be possible for him to have some improvements effected in the rates of delivery in the North Sydney area and through the Artarmon Mail Exchange.

Mr DONALD CAMERON (Griffith) (5.10)—I regard these across the board increases in many of the areas of postal charges as being an exercise of deceit by the Government. Government members have stated today that the charge for posting an ordinary letter has not been altered for some time. Yet last year the Government reduced the weight of letters which could be posted at standard rate by some 25 per cent. The weight was reduced from 28 grams to 20 grams. So the public was hit hard there. The Government also introduced a system under which, if a letter weighed more than 20 grams, it would cost 15c to post. So the public was belted there. A few short weeks ago, the Government attempted to introduce an increased charge of 9c for a standard rate letter. Previously, the charge had been 7c for such a letter. The Senate, rightly or wrongly—I am not coming into that argument—rejected the increase. It was a move that pleased me. I post many letters. I thought that in these rather difficult days at least that was one small saving. But the Postmaster-General (Senator Bishop) has used the Budget to increase the postage cost for a standard rate letter to 10c.

The honourable member for Corio (Mr Scholes), who is not present in the House, expressed the view today that members of the Parliament speak in relation to unpopular measures according to the side of the Parliament on which they sit. I reject that. I can recall that, a few short years back when I occupied a seat on the side of the Parliament now occupied by the present Government, Sir Alan Hulme, the then Postmaster-General, increased the postage rate for a standard rate letter from 5c to 7c. At that time, I made the plea that there was a need for a giant investigation into the Australian Post Office and I said that the government of the day, which was composed of my Party, could no longer look forward or take for granted my support when initiating such large increases. Yet today there has been an increase of nearly 50 per cent in the cost of posting a lousy letter. Mr Deputy Speaker, I say to you and to the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen) who is at the table that it is no use to the people of Australia for different

governments, regardless of their political colour, to continue along the road of just increasing postal charges.

I am quite certain that a comparison of postal costs in this country with those in other countries shows us up in a bad light. In fact, it costs only 14c Australian to send a half ounce letter from the United States of America to Australia. But if the same letter is posted from Australia to the United States in one of the post boxes of the present Postmaster-General, a person will pay 35c for the equivalent service. That difference cannot be explained away simply by saying that there is a greater volume of mail in the United States. That is not good enough. It is time that we came to grips with our entire system and gave it a good shake, if necessary. It is no use saying that we will upset some people in the Post Office, let us forget about it for that reason; don't push it under the carpet and slug the public once again. The public cannot continue to carry the impositions which are being thrust upon it by the present Government. I know that the Minister will say that the Post Office will lose so many millions of dollars this year. He will ask me whether I am suggesting that the Government should not spend money in some emotive area to make up for the losses in the Post Office. He will talk about child care or paralysed people and ask: 'Are you suggesting that we do not spend money in that area?' But if one looks at what is being ripped out of the Australian taxpayers' pockets in the form of taxation compared with the amount the Government has derived from that source over other years, one can see that the Government has more than enough money to withstand some temporary losses until such time as the recommendations contained in the report of the expensive Commission that was set up to investigate the affairs of the Post Office are implemented.

I was elected to this Parliament in 1966 and took my seat in 1967. In the financial year 1966-67, the amount paid in income tax by Australians was less than \$2,000m. In a few short years that amount has increased to \$8,000m. If we take income tax as a percentage of Budget outlays, we find that when I entered this Parliament income tax was 32.4 per cent of total Budget outlays. It has now risen to 48 per cent. Just how much more can each Australian—pensioners, workers and others—be expected to pay? This Government is slowly strangling the initiative of every working Australian. Whichever way he or she turns, he or she has to meet the cost of some Government scheme or service which is

inefficient. I believe that the Australian Post Office is a most inefficient organisation.

In this cognate debate, together with increases in postal charges, we are considering legislation to authorise the introduction by the Government of a courier service. This proposal should not simply be welcomed with open arms. The Government says: 'This is being done privately. We are now going to do it too'. The reason that private courier services have developed over the years is that they provide a more efficient approach to the job of delivering mail. The Special Minister of State may say that they only service needs in cities and that the Australian Post Office has, for example, to carry letters from Perth to Innisfail in North Queensland and that such services cost more. The fact is that these small courier services have met a need and are more efficient and far less costly. What is this Government to do about them? It is to set up a similar organisation. I ask the Minister whether the Government has in mind for the future a scheme to forbid private enterprise entering or continuing in this area?

We have seen the way in which the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) has set out systematically to destroy nursing homes. In the next two or three weeks in my home city of Brisbane 2,000 people are likely to be affected because 23 nursing homes in Brisbane will be forced to close unless there is an increase in the subsidy paid to maintain people in those homes. Just as this socialist Government is causing that situation, is it looking at the introduction of legislation to force private courier services out of business in order to give the Government a monopoly in this area? Once a monopoly is established, we are on the road once again to a most inefficient organisation.

I have promised the Leader of the House (Mr Daly) that I will not take too much time of the Parliament in this debate today. But I do hope that notwithstanding its political colour, the Government will have the courage to recognise that a great deal has to be done with respect to the Australian Post Office. The stage has been reached, in a few short years, where a 5c stamp has almost become a collectors' item. The way the Government is going, in allowing inflation to run, I intend to keep my 10c stamps because, again in a few short years, they will be in short supply.

Mr Keogh—Are you not going to send me a Christmas card this year?

Mr DONALD CAMERON—The honourable member for Bowman asks whether I am going to

send any Christmas cards this year. The answer is yes. But, regrettably, his name will have to come off my list as I must effect some saving somewhere. I conclude with a very strong plea to the Special Minister of State that he does not continue to adopt the system of introducing further increases in charges simply to get the Government out of trouble.

Mr WENTWORTH (Mackellar) (5.20)—This Bill is, of course, part of the cost of the Labor Government. It is said that the country has to meet the costs of the Labor Government. I do not think that when the Australian people elected the Labor Party to government they realised how fierce those costs were going to be. It is said that because of this increase in the cost of running the mail services postage has to go up. I think it has gone up in the course of this Government's short and inglorious term of office by something over 50 per cent when we take into account the reduction in the weight of a letter and the present proposed increase in postal charges. I do not think wages have gone up as much as that, so there must be less efficiency than there was. With increasing mechanisation and technology one would have expected costs to go up a great deal less than wages. This shows the fundamental inefficiency of the Government.

I have never been an advocate of low wages. I am an advocate of high wages with high productivity but the trouble is that in this mail section there has been a continuous loss of productivity. I do not believe that this is due to the average postal employee. Most of us know our own local postal employees and are on friendly terms with them. We believe they do a good job insofar as they are allowed to do so. But there are 2 things that stop them. The first is the inherent inefficiency of the Government and the second is the industrial disruption imposed upon them, when very often they themselves do not want this disruption, by their own militant unions who are making disruption not to help their members but in order to break the whole social system. It is an unhappy fact the postal unions have to a large extent fallen under the control of Marxists. I want to give an example of something which is only a few months old and yet is very relevant. Shortly before the elections the then Postmaster-General, now the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen), went to the Redfern Mail Exchange to meet the employees. He was not accompanied by his own officials from that Exchange. He excluded them from the meeting with the men although I believe he had with him one person from his own central office.

Mr Lionel Bowen—I rise to order. The remark made by the honourable member that I excluded officials is untrue and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr WENTWORTH—I believe it to be true and I can only say—

Mr Lionel Bowen—I raise a further point of order. It is a reflection on my position—

Mr WENTWORTH—It is not a point of order at all.

Mr Lionel Bowen—It is a point of order.

Mr WENTWORTH—It is not a point of order at all. If the Minister wants to make a personal explanation let him make it at the end of my speech.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Armitage)—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat while the point of order is being taken. I will make the decision whether it is a point of order or not.

Mr Lionel Bowen—It is a point of order because it reflects on my action as a Minister. I ask that it be withdrawn. It has nothing to do with misrepresentation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Will the honourable member for Mackellar withdraw the remark?

Mr WENTWORTH—If it is not a misrepresentation what is the Minister talking about? If he wants to make a personal explanation at the end of my speech he is entitled to do so.

Mr Lionel Bowen—You are not entitled to tell lies.

Mr WENTWORTH—I am not telling lies. What I am doing is repeating what was told to me by the Minister's officials at the Exchange and I was told that the Minister excluded the officials from the Exchange although I was careful to say that I believe he had with him somebody from his own central administration.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! I ask the honourable member to resume his seat while I give a ruling. I think it would be appropriate for the Minister to make a personal explanation when the honourable member for Mackellar finishes speaking.

Mr Lionel Bowen—Speaking to the point of order, I want to make it clear that a statement was made based on hearsay. The honourable member is supposed to have some knowledge of what he feels was the position and he has not named anybody who gave him that information. I have said it is untrue. It is false and the fact that it is untrue and false does not entitle the honourable member to let it stand so that I then am put

in the position of saying that it was a misunderstanding or a misrepresentation. It is a falsehood, a lie, and it should never have been uttered. I ask that it be withdrawn because it is a reflection on me.

Mr WENTWORTH—Let me continue. I think I can satisfy the Minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—A point of order has been taken. I think the Minister has made his point but the Chair is not in a position to determine whether or not the statement is true. I think the Minister should make a personal explanation after the honourable member has finished speaking.

Mr WENTWORTH—I think I can satisfy the Minister. When I visited the exchange the senior officials there gave me this information. I was not present at the meeting myself and I do not know of my own knowledge who was present. But I am willing to swear that senior officials gave me this information and they said that although—

Mr Lionel Bowen—I want you to swear it now. Swear it now.

Mr WENTWORTH—Yes, of course I do.

Mr Lionel Bowen—Do it now. Name them.

Mr WENTWORTH—I will not name them because you will victimise them. This is normal trade union standover tactics. You are out for victimisation.

Mr Lionel Bowen—You are a villain.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Armitage)—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. I ask that the interjections and the private meeting between the Minister and the honourable member for Mackellar cease. The honourable member should not be inviting interjections in the way he is doing.

Mr WENTWORTH—Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I thank you for your protection and for your wise ruling. I hope the Minister will remain silent. I will say only that when I visited the exchange the Minister's own senior officials told me that people from the exchange were excluded from the meeting, although there were representatives from the organisation outside of the staff of the exchange itself.

Mr Lionel Bowen—Ridiculous! You are nonsensical.

Mr WENTWORTH—I was not present at the meeting. I can only say what was said, but I have had independent evidence that at that meeting a series of demands was presented to the Minister. He accepted them and said: 'If you elect us as the government, this is what we will do'. I am told

that the Minister put his signature on that series of demands at the meeting. If this be untrue, let the Minister deny it.

Mr Lionel Bowen—Of course it is untrue. It is the second or third time you have said it.

Mr WENTWORTH—It is the first time I have said that.

Mr Lionel Bowen—No, not at all.

Mr WENTWORTH—In the House, that is. There was a large number of people present at that meeting and they will know whether it be true or false. I dare say we will hear more about this in the near future. I am told and verily believe that the Minister put his signature on those demands at the meeting. He spoke to the men behind the backs of his own officers at the exchange, although he did have others with him. He excluded from the meeting people from his own exchange, people who were in charge of the exchange. He capitulated to the men, and it is most improper. If this story be true, the Minister did something which was dishonourable and it should entail his resignation from the Ministry. No Minister is entitled to make election pledges with public money and say 'I will do these things if you elect me'. Do it as a Minister? Do it secretly without letting it be known? I think we will hear more of this. I will be glad to have a statutory declaration from the Minister that he did not do any of these things.

Mr Lionel Bowen—What about yours first?

Mr WENTWORTH—You will have my statutory declaration in the morning. If there is a justice of the peace in the House I will do it for you tonight. We will then obtain your statutory declaration in reply. I would like to have it, thank you, since you started to make these challenges.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Armitage)—The honourable member for Mackellar will address the Chair and not the Special Minister of State.

Mr WENTWORTH—Yes, I think that is right. I have shown that the rises in charges, which are not covering costs, are greater than the rises in wages. They are therefore due to organisational inefficiency and union disruption. I am not trying to blame the individual postal employees because I think, with some exceptions, generally speaking they are very good and they deserve the commendation of this House and of people outside this House for the work that they do. I have had postmen come to me and say: 'Look, we do not want to go on strike. We do not want to disrupt the mails, but if we do not go on strike we will be victimised.'

Here we have the Minister, who has had some association with trade unions, coming into this House and asking for the instruments of victimisation. I know exactly what he means when he says that. He wants to be able to victimise the people concerned. He is a trade unionist. He is one of the people who will be working these kinds of standover tactics in the unions—standing over the men in the unions. I think he should be ashamed of himself because he used his position as a Minister corruptly to offer bribes in the way—

Mr Lionel Bowen—You are a disgrace to the Parliament. You should not be in this House.

Mr WENTWORTH—Will you protect me, Mr Deputy Speaker? Will you protect me from this outrageous Minister? I am sure you will as a fair and impartial man.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! I think that the honourable member for Mackellar is getting quite a fair time in this House and he usually does.

Mr Scholes—Mr Deputy Speaker, I take a point of order. The honourable member for Mackellar had made certain charges which can be made against a member of this House only as a result of a substantive motion. I ask that you ask him either to make such a substantive motion or else to withdraw.

Mr Hunt—On a point of order—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Is the honourable member speaking to the point of order?

Mr Hunt—I am taking a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—A point of order has already been taken.

Mr Hunt—I will speak on the point of order along these lines, Mr Deputy Speaker: If you uphold that point of order I would expect you to rule that the comment that the Special Minister of State at the table made both with his hands and his mouth, giving the impression that the honourable member for Mackellar is deranged or insane and should not be a member of this House, is offensive to an elected member of this Parliament. I think that there has been far too much tit for tat across the House here. If you are going to accept a point of order on that, I think that another point of order should be taken against the comments that have been made here.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Armitage)—A point of order was taken and the honourable member for Gwydir spoke to the point of order. I have already ruled that the Chair is not in a position to state whether the statements made by the honourable member for Mackellar are correct. I

think that the appropriate course would be for the Minister, if he considers that he has been misrepresented, to make a personal explanation after the honourable member for Mackellar has finished speaking. At this stage I want the House to return to the Bill and to finish the discussion on it.

Mr WENTWORTH—Thank you very much indeed, Mr Deputy Speaker. I note how honourable members opposite portray their background as militant unionists by rising in a body over this kind of—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Armitage)—Order! I have already asked the honourable member for Mackellar not to stray from the Bill but to speak to the Bill. If the honourable member for Mackellar continues making personal remarks against the Minister or any other member of this House I will have to sit him down.

Mr WENTWORTH—Very well, sir. I have pointed out that the rises in charges which are imposed by this Bill—which the Minister says are necessary to meet rises in costs—are greater than the rises in wages. They therefore measure inefficiency in the Post Office. In my view, this inefficiency springs from 2 causes. First, the inefficiency of the administration—which is the Government—and secondly, from the calculated disruption of certain small sections within the unions concerned. I gave as an instance, and evidence, of this something which was told to me. I will make a statutory declaration in a few moments that it was told to me and I will not—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! I have asked the honourable member for Mackellar to apply himself to matters continued within this Bill. I ask him to do that or I will have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr WENTWORTH—I would make one other point and I think it is substantial. It is the Government's philosophy apparently that charges should be made to cover the costs of services such as the Post Office. I want to examine that fundamental proposition. In my view, charges should certainly be made to cover outgoings whether for wages or for any other current expenditure. Charges should certainly cover those costs. Certainly, fixed charges should go in for accounting purposes so that we know where we stand. But with a Government service, whether it be postal, railways, or any other service, whether it be State or Federal, it seems to me that we are now in a new kind of ball game with inflation.

It appears to me also that governments, as an anti-inflationary measure, should be reducing the charges for services to the current costs. I do not mean to say that they should not charge any interest but I think interest should be shown as a loss so that the true accounting of the service could be known because this is vital when one considers capital extensions, whether they be for the railways, the buses or the Post Office. I believe that it is important that the accounting be kept. For these public services, one of the great things about an anti-inflationary policy must be surely that we should be reducing charges to the real costs. This is something which I believe is fundamental. It concerns this Bill but it goes beyond this Bill. I believe that this real principle should be part of the anti-inflationary policy. We are in a position where an anti-inflationary policy is needed, new principles are needed, and new thinking is needed. This Government, which prides itself as being a progressive government, is really the victim of the old shibboleth—it cannot really think in new terms—and this Bill shows it.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State) (5.39)—in reply—Until the last speech there had been a rather intelligent discussion as to what the Bill was really all about. The Bill before us is virtually the same Bill as was introduced some months ago but which was rejected by the Senate. The big issue today is: Why has it been necessary virtually to increase the postage another 1c because of the rejection of the earlier Bill? The figures prepared by the Department clearly show that the 2 months' delay resulted in a \$30m deficit. Obviously if the Department cannot get the cash flow from the earnings it would have expected to receive from both telecommunications and the postal service, it has been deprived of that amount of money. The amount now to be recovered is the same amount as would have been obtained if the proposed charges had become effective from 1 August. Due to the obstruction of the Senate the Department has been prevented from getting \$146m in the period from 1 August last to 30 June next. The Government is now obliged to raise that sum of \$146m in the period from 1 October to 30 June next. It is very simple to understand that because the Post Office has been deprived of that income it has now to be raised within a shorter period of time. Accordingly the postage charges have had to be altered. Honourable members opposite should understand that it is on that basis that the charges have had to be increased.

But let us look at the rapid way in which our predecessors escalated postage charges. They

did so in 1967, 1970 and 1971. In fact, postage rates were increased by 2c in 2 consecutive years. Although the conventions of Westminster clearly indicate that I cannot produce every detail of what my predecessor had, within his knowledge, on the basis of wages escalating at a certain rate it is quite clear that he would have had to increase postage rates again in 1973. We have not increased postage rates since they were last increased by the Opposition when it was in government. Postage rates were increased to 7c in 1971. So virtually there has been a 3-year gap, which never would have been within the business plan that the Opposition had in mind. I have in front of me information as to what the Opposition had in mind, and it is clear that postage rates were to be escalated much more rapidly than they have been.

Opposition members have talked about innovation, but not one of them has mentioned the fact that with these proposed postage rate increases the weight limit has now been removed. In fact, the new postage rate covers all standard size letters. The concession is on the basis that the 20 gram minimum limit will no longer apply. The weight limit has been removed, provided the letter is of a relatively standard size. Most mail, of course, comes from commercial enterprise. The Post Office handles few domestic letters. People in commerce will obtain a benefit because whereas in the past—this was the situation even under the system of our predecessors—they would have had to pay well over 15c they will now be able to get virtually the same concession for 10c. So there has been no increase in postage rates in the commercial field.

I must mention also the Vernon Commission which we established. Honourable members opposite have spoken only about the need for innovation and the need to improve the Post Office. What did they do about it? They did nothing. Every year they simply introduced a Budget which increased the rates set on the previous occasion. On that basis the Opposition is indicted because it made no survey of what was wrong with the Post Office. It took this Government to establish the royal commission. The Vernon Commission has come in with its report and has said: 'Yes, separate the postal service from telecommunications'. The Opposition would not have done a thing about that. How many Post Offices were closed and how many services were lost during the Opposition's administration? If it is illegal for private enterprise to operate courier services, as was suggested by one honourable member opposite, why did the Opposition do

nothing about it when it was in government? It let them flourish. Even though members opposite now claim that they are illegal, when in government they allowed such services to operate. It is perfectly legal for such services to operate. But the Opposition would rather courier services be left to private enterprise than to allow the Post Office to run them. Does the Opposition say that it did not prevent the Post Office from running a courier service? It is only now under this legislation that the Post Office is given the sort of opportunity that it needs to compete in a field that might be deemed to be reasonable. Somebody in the Opposition back benches said that that is wrong also because it will put the private courier services out of business. In other words, the good old Post Office can take the broken down arrangements, the long hauls, and everything that nobody else wants, but it should never be given the benefit of competing on an equal basis.

The Opposition should have a look at what it has done with its economics. The superannuation scheme was so badly organised—I cannot blame any members of the Opposition for that; nevertheless it was part of their Government's system—that the previous Government did not even establish what was needed in the superannuation fund. That was not known until we had the Vernon Commission. It is established now that the Post Office is some \$311m in arrears in its superannuation fund. Under the Bill now before the House we have to pay the Treasury \$130m for superannuation. That happened under the Opposition Parties' scheme and under the Treasury of which they were in control. It took us to find out these facts. But not one member of the Opposition has mentioned that.

What is it that honourable members opposite are debating today in regard to this Bill? They are the greatest lot of whingers I have ever seen as far as talking about what is wrong with their fellow Australians is concerned. One honourable member talked about how he would march on the city with a pitchfork or something. What do they think the city people are—aliens or enemies? They are their fellow men. Honourable members opposite are trying to stir up this utter rubbish about what is wrong with their city brothers. They are paying the same telephone rental. If honourable members opposite look at the telecommunications system they will see that it makes a profit only because of the fellow who uses the telephone every two or three minutes. The money that we get from the bills with which we sock those city people is what makes the surplus. We do not want to go into what benefit they

get from it, but they are certainly paying through the proper channels and making the surplus that we spread into capital outlay throughout the country. That is not a new concept; it was the concept of any previous government, naturally, to get its funds.

Not one honourable member opposite mentioned that this Government has written off the postal debt which the Opposition Parties graciously imposed as a result of a decision by Sir Robert Menzies in 1960. We have written it off and saved the postal service some \$17m in interest. The Opposition Parties' stupid old arrangement from 1960 on was that the poor old Post Office had to pay interest on the money it received. The Post Office has been bogged down with all these outmoded ideas that the Opposition Parties foisted upon it. Honourable members opposite did nothing about them; yet they come here and bash the fellows in the service. The people in Bendigo must be astounded to hear what their member says about the postal employees in Bendigo. He virtually accuses them of being loafers who are not prepared to do a day's work. I will be amazed if he expects to get their support the next time he fronts up for an election. That is all he did and that is all most honourable members opposite have done this afternoon.

Honourable members opposite were saying: 'What is wrong with the workers? Why won't they work harder?' The workers are working hard enough. The big issue is that there has to be more incentive. There has to be some eradication of this outmoded Public Service structure whereby a chap can go from the Fourth Division into the Third Division only if he has some certificate. There are chaps in the service who have no promotional incentive and no pay incentive. Are they going to be revitalised by the suggestion that they ought to work harder? Obviously there must be some incentive, some retraining and some opportunities for them to improve their lot in life.

What did the Opposition parties do? They built the Redfern Mail Exchange, a monster of a thing from the point of view of humanity. The idea was to put a whole lot of people together with a whole lot of mail and a machine that breaks down perhaps more often than it should. We will not criticise the machine, because it has been improved. It was the only one of its kind in the world and there has been nothing like it since. Let me make clear what members of the Opposition did and how their predecessors ran off to become directors of the companies which

were associated with the supply of equipment. What about that sort of arrangement?

What about the thousands of people working at Redfern whom nobody ever bothers to go and see? Because I go and see them some honourable member here says to me: 'You are guilty of victimisation, corruption and goodness knows what'. Let me make it clear that I did go to see them. I went with Mr Milton Stevens, the Director of Postal Services in Sydney. The honourable member to whom I am referring was not there, of course; so he would not know. But he says that he was told that I went without anybody else. Could anyone imagine all the people in the entire Redfern Mail Exchange being able to organise a meeting without anybody else knowing about it? The meeting was arranged with the consent of the Department and everybody knew it was to be held. The television cameramen and everybody else were there and it was held with full publicity. Mr Milton Stevens was the departmental man there. The honourable member concerned rang my office after that and asked whether he could go there. He asked whether he could take his television cameras. I said that I would be delighted. He went there with his own set of film projectors. Whatever happened to the film I do not know. I do not know whether anybody saw it. He went there to discuss the position. I do not want to give any more credit to the honourable member. He is in the eve of his political life, due to retire, and he can use words such as 'victimisation' and 'corruption' and get away with it, because apparently under the Standing Orders, as they are interpreted, someone can slander and libel you as much as he likes but you have to do your best in a personal explanation. That is not my style, and I do not intend to put any more weight on the argument that was put forward.

Let us look at what we are discussing. We have now the report of the royal commission. It establishes now that the Post Office is to be a viable proposition. It is to earn sufficient to pay its way. Of course, in its postal operations, which are labour intensive, it has to pay the wages of the people who are employed. If we had adopted the Senate assessment of the situation and had been deprived of the \$30m we wanted and have now got in this Bill—the Opposition has at last said it will approve it, having had second thoughts, but the position still holds if the Opposition does not approve the Bill and the Bill is rejected—how many thousands of men would be sacked from the Post Office? We will have to sack at least 5,000. Five thousand employees are depending

on this Bill going through. How does the Opposition face up to that responsibility?

It was made clear to the Premiers by the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) on 7 June that the postal allocation would remain at \$385m and that he expected the Premiers to maintain their position also. As honourable members know, the Premiers have been put in the position of having to increase petrol charges, freight rates and everything else to maintain their services. We would not be honest if we were now to say we did not really mean what we said to the Premiers, that we will change our mind and borrow more money. This has always been the attitude of the past.

Sir James Vernon was right. We should separate the postal and telecommunications functions of the Post Office, because one is viable and the other will possibly always need a subsidy. Look at what the Country Party did. I give it credit for doing it. On the last occasion we discussed increases in post and telegraph charges the Country Party successfully moved an amendment that gave very good concessions to the registered publications. Members of the Country Party will be delighted to know that this concession will result in a loss of \$12m in the coming year. They should not think that every charge is based on the cost of the service provided. When their country cousins have to put a 10c stamp on a letter they should remember that they are subsidising the local newspaper, which is going through the post at a cost of 2.5c or 4c. We are losing millions of dollars by granting a concession on these newspapers. The Country Party will not let us run the Post Office on the basis that everybody pays a fair rate. The registered publications, particularly newspapers in the country areas, have to be subsidised, and that is what has happened. We have accepted the position because that is the only way we could get last year's Post and Telegraph Rates Bill through. I know that the Country Party claims this concession as a great credit. It is entitled to the credit, but it must bear the odium of the fact that it has also guaranteed the people who use the postal services and the telephone services that they will subsidise country newspapers. I do not think that is fair.

Mr Nixon—What about trade union papers?

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—The honourable member used that argument in another debate today. The best thing to say is this: Let us put the Post Office on the basis that Sir James Vernon wanted. Let us have a corporation representative of people who use the postal service and who are interested in its welfare. Let us put the Post Office

on a viable basis. Let us develop courier services in the Post Office. We can make the Post Office something worth while. Let us give the employees more incentive. Let us decentralise and develop regional concepts. Let us get away from having State directors. Let us cross State boundaries and do something that can make the Post Office really move. Let us give the man in the town and the man in the country the right to be the man who makes the decision so that he is not bound down by some bureaucratic struggle that eventually has to be referred to Melbourne to be interpreted. That is what the concept of the royal commission means. Not one honourable member opposite has mentioned that or praised it. It is the position that will apply. We will get rid of that wretched concept that has been with us since 1900 that because there is a River Murray you must have different sets of rules on either side of the border. What I have outlined can happen.

Mr Nixon—This has nothing to do with the debate.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—Unfortunately the honourable member was not present during the debate. I am surprised that I have to castigate him on that point. During the course of the debate, when the honourable member for Gippsland was not here, honourable members opposite were saying how inefficient the arrangements have been. The honourable member for Hume (Mr Lusher) spent most of his time talking about railways. I cannot solve the railway's problems, but at least I am entitled to say that we can solve some of the regional concepts if we get put into these areas people who can overcome the immediate issues.

Mr Lusher—But some mail goes by rail.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—I am sure they will be fixed by next Sunday. I am told that railway services will be all right from 22 September 1974. This has nothing to do with the debate, but I inform the honourable member for Hume that this is the position.

The point I come to is this: The Senate caused the problem that honourable members opposite are now anxious to avoid, but the mathematics are there and they cannot deny that. A number of honourable members opposite have stated what they feel is wrong basically in their own electorates. I come to the issue of what has been wrong with the whole concept. It has been the problem of interest and failure to understand superannuation liability. The general problem has been one

of not giving employees incentive or an opportunity for advancement. The former Government's arrangements, which were within its knowledge, made it quite clear that service charges would have to escalate because the whole problem in this field was that the Post Office was regarded as a commercial enterprise. That has been the biggest problem with regard to rural lines. It costs at least \$3,000 of the taxpayers' money to install the first 8 kilometres. That is a contribution. But if one is living well out in the country one cannot expect the service to be provided free, which was the concept of the previous Government. That concept ran into enormous liabilities of approximately \$21m already expended with an annual loss because of the interest paid on it. People in those areas could not possibly use the service enough even to pay the interest charges. That was the position that had to be looked at. Not one member of the Opposition has said that this Government has reduced call charges for the first 50 kilometres, particularly after 6 p.m., to 6c. That is a great saving to many people. It is a \$3m cost saving, and it shows the advantage of using the service at off-peak times at reasonable cost.

The other point that is important in the whole concept of telecommunications is that it is expanding all the time. That is a good concept, but it is an expensive concept. Trunk call usage is expanding by 13 per cent a year. People are using the service. We must meet the demand. Last year we made a record number of installations—an all-time record. Demand was an all-time record also. So we must invest this money back into the business. All that Opposition speakers have done this evening is to go on with a series of complaints that they could have made in any adjournment debate. Not one of them looked at the question of how postal charges, rates or weights could be altered. Not one of them can deny that the charges appear to be reasonable, except for the unreasonable amendments which the Opposition moved last year. That is the position.

Mr Donald Cameron—They are not unreasonable.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—They are very reasonable by world standards. The Opposition again wants to decry postal employees, because that is all it did.

Mr Donald Cameron—I said that the whole system is inefficient.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—Opposition members cannot face up to the fact that it is their fellow Australians whom they are castigating all the

time. Their fellow Australians are running the postal service. Members opposite are so upset about it, on the basis of what? The Opposition did nothing about it. It did nothing to improve the service. All it ever did was increase charges. All it ever did was give hand-outs in areas which are causing greater losses than ever. It cannot avoid the fact that it was the previous Government that put on it the great interest burden, particularly in the postal section.

Mr Donald Cameron—He is telling lies.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Scholes)—Order! The honourable member for Griffith will withdraw that remark.

Mr Donald Cameron—But the Minister said—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Griffith will withdraw that remark.

Mr Donald Cameron—I withdraw it.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—I wanted to make this position completely clear for honourable members opposite. The same Bill is being introduced again because of the Senate obstruction. It is achieving no more than it was intended to do before.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The Minister's time has expired.

Mr WENTWORTH (Mackellar)—I rise on a point of misrepresentation, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Scholes)—Order! Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr WENTWORTH—Yes. The Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen) has seriously misrepresented the facts in regard to my visit to the Redfern Mail Exchange. As he asked me to do, I have set out the true facts in a statutory declaration. If the House were to give me its indulgence I would read it. It is quite short.

Mr Keating—No.

Mr WENTWORTH—I seek the leave of the House to table it.

Mr Keating—No.

Mr WENTWORTH—All right. I can do no more, Sir.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! Honourable members cannot refuse leave in relation to something which has not been put to the House. The honourable member for Mackellar has asked for leave to incorporate a document. Is leave granted?

Mr Lionel Bowen—No. Do it in the adjournment debate tonight.

Mr WENTWORTH—Thank you, Sir.

Mr DONALD CAMERON (Griffith)—Mr Deputy Speaker, I claim to have been misrepresented by the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen). I commend him on having set up the Commission of Inquiry into the Australian Post Office. I think that it was one of the great things that he did when he was Postmaster-General.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member must say where he has been misrepresented.

Mr DONALD CAMERON—I am not against the workers. The Minister misrepresented me when he said that I was only against the employees. I believe that there is something drastically wrong in the whole Post Office system.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order!

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Bill (on motion by Mr Lionel Bowen) read a third time.

POST AND TELEGRAPH BILL (No. 2) 1974

Second Reading

Consideration resumed from 17 September (vide page 1437), on motion by Mr Lionel Bowen:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Bill (on motion by Mr Lionel Bowen) read a third time.

CHILDREN'S COMMISSION

Ministerial Statement

Mr LIONEL BOWEN (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State)—For the information of honourable members, I table a ministerial statement dated 19 September 1974 on the establishment of a Children's Commission.

Sitting suspended from 6.3 to 8 p.m.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr YOUNG (Port Adelaide)—Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr SPEAKER—Does the honourable gentleman claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr YOUNG—Yes, I do, Mr Speaker. I refer to the debate on the censure motion which took place in the House yesterday. As reported at page 1442 of yesterday's Hansard, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) made the comment during the debate that he expected the Australian Council Bill to come before the House today. Being one of the speakers from the Government side on the Australian Council Bill, I have been involved in discussions with people who have visited Parliament House in Canberra this week concerning the sections of the Bill which are causing some controversy outside this place. The Leader of the Opposition made the comment that information that had been given to the Opposition by me indicated that the Australian Council Bill would not come before the House. Mr Speaker, that is not correct. As I have said, I have held discussions concerning the Bill with people who visited Canberra. I did make inquiries as to when the Bill would come before the House. I did not at any stage talk to any member of the Opposition, including the Leader of the Opposition, about the make-up of the business that would come before the House. As all honourable members will understand, those of us who serve on the back benches do not have anything to do with deciding what business comes before the House. In that manner I was misrepresented in the House yesterday.

**WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILISATION
BILL 1974**

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 17 July (vide page 294), on motion by Dr Patterson:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory)—Mr Speaker, may I have the indulgence of the House to raise a point of procedure on this legislation? Before the debate is resumed on this Bill I would like to suggest that it may suit the convenience of the House to have a general debate covering this Bill, the Wheat Products Export Adjustment Bill and the Wheat Export Charge Bill as they are related measures. Separate questions will of course be put on each

of the Bills at the conclusion of the debate. I suggest therefore, Mr Speaker, that you permit the subject matter of the 3 Bills to be discussed in this debate.

Mr SPEAKER—Is it the wish of the House to adopt this procedure? There being no objection, I will allow that course to be followed.

Mr SINCLAIR (New England) (8.3)—Mr Speaker, the 3 Bills that we are considering tonight are Bills that politically are and have been traditionally the fundamental basis upon which many Australian farmers have been able to survive the swing of the pendulum of seasons and the swing of the pendulum of markets. In the past the wheat seats, as they were called, were the seats that determined the fate of the government in this Parliament. Of course, these 3 Bills are radically different from the original stabilisation proposals that were introduced into this Parliament. One wonders how Mr Reg Pollard, a former Minister for Commerce and Agriculture—a Labor member and one of those who originally introduced the wheat stabilisation legislation—might regard a Bill which goes by that pseudonym but which is, in fact, more a payments equalisation measure than a stabilisation measure.

Nonetheless, these 3 Bills encompass a range of assistance to the wheat growers of Australia which has resulted from discussions, if one can call them that. They were discussions but they were conducted under a measure of duress with the Australian Wheat Growers Federation and with the members of the Australian Agricultural Council. The proposals themselves are designed to provide assistance to those who will produce wheat during the next 5 years. As members of this place and wheat growers generally know, the previous 5-year wheat stabilisation scheme was extended for a period of one year. Over that period the present Labor Government changed generally the character of the negotiations which I had entered into prior to the change of government and indeed changed the substance of the stabilisation proposals offered to the industry.

I think it is appropriate that I deal first with the measures that the Government has brought forward, rather than the alternative proposals I would like to have seen developed. I think it is also appropriate at this stage to say that in the industry there has been quite real concern at the delay in debating this measure in this chamber. It is 3 months and 2 days today since the Bill was first introduced into the House. The Opposition had hoped that the debate might have taken place during the July sitting. For various reasons

this apparently did not meet the wishes of the Government. While the Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory (Dr Patterson) said in his second reading speech that there was some delay because of the 18 May election, I think that it is equally true to say that it is unfortunate that there was not an opportunity for the measures to be debated in July and for wheatgrowers generally to be certain of the result.

However, I think there is some merit in having a look at the contrast between circumstances that prevail today and those that prevailed, not in July, but in the first of the intervening years between the termination of the preceding stabilisation scheme and the introduction of this one. Of course the significant change is that generally grain stocks around the world have dwindled into negligible quantities. While in some countries there has been a reasonable level of production—for example in the United States of America, which is still one of the world's largest wheat producers, there is this year a record crop—grains today are more interchangeable than they have been. No longer do those who are in the market for wheat look at wheat as only a grain produced for human consumption; rather it is seen to a greater degree than perhaps it has been in the past as one of a range of grains produced either for human consumption or for stock feed purposes. In a blend availability of wheat alone is not the price determining factor, but its availability relative to the availability of other grains such as corn and milo, and also other crops such as soya beans, all of which to a degree are interchangeable, and certainly all have a place for purposes of stock feeding, perhaps more than for human consumption.

The legislation consists of 3 distinct Bills, the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill, the Wheat Products Export Adjustment Bill and the Wheat Export Charge Bill. As I have suggested, the title of the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill is a misnomer. As I see it, it would be far better called the Wheat Industry Equalisation Bill. The Opposition regards this as one of the more regrettable consequences of the changes which this Government has introduced. In the present economic climate for grains the wheat growers of Australia will make a significant contribution to the consumers throughout Australia which regrettably will not be recognised or will too rarely be recognised. In the past wheat growers have been prepared to accept a domestic price plan which has provided stability for the industry and they have taken their chance on the export returns. For the time being the current domestic price set within

Australia for home consumption is significantly lower than the world export price. The stabilisation price set within this legislation is \$2 per bushel. About a fortnight ago in the Kansas City Grain Exchange grain was being sold at US\$4.61 a bushel. That was a price which it was accepted might well not be available at the low point of the season and indeed, it was significantly lower than some of the prices that had been offered some weeks before. So the price being paid domestically in Australia to Australian wheat growers under this arrangement will mean a significant contribution by the wheat growers in respect of the 80,000-odd tonnes of wheat that is used within Australia for domestic purposes. It is being offered to consumers in this country at a significant discount but wheat growers accept that as part of the provisions of this stabilisation scheme as it has been in other schemes. It is a recognition by wheat growers that this predetermined price does give them a basis on which they can produce profitably. Therefore they are prepared also to produce greater quantities of wheat which supplements Australia's export earnings. Assistance is also given to the provision of those funds which are necessary to finance our national development and the achievement of national objectives which in the past have been set by the availability of funds but today seem to be set more by the ideology of the Government than the nation's capacity to pay.

Within the provisions of the scheme those aspects to which I think reference needs to be made include the degree to which the stabilisation scheme itself has been changed as far as the owners-operators' allowance from the earlier scheme is concerned. There is a change in the basis by which industry and Government will contribute to the Stabilisation Fund from which amounts are to be paid to wheat growers. There is certainly a change in the terminology of the basic wheat and in this respect the Opposition completely supports the proposal of the Government. The old 'fair average quality' terminology has been changed to 'Australian standard white'. There have also been changes in respect of some of the provisions related to unauthorised dealings with wheat which, of course, will be reflected in the complementary State legislation. These provisions are designed to minimise across the border trading particularly in respect of wheat that is being produced on leased land. The other aspect of change to which the Minister referred in his second reading speech and which has some importance, I believe, is the requirement of the Australian Wheat Board to

tender an annual report on its operations. The Opposition completely supports that aspect too.

The second of the 2 Bills—I will come back to deal with each of them in a little more detail—is termed the Wheat Products Export Adjustment Bill. This Bill really authorises the Board to require exporters of wheat products to pay to the Board the difference on those occasions when the export prices are higher than the domestic prices. So in fact an exporter, protected as he normally is against a disadvantage in export markets when export prices of wheat are lower than domestic prices, is prohibited from gaining an advantage in producing his product at a time when export prices are higher.

This highlights one of the areas of deficiency in this scheme, the failure of the Government to realise some of the problems of the processors of wheat and wheat products. In the course of the last few months I have had some discussions with those who are in this category and each has expressed concern at the general implications of the provisions that the Government has brought forward and at the Government's failure to consider the problems of availability of grain, the availability of grain of different classes and their ability to compete in production of gluten or whatever the by-product might be with those who are producing that particular product either from other grains or in particularly advantageous geographic locations. For example, some advantage is given to an exporter of wheat products and a processor of wheat products who is now located in Tasmania. He gains through some of the provisions of this legislation from the equalisation of wheat prices in that State an advantage over wheat processors on the mainland.

The scheme set out in the Wheat Industry Stabilization Bill is radically different from previous stabilization schemes. It reflects generally the bias that this Government has against rural industries and which has never been better demonstrated than by the complete failure of the Government to consider the problems of rural industries in the Budget presented on Tuesday night. Although the Government can claim that this wheat legislation was negotiated with and finally approved by the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation, there is no doubt in the mind of every wheat grower in Australia that it was a very unsatisfactory set of negotiations. As recently as last weekend violent objections were lodged up in Moree in northern New South Wales to the implications of this type of legislation which for so many seems to capitalise on

the presently advantageous world market conditions but prejudices the long term opportunities for wheat production. I do not think it is unfair to say that the Wheatgrowers' Federation was bullied and cajoled generally with threats of intimidation and references to the Industries Assistance Commission and all sorts of other alternatives to the point where it had no alternative but to accept the proposals put to it by the Australian Government.

Similarly the objections raised by individual States were taken into account only to a minimal degree. It is unfortunate that the process of formulation of policy by this Government tends more and more to ignore the wishes of the individual and of the States but pursues a philosophical bent which in the consequence I am afraid will lead to a marked disadvantage to the whole of our Australian community. The Federation, of course, was told to accept this proposal or there would be no stabilization scheme or that the scheme would have to go, if there was to be one at all, to the Industries Assistance Commission. With the traumas that many wheat growers have had over the last few years and with the problems which they now foresee in generally maintaining their profitability most wheat growers believed that they would just have to accept the scheme. It was for that reason and in spite of very real objections by some members of the Federation that the Federation finally accepted the proposals.

Similarly both Labor and non-labor governments expressed their reservations at the Australian Agricultural Council about the manner in which the negotiations were carried out and on some aspects of the scheme itself. Many of these governments have approached members of the Opposition suggesting that we should move substantive amendments to the proposals now before us. It is very tempting for those of us who have a genuine interest and concern for producers to do so. But were we to do so, this being 19 September, we would be in a position where it would be impossible for those who are producing wheat and will have it delivered to silos within the next two or three weeks to know where they were going. Therefore we in the Opposition feel that we are being precluded from moving any substantive changes to this legislation. We are supporting this legislation not because we believe it is good but because of the time factor and the lack of opportunity for us to change the legislation in a way that we believe would be desirable if the wheat growers, consumers and the interests of all Australia were to be taken properly into account.

In many ways this scheme is quite inferior to earlier schemes. It reduces the level of protection available to growers that was set out in former schemes. It reduces the level of government involvement in maintaining the viability of Australia's major dry land farming industry. It reduces the future potential of wheat growers to maintain their volume of production in the light of growing world food needs if world export prices should take a downturn. It fails to recognise the degree to which grain production is becoming more and more capital intensive. It fails to recognise the necessity for the maintenance of major agricultural industries in many of our outlying communities. Beyond all that it still pursues a single commodity policy at a time when many other countries—the United States, for example—are considering not just one grain but providing an opportunity for farmers to move from one source of production to another according to the potential profitability to the producer of those crops and giving him the same protection.

Let me advert for a moment to an aspect which it had been my intention to discuss with primary producers when we were in government. We were pursuing the idea of giving those who were in wheat production an opportunity to produce milo or any other agricultural crop if that crop were to produce for them a better result. We wanted to see whether it was not possible to give them the same sort of guarantees as are provided for them in the wheat agreement. For example, many can produce oats, barley or milo. If one is in a summer rainfall area and there is a drought during the winter months it is far better to produce milo than to leave the land fallow and produce no grain until the following year.

I refer those who might be interested in the topic to a piece of legislation which the United States has on its statute book. It is public law 93-86 of the 93rd Congress. It was passed on 10 August 1973. It covers not just a wheat program but a program relating to a range of agricultural industries. The aspect I refer to the House in relation to this concern which I have with this legislation is that it is designed to attract the farm production needed to meet domestic and foreign demand for food and fibre. The United States legislation accomplishes this by creating a favourable climate within which farmers may respond to market signals which indicate consumer demand and thus produce the crops which are needed at home and abroad. This Act provides a concept of guaranteed or target prices. It has deficiency payments for a range of commodities. The deficiency payments are to be related to

an average market price. They are related to that average market price remaining above a target level. The Act provides a bonus for individual productivity greater than the overall national productivity. In other words, it provides an opportunity for producer freedom and market orientated farm policy. To my mind this is a basis from which we in Australia might well be able to encourage farm diversification which has been of such tremendous advantage to Australian agriculture in the last few years. This is a form by which this legislation could venture out and provide more for the farmer than it does now.

In fact, this Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill represents the level of production which is available to growers under former schemes. Not many Australians realise that a negotiated home consumption price for wheat under this legislation results in them getting farinaceous food products, such as bread, at much lower prices than the rest of the world's western industrial communities. In other words, our wheat farmers are prepared to accept and are accepting a significantly lower price in order that they can get some stability in their income over a period. They are prejudicing the higher prices which they reserve by selling their wheat abroad. They are doing this in order to enter into this agreement. Unfortunately, the Government has not had the decency within the agreement to provide an offset by giving them a fair sort of return. Rather, it has devised a scheme which ignores the cost to the producer, ignores the inflationary situation which the Government is inciting and ignores the circumstances of industrial disruption which has prevented the Australian Wheat Board and other grain marketing agencies from delivering grain and realising proceeds which otherwise would have been capable of being paid to producers of grain delivered some years ago. In other words, the wheat industry in a very significant way is subsidising Australian consumers under this legislation. The Labor Party should recognise this when it talks about its hot air war against inflation. It should commend the industry for its restraint. This year the industry most probably will harvest a crop of less than 400 million bushels. It probably will be less than last year's crop. Harvesting this crop, transporting it to silos and delivering it from silos in the bush to major seaport terminals will not be easy, particularly if this Government completely neglects the provision of fuel supplies. One wonders whether the harvest will even be able to take place.

It is quite tragic that this Government thinks it can talk about wheat in one package and forget

all about the problems of harvesting wheat, having fuel to harvest the wheat, having fuel to enable the rail trucks to get the wheat to the point of shipment and having men working when the wheat is delivered to the port of shipment. All these things are breaking down and are creating a circumstance in which this wheat stabilisation scheme could be completely frustrated. Harvesting this year's crop, transporting it to silos and shipping it could well be completely impossible under the farcical arrangements that this Government is pursuing with respect to fuel supplies, particularly in northern New South Wales and Queensland.

Mr Lusher—Spare parts.

Mr SINCLAIR—Yes, getting spare parts for agricultural machinery is another problem area. There are so many problem areas that the wheat farmer will find it almost impossible to subsidise the Australian consumer as this legislation requires him to do. If this Government maintains its abrogation of its responsibilities for maintaining peaceful industrial relations there is little prospect for the future survival of the wheat industry.

At the dockside level there is a ridiculous situation. The waterfront unions are refusing to handle ships under contract. They are dictating the nation's foreign affairs policies and refusing to load Greek flag vessels with wheat. Previous bans on Chilean ships have meant that the Wheat Board's shipping program is running well behind schedule, causing income flow shortages to the wheat industry. These shortages resulted in the Wheat Board not being able to pay a promised 20c per bushel on deliveries from last year's crop. The payment of that 20c per bushel would have meant a better liquidity situation for wheat growers and would have helped to relieve the liquidity position of the banks. Moreover, this occurred after an announcement by the Wheat Board last April setting out the dates on which funds would be available as a result of sales that were made. It was known that ships were coming in. The only reason the payments were not made is that this Government has not been bothered about getting the men to work and getting the cargo moving in the way a responsible government would have done.

There are other ways in which this Government could have helped. If, in the last resort, it had not been able to get the ships moving, get the grain moved and get the fuel so that the New South Wales Railways were able to move the grain from the internal granaries to the ports, it could at least have considered the Rural Credits

Department of the Reserve Bank and perhaps arranged to make a payment through it so that wheat growers could have received the 20c per bushel that had been promised to them. Indeed, the borrowings from the Rural Credit Department were at their lowest level for several years. The Board, of course, had excellent prospects of repaying the money within a very short time, but the Government was not prepared to come to the party. One of the amendments that I understand we are to consider later tonight is to enable this legislation to go through with an accelerated passage so that money can be borrowed commercially. That might be a way around the problem, but it is no answer in respect of the Government not having provided that which is already available—a loan through the Rural Credits Department of the Reserve Bank. The Minister for Northern Development, who represents the Minister for Agriculture in this place, on many occasions, has argued the need for rural credit. He was a party, I suspect, together with his colleague, the Minister for Agriculture, to a decision to deny credit which could have been easily and properly repaid.

There is another aspect of the Bill which is even more concerning. This Government supposedly is concerned with social justice—social justice to everybody other than the producers of this world. In the wheat industry it has preserved one particular inequity, which is quite incredible. In the formulation of this scheme the Government has decided that the cost of an owner-operator's allowance for labour should be that of a leading hand under the Pastoral Award of 1968. The award then was \$3,181 per annum. It is now about 70 per cent higher than that. In other words, the wheat growers of Australia are being called on to produce wheat and to subsidise the Australian consumer, yet they are being forced to work at a labour cost imputed on the growing of that wheat at a wage rate which was relevant to the economic climate of 1968. If that is social justice, goodness only knows how the Australian Labor Party interprets any of its motives.

There has been some suggestion that this situation may be reviewed in 1975. I trust that the Minister for Northern Development who represents the Minister for Agriculture in this place will give us an assurance that it will be reviewed as soon as possible.

Mr Fisher—He is not even here.

Mr SINCLAIR—Correct; he is not even in the chamber. There is another question that concerns me. It is the question of mid-term

repayments. Under this scheme, all the growers' contributions to the stabilisation fund are utilised before the Government is called on to make a contribution. However, if a deficit builds up in terms of the Government's contributions, any payments by the growers to the central funds must be paid to the Government. I find this most inequitable and against any principle of stabilisation. Stabilisation is a two-way agreement, not a one-way agreement. The wheat industry has to take its risks and the Government, if it is to be realistic in providing a stabilisation scheme, must also take its share of risks. The arrangement in relation to the mid-term repayments is against the spirit of stabilisation. Of course, in the short to medium term, the outlook for the Australian wheat industry on international markets is excellent. The only factor limiting this outlook is the domestic economic management of this nation. Wheat growers, like all producers, are in the hands of inflation. Rising production costs, shortages and so on, caused to a large degree by this Government's failure to restrain inflation at a tolerable level, are adversely affecting the profitability of the wheat industry. In many other rural industries, many producers are operating at negative profitability because of the rigours of inflation. Although the consumer price index indicates an inflation level of 16.4 per cent, it is considerably higher in many agricultural industries. For example, the assessment of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics produced before the Prices Justification Tribunal inquiry into the dairy industry was 24 per cent a year cost inflation. In the wheat industry, it is considerably higher.

The Opposition is concerned with the implications of this Bill. It accepts that it is necessary but it is horrified at the manner in which it was negotiated and believes that it is necessary that the House take note of the Opposition's amendment. Therefore, I move:

That all words after 'That' be omitted with a view to inserting the following words in place thereof:

'whilst not opposing the provisions of the Bill this House (1) expresses its concern at the arbitrary nature of discussions with the Australian Wheat Federation and Agricultural Council on details of the new stabilisation proposals, and (2) because of industrial disruption beyond the control of the industry, deplores the Government's failure to take the action necessary to enable pool payments foreshadowed for the 1973-74 crop to be made to growers.'

We believe that the Government has neglected its responsibilities to the wheat industry. It is only in the circumstances of lack of time in spite of the duress of the original negotiations that the Opposition accepts this Bill, subject to the amendment that I have now moved.

Mr SPEAKER—Is the amendment seconded?

Mr King—**Mr Speaker**, I second the amendment.

Mr WHAN (Eden-Monaro) (8.34)—The Bills now under consideration provide for a new wheat stabilisation plan for the 5 seasons beginning 1 October 1974. Subject to complementary legislation being enacted by the States, the present proposals will also provide for the continuing operation of the Australian Wheat Board for 2 seasons beyond the duration of the stabilisation plan in order to provide continuity in wheat marketing. Negotiations on the new scheme were conducted by the Minister for Agriculture, Senator Wriedt, with the executive of the Australian Wheat Growers Federation. Unlike the previous speaker the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair), I state that these negotiations were conducted in an atmosphere of co-operation and in a genuine attempt to arrive at a solution to a problem which has beset the wheat industry for many years.

When the negotiations were concluded successfully with the Federation on 8 March, the President of the Australian Wheat Growers Federation, Mr Max Ridd, stated publicly that he was satisfied with the results of the negotiations. Mr Max Ridd, as we have heard here this evening, was supposed to under some sort of duress. Certainly, he would not have been restrained in his comments if that had in fact been the case. The delays that were caused on that occasion were due purely and simply to the pig-headedness of Liberal and Country Party State governments. The State Labor Government of Western Australia had accepted the proposals. At the subsequent State election, a new Liberal Government was elected. That Government rejected the scheme. But, of course, that Government could not be outdone by the greatest obstructionist in the Australian States, Sir Robert Askin, who went to the polls and was elected on a mandate to obstruct any action by the Federal Government, regardless of whether it was beneficial. Sir Robert Askin stepped in and reneged on those arrangements. His Government reneged on the commitments that it had given to the wheat industry. What is more, these actions by the State Governments of Western Australia and of New South Wales were condemned at the time by the wheat industry. It was this sort of obstructionism that led to the major delay in the initiation of this Bill.

The scheme itself is a determined and almost unique attempt to overcome a problem which was inherent in the previous schemes. This was

the confrontation between the prices and costs of production of wheat on the one hand and, on the other hand, world prices which had no relationship or relativity at all to the costs of production in Australia. These 2 conflicting issues have been resolved for the first time in what is indeed a unique scheme. The variations in wheat prices on the international market are a fact of life and so, too, is the escalation in costs of production.

We had all sorts of convolutions taking place under the previous Government. The wheat industry does not need to be reminded of the sequence of events leading up to the end of 1969 when the previous Liberal-Country Party Government in a quite summary way imposed quotas on the wheat industry at a time when many of the wheat growers had wheat in the ground. It is far better to give the wheat industry some sort of notice of what income its producers are likely to receive many years ahead and to cushion the income of wheat growers against the shocks of the international market. That is in fact what this scheme achieves. That is far better than a policy of imposing quotas in a mandatory way out of the blue on wheat growers when they have their seed in the ground, as happened under the previous Liberal-Country Party Government in 1969.

The first element of this scheme is a fixed domestic price for wheat to be adjusted annually from the level of the 1973-74 season and to be carried out by index methods through the life of the scheme. The second element is a stabilisation price covering all export wheat. Under the previous scheme, the guaranteed price covered only 200 million bushels. That was another of the limitations built into the scheme under the Liberal-Country Party Government. The present scheme covers all export wheat. This is clearly a major revolution in the protection of the wheat industry. In common with the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation's proposals submitted to the Government last September, the major objective of the scheme is to give the wheat industry some security against price fluctuations without distorting the underlying trend in market prices and to keep the cost to the Australian public within definite limits. The proposals from the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation have been accepted in this new and unique scheme which moderates the impact of fluctuating prices on the international market.

The scheme continues the orderly marketing arrangements through the Australian Wheat Board which the industry has enjoyed since the first post-war stabilisation scheme commenced

under a Labor Government in 1948. Once again we see a Labor Government introducing the first major innovation for the protection of the wheat industry against fluctuating incomes. The arrangements under which the Government guarantees borrowings from the Reserve Bank by the Australian Wheat Board will continue. These arrangements have enabled the Board to maintain the first advance payment over the years even when average returns have fallen to lower levels. With reference to first advance payments, immediately on taking office, this Government agreed to demands which had been refused by the previous speaker in this debate, the honourable member for New England, who was then Minister for Primary Industry. Those demands were to increase the first advance payment by 10c to \$1.20 a bushel. This action must be contrasted in the wheat grower's mind with the attitude of the honourable member for New England when, in October 1972, as Minister for Primary Industry, he pointblank refused to increase the first advance payment by 10c.

Mr McVeigh—You put the interest rate up by 6 per cent.

Mr WHAN—We have now struck the chord. We hear the Country Party—

Mr McVeigh—What rubbish.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Deputy Leader of the Country Party was heard in comparative silence.

Mr McVeigh—He told the truth.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Darling Downs will remain silent. I will insist that the honourable member for Eden-Monaro receive the same courtesy as did the Deputy Leader of the Country Party while he makes his contribution.

Mr WHAN—Mr Speaker, I thank you for your protection from the kindergarten behaviour on my right. The reaction was due simply to 2 undeniable facts: On taking office this Government raised the first advance by 10c a bushel, while in October 1972 the Liberal-Country Party Government, in which the honourable member for New England was the Minister for Primary Industry, refused point blank to do this. There is no argument about that. That is a statement of the position as it existed and as it was known by every wheat grower in the industry. The stabilisation price for the year 1974-75 will be set at \$2 a bushel—considerably more than the guaranteed \$1.60 a bushel which applied in 1973-74. The stabilisation price will be adjusted in each of the succeeding 4 years by the application of the

formula which was agreed to by the industry and the Government. The formula will move stabilisation prices in line with market trends and in particular will cushion sharp declines in overseas market values. This, of course, is one of the unique features of this scheme, this shock absorber system which has been built into it.

With grower returns linked more closely to the market place a more economic allocation of resources will be encouraged within the wheat industry and the rural sector generally, and it will go a long way towards providing that flexibility that the honourable member for New England appealed for in terms of alternative uses of the farm. Under past schemes there existed a guaranteed price which moved in line with changes in assessed costs of production. This proposal is a major revolution in the protection of wheat growers' incomes against fluctuating prices. The honourable member for New England said that the present agreement ignores the costs of production and gives reduced protection to growers. Let me quote from a speech made in this House on 10 October 1968 by the present Leader of the Country Party (Mr Anthony). In that speech he said that the simplest explanation for the need for change in the cost formula—I refer here to the cost of production index—was that in 15 consecutive years average returns to growers had been less than the assessed cost of production, yet the industry had expanded at an unprecedented rate. He then said:

It is demonstrably prosperous. There can be no doubt that the returns from wheat marketed have been remunerative.

This was the present Leader of the Country Party saying that the cost of production index had been obviously out of kilter with the facts of life. Yet here we have the sort of criticism that he was then answering being levelled at the Government by the honourable member for New England. In the 1973-74 season, as I have mentioned already, the Government raised the first advance by 10c a bushel. It was a clear response from a concerned Government to the conditions that existed in the wheat industry and a response to the need that existed in the wheat industry at that time.

There can be no question that this Government has done more for the agricultural sector than any government in the last 23 years. In one fell swoop it has given to the agricultural sector, including wheat growers many of whom run sheep, a fixed reserve price. Look at the saga that existed on the Opposition benches over that issue. The scheme was bankrolled by \$150m of Government money. I return to another point

made by the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair). He complained that wheat harvesting in New South Wales and in Australia generally will be curtailed by fuel shortages. Imagine what would have happened if by some disaster he and his colleagues had been elected to government. Those wheat farmers would now be paying extraordinary prices for the petrol used in harvesting, simply because the oil companies of the world had them under their thumbs.

(Opposition members interjecting)—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I warn the honourable member for Darling Downs.

Mr WHAN—This new scheme for stabilising wheat prices represents a major step forward in the protection of wheat producers against fluctuating incomes. It cushions them from the sudden shocks such as the one brought about when quotas were introduced under the previous Government at the end of 1969. It cushions the wheat growers against this very disastrous change in expectations. This scheme has been designed in consultation with the wheat industry and one of the things that the Country Party cannot accept is that industries such as wheat and wool, and other industries, are now prepared to consult and work in co-operation with this Government. Honourable members opposite still think they have a mandate to govern. They still think that they are the only ones who have a right to be addressed by the agricultural sector. The fact is that this scheme has been worked out in consultation and co-operation with the wheat industry and this sticks in the throat of the Country Party.

This scheme embodies in it all sorts of commitments which are new and revolutionary—credit commitments which, as the previous speaker has indicated, will be embodied in this Bill by an amendment giving the Wheat Board the opportunity for the first time to use credit outside that available within the Government, giving it more flexibility in their trading operation, more ability to make independent judgments, having the independent source of finance which we will give it. These are the sorts of operations which indicate that this Government has confidence in the people making marketing decisions on behalf of agriculture, instead of, as we are often told and as the agricultural people are forced to hear from the Country Party, having no confidence at all in their judgment, having some sort of desire to take over these operations in some centralised bureaucratic fashion. The facts are there for any objective person to see. By giving these powers to

the marketing boards we are now placing a vote of confidence in their judgment to manage their affairs on behalf of the people they represent.

Mr HYDE (Moore) (8.43)—Before dealing with the matters I intended to speak on, I want to deal with an extraordinary statement by the previous speaker, the member for Eden Monaro (Mr Whan), a man whose training I thought should provide him with knowledge enough to know better.

Mr James—He spoke above your head.

Mr HYDE—He did not speak above my head. He spoke of the increase of 10c a bushel in the first advance price on wheat. That 10c a bushel, a move from \$1.10 to \$1.20, is a far lower proportion of the moneys coming in when compared to the export price of the day; compared to world prices it is far lower; compared to the stabilised price it is far lower. In real terms it is, of course, far lower. It is ridiculous to refer to that as a real rise. It is a fall.

Mr Duthie—They never got it under your Government.

Mr HYDE—I still make the point that under our Government a far higher proportion of money received was paid as the first advance. It is not the wish of the Opposition to delay this Bill. It should not be delayed at this time. But that does not mean that we are happy with it. We are most unhappy with it. The industry does not wish to see it delayed. That does not mean that the industry is happy with it. The industry is most unhappy with it. We have seen a radical change of principles. Let me quote from the second reading speech of the Minister for Northern Development (Dr Patterson) who represents the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt). Incidentally, he has not bothered to remain to hear the debate. He said:

... the Government concluded that there should be a major revision of the existing stabilisation arrangements. In particular, we—

that is, the Government—

reached the position that the provision of a guaranteed price for a specific quantity of exports, with the price being adjusted according to certain cost movements from year to year, was not conducive to maximum efficiency in the wheat industry.

That may be so. He also said that these proposals—

are to give the industry some security against price fluctuation without distorting the underlying trend in market prices.

The proposed scheme distorts the underlying trend in market prices and gives very little protection against price downturns. This industry produces its product in an environment where

costs are boosted by the tariff wall and by industrial policies of the Government, and are abetted by the Government. It has been argued, and reasonably argued, in the past that a high home consumption price—that is, high in relation to the world price with tariff compensation—was the thing that brought the market forces back into balance and back into play.

Incidentally, were there time to refer the matter to the Industries Assistance Commission—obviously there is not—I would find it very hard to believe that the industry could suffer from any inquiry by that Commission. In fact I believe its submissions would stand up very well indeed. The pricing formula used will result in the wheat industry being used to subsidise the home market, and to subsidise it heavily. This policy will be deflationary in that it will both reduce costs and reduce money in growers' pockets. Even to that extent it might be deflationary.

Dr Klugman—Inflationary?

Mr HYDE—Deflationary. It will reduce the money in growers' pockets and to that extent it might be deflationary. It will also raise the level of unemployment. It might even be considered quite sound if the industry were offered anything reasonable, but it is offered nothing in return. The home consumption price should not move up and down with every shift in market forces, but it should reflect likely long term trends and in adverse times it should cushion violent downturns in the market that would disrupt the industry and bring hardship to even the most efficient producers.

The home consumption price is to be adjusted by annual reference to costs except that the allowance for the grower's return—his basic wage, as it were—is fixed according to 1968 values. In these times of spiralling wages and prices why single out wheat growers to stand still in money terms and to fall back very rapidly in real terms? There is currently around 86 million bushels of wheat used within Australia. Exports should yield in excess of \$2.75 a bushel with a probability of \$3 a bushel. The 86 million bushels sold to the home market at 75c less than export prices represents an annual contribution to the home market of \$64m or \$320m over the life of the agreement. For anyone to argue that escalating costs will force up the home consumption price as we live with inflation and so reduce the margin between the home consumption price and the export price, is to say that this Government is going to allow a situation in which our rate of inflation will inevitably be higher than that of our trading partners. Heaven help us, for

that will destroy the export market. In return for this contribution the Australian wheatgrower is offered stabilisation—or equalisation—but at what level?

In the event of a drastic slump the growers' price is to be stabilized from a fund of \$80m to which he himself has been contributing. How much will he have been contributing? The growers will have contributed \$48m now and in all probability, the whole \$80m—with nearly the remainder going in this season. We can forecast with reasonable expectation that prices will be more than 15c above the stabilization price for at least the first 2 years. Every contribution of the Government to this fund will be repaid in the event of grower contributions later placing moneys back into the fund. So, it is almost impossible to envisage a situation where the Government would be involved in any loss whatsoever. Nevertheless, let us consider the most costly but still unlikely position in which the Government might find itself. That is, growers contribute—as they certainly will—\$48m in the first year and \$30m in the next year and the remaining \$2m in the third year. If the wheat market collapses completely the Government pays out \$30m in each of the remaining 3 years—in the most unlikely event of a prolonged and unpredicted slump. Even in those conditions the Government would have to find a mere \$10m. The export price would need to fall to most unlikely low levels for the home consumption price to return the \$128m subsidy that the wheatgrower is providing to the home market in the first 2 years. In fact, the Government is using the wheat industry in an anti-inflationary policy and offering it nothing in return.

Let me come to the accusations of obstruction by the State governments. Let us look at the position in Western Australia in particular and at why the Court Government was so reluctant to accept these provisions. First of all, in Western Australia we have produced 29 per cent of the wheat and we have 22 per cent of the quota. We have no great incentive to stay with this scheme. We have the greatest potential to expand our wheat production and to bring further land under wheat. Yet, the quota was frozen. We have a freight advantage that has never been adequately recognised. We have no border over which we can trans-ship wheat and so avoid the provisions of the quota and the restrictions imposed. If honourable members consider that is a small matter I ask them to consider that when world prices rose and it no longer paid to sell wheat outside the system wheat for home consumption purchased from the Board jumped by

26 million bushels. A lot of wheat was being sold outside the system. Western Australia was not in that. There was no opportunity. Not that I believe that any grower ought to have been in it.

Because Western Australia has a low home consumption and a high export, when we are faced with an inequitable scheme such as this—inequitable between the consumers and the producers Australia, perforce, makes a much greater contribution to the inequity. Western Australia had every reason to be very chary about this wheat scheme, and hence the stand of the Court Government.

I wish to say something about wheat quality and payment for quality. For too long the industry has been offered no financial incentive to produce quality wheat. It is too often confused with the argument of segregation and the admitted difficulties of segregating a vast number of wheat varieties. It is sufficient that the wheat growers be paid for producing quality, and all that is necessary to conduct the machinery of this exercise is that sufficient sampling be done so that each grower can be rewarded for producing something better than the minimum standards—standards, incidentally, that have to be set so that most growers can meet them. If we again go into times when wheat is difficult to sell we will regret not having done our level best to produce the best wheat within Australia. Finally, I summarise my remarks about the scheme itself. Growers contribute much—\$64m a year—and they get little. In all probability they will get nothing.

Mr FitzPATRICK (Darling) (9.1)—I was very surprised to hear the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair), blame the Government for the delay in the introduction of these wheat Bills. The Opposition seems to have a great capacity to cause delay and to blame it on the Government. The delay in the introduction of these Bills was caused by the Senate's refusing to introduce measures that were approved by the people at the May elections. Not only did the Senate refuse to endorse the measures; it even went as far as going into court in an effort to prevent the Government from holding the Joint Sitting of the Parliament. It is a lot of rot to say that the Government is holding up its own legislation. I do not think any of the electors will be fooled by this type of propaganda. The honourable member for New England was critical of the fact that there has been some delay in the export of wheat because of an industrial dispute. Does he forget that there was an even longer delay when the Opposition was in government? At that time

we had no overseas markets to supply. It was not until this Government went out and obtained markets that we had any opportunity to export wheat.

The honourable member for Moore (Mr Hyde) has mentioned the Tariff Board. It seems to be a strange thing that the Opposition parties want to remind the people of what happened with tariffs during the 23 years that they were in government. The wheat growers were concerned about tariffs. They asked our predecessors to remove them, but it was not until the Labor Party came into power that there was a 25 per cent reduction in tariffs.

I support the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill because I believe that, together with the Wheat Products Export Adjustment Bill and the Wheat Export Charge Bill, it will introduce a stabilisation plan in respect of the 5 growing seasons starting on 1 October 1974. I believe that this is a very desirable proposition. It will remove much of the uncertainty in the minds of wheat growers and will allow them to plan their production over a long period. This will result in better planning and therefore a greater financial return to the industry. These measures should meet with the approval of the industry. When introducing these Bills the Minister for Northern Development (Dr Patterson) told us that they had been accepted by the industry organisations. So they should be, because their basic aim is to bring security against price fluctuations. The legislation sets out to do this without any undue interference with market prices. I want to point out here that I do not intend the inference to be taken that there should never be any interference with market prices. I am reminded of what happened with the wool markets. If there had not been some interference with those markets many wool growers would be out of production today. I do not think that interference is quite as necessary in regard to wheat because the Australian Wheat Board is the sole marketing authority and has control over all wheat marketed in Australia as well as the wheat and wheat products exported from Australia.

I agree with the provision that the Australian Wheat Board is to have power for two seasons beyond the duration of this stabilisation scheme because to grow and market wheat is no small operation. Big things, of necessity, should gain momentum slowly and, of course, they should be run down slowly. These measures bring in a stabilisation on price related to movement in the international wheat market. I am in favour of this because I believe that no responsible government should introduce a scheme which is not

related to either the requirements of an international market or to home consumption. If this were not so our valuable resources could be wasted and excess wheat could be produced, although I am prepared to admit that this is highly unlikely in the foreseeable future.

This scheme provides for abandonment of the concept of a guaranteed price and replaces it with a stabilisation price related to movements in the international wheat market. The grower will know in advance what his return will be and will know that it will not be below a certain figure. As a matter of fact, the 1974-75 price will be \$73.49 per tonne f.o.b., or, as stated already, \$2 per bushel. This is an advance on the present legislation because it does not contain this provision. It applies, of course, to all wheat exported. Honourable members should compare this scheme with the present legislation and the dried vine fruits stabilisation legislation. The scheme for dried vine fruits contained a tonnage limitation but no limitation applied to new plantings and this forced many growers off their land.

This wheat stabilisation scheme will provide security not only for those directly involved in growing wheat but also for those indirectly involved. It is only just that in a time of buoyant prices the industry should make some contribution to the cost of the scheme. Regardless of this the Government is guaranteeing the scheme to the extent of \$80m over 5 years. Any government contribution not recouped before the end of the 5 year period will be written off. The Minister has explained already that this provision is not contained in the Bill but he mentioned it in this House for the record. In addition the grower is to pay no contribution if the average export price is below \$55.12 per tonne, or \$1.50 per bushel, and he will receive a contribution from the fund under the formula set out in clause 29 (5) of the Bill. Also, he will receive a distribution when the fund is in credit in excess of \$80m. The inclusion of clauses 21 (6) and 23 (1) (b) will close a lot of loopholes that exist in the present legislation. All honourable members remember the period when we had the across-the-border black market in wheat. Today we heard a lot about slush funds of the deep sea sailors. I am not saying that the same thing applies in regard to black marketing in over-the-border wheat, but I point out that a lot of this black marketing was going on and it put many wheat growers off the land. The previous Government was in a position to do something about it but failed to do it.

The provision to include 10 growers' representatives on the Board has been retained. I believe

that is to the credit of the Government. The legislation is being amended to give one home consumption price. I believe that here again another loophole in the present legislation has been blocked off, because there is no doubt that non-human consumption wheat has been finding its way into markets to which it should not have found its way. Having a good general standard of wheat throughout is a much better idea.

I hope that the Opposition will not delay the passing of these Bills, because already there are restrictions on expanding the world food supplies. The traditional approach to increasing production by expanding the area under cultivation can no longer apply or has limited scope for the future. This is because densely populated countries like Japan and the countries of western Europe no longer have land available for crop production. Added to this, most of the rivers that lend themselves to damming and irrigation have already been developed. We have yet to learn what impact the energy crisis will have on food production. It could well mean that energy cost may cause farmers engaged in high energy consuming agriculture, such as that in practice in the United States of America, to hold down production. I believe we have a duty to create a global food reserve to provide a measure of world price stability. I think that in the long run this will be in the self interest of all nations. I commend the Bills to the House.

Mr KING (Wimmera) (9.13)—Being a very charitable type, I commence my remarks by saying that the 2 Government speakers this evening made the very best with very poor material. The honourable member for Darling (Mr FitzPatrick) commenced his speech by claiming great credit for securing export sales of wheat.

Mr FitzPatrick—We did.

Mr KING—He went very close to it. He criticised the previous government because it could not find markets overseas, but today we have them. Therefore, if that is not claiming credit I do not know what is. But the honourable member is not prepared to tell us about the lack of demand today for wool and meat. If he is to take credit on one issue, please let him take what goes with the other. The honourable member for Eden-Monaro (Mr Whan) gave us a very interesting address too. He talked about the many things in the wheat stabilisation scheme of which he was proud. He said he was proud of the fact that it would cover all the wheat that was grown in Australia, but he did not say by how much. He talked about this legislation as a major innovation. He talked about the first advance on wheat,

but he did not tell us what sort of interest rates the wheat industry pays today. He did not remind us of the percentage that the present Government is paying on the first advance, as the honourable member for Moore (Mr Hyde) reminded him of the percentage being paid under this scheme as compared with what was paid by the previous Government. The previous Government paid a first advance averaged over 5 years, of more than 80 per cent of the final payment to wheat growers. In the first year of this new plan the first advance is expected to be less than 50 per cent.

Mr McVeigh—Only 50 per cent?

Mr KING—Only 50 per cent. The honourable member for Eden-Monaro made great play about the satisfaction of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation with this plan. The Deputy Leader of the Country Party (Mr Sinclair) made it very clear that the Federation accepted the plan rather reluctantly. The honourable member for Eden-Monaro criticised quotas. This again is the suggestion of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation. Why did he not praise the Federation on that point, too?

The difference between this plan and the previous plan, on the surface, appears insignificant; but on a close scrutiny one will find a very big difference. It removes the guaranteed price and substitutes what I call a cushioning price. The returns to growers will tend to follow the market both up and down. When the market is down we in this Party are very concerned on behalf of the wheat industry. The issues in this Bill appear minor today, but when times are tough and prices are low these minor items could well be major issues which would have adverse effects on the return to growers. The reason I say this is simply that at present the reduced quantity of wheat throughout the world has tended to lift the price considerably. Government members take credit for this fact.

If one compares this increased price and the general cost of production today with the position some years ago, one will agree that at present the price is not excessive. I ask: What article can be purchased today for a figure less than double that of a few years ago? If it were just profitable 10 or 15 years ago, my guess is that it is no more profitable today. The only advantage is that wheat growers have increased their productivity more than have the growers in any other industry of which I know. Previous plans had a limited amount of wheat which came within the export guarantee, but the amount of the guarantee per bushel was unlimited. It was

limited in quantity, but the finance was unlimited. Today in this proposal the quantity is unlimited but the amount of money is restricted. The position is the reverse. Yet the Government is proud of this position. It means that there is a maximum of \$30m a year. If \$30m is spread over a crop for sale of \$300m, it is only 10c a bushel, whereas previously the quantity was limited to 200 million bushels. But it could, if the price fell to a low level, mean even so much more in total as well as in the amount per bushel. For the 1967-68 pool the then Government paid out \$42,869,000, and in respect of the year 1971-72 it paid out \$40,131,000. I point out, however, that it is not the total figure that is so important but the guarantee in the event of the price falling below a reasonable figure. To my mind, that is the most important point to remember in relation to any plan.

It is obvious that this plan, spread over 5 years, will be successful because, first of all, the growers have contributed \$48m up to this time, before the actual scheme commences. There is \$48m in the fund now. Because of the present ruling price it is expected that they will contribute a maximum of \$30m this year. It is hardly likely, because of the present world shortage and the fact that the surplus accounts for only 22 million tons as compared with approximately 50 million tons average over the last 10 years, that the price of the next harvest will fall below the minimum price at which growers are required to contribute. In theory the growers will have in the fund \$78m, or maybe \$80m. Under Part IV, clauses 30, sub-clause (5), the amount to be paid out in any one year is limited to \$30m. That being the case, irrespective of what the price may be that \$80m must fall short by only \$10m to cover growers for the remaining 3 years if the overseas price falls below the guaranteed price, which means in turn that the total commitment by the Commonwealth Government would be only \$10m over a 5-years plan. That is how good this plan is. That is \$2m a year. I almost use up that amount in my own electorate, let alone my own farm. So while it may appear to be a fine gesture by the Government to return any unused funds to the growers after the plan expires in 1979 it has really given back nothing because if the price drops to a minimum low for 3 years its total payout will be, I repeat, only \$10m. If the price remains on a reasonable level the Government contributes nothing but makes a fine gesture by returning the growers' money to them. We are going to give them back their own money. In other words that is the only contribution the Government will make.

So much for the 5-year period. If this plan is carried through in its entirety for the next 5 years and the export price runs out at below the guarantee, then the maximum contribution by the Government could not be above \$30m a year or \$80m over 5 years, which is the maximum the Government is expected to contribute in accordance with this Bill. It could well be said that this is a fine contribution. But it should be remembered that it is over a 10-year period, which would average out at \$9m a year, during which time growers could well make a very large contribution to the supplying of cheap wheat for consumption in Australia, as was expounded by the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party earlier this evening. Their contribution to the supplying of cheap wheat is estimated at approximately \$107m this year. That is on present day prices. The Government's contribution will be a total of \$90m over 10 years. That is how imbalanced this plan is. If the price remains high for 10 years the growers' contribution could well be about \$100,000m plus. In return they would receive a guarantee, as I have said, of \$80m of the taxpayers' money. But if the price remained high the Government would contribute nothing.

All I can say to those people who suggest that this is a magnificent plan which will assist the wheat growing industry is that it is not. It is far from it. The growers will in the main contribute a lot more to the economy than they will receive in return. If inflation continues to rise in Australia at the present level and production costs continue to increase we could well see a situation by the time the plan expires in 5 years from now in which the value of their contribution of \$30m will be minimised to the extent that it will be meaningless as far as a wheat stabilisation plan is concerned. Perhaps I should explain that by pointing out that if by chance costs double in 5 years or even 10 years the present \$30m will be equivalent to about \$15m on today's level, which makes the whole exercise of little value.

It has been said that the industry and the State governments have accepted this proposal. That is true. But I join with the Deputy Leader of the Country Party in saying that they have done so very reluctantly. They had no alternative. It was a case of take it or leave it. The Government could not establish a 5-year plan in 10 months. It had to take 2 years to introduce it. The industry certainly put up a good fight. It obtained a few concessions, but it is really not very happy about the overall situation. Anyone on the Government side of the chamber who disagrees with me in that respect ought to go out and talk with the

industry about the matter. Honourable members opposite should talk with the individual wheat growers and see what they think.

To my mind too much has been made of 2 other issues, namely, the removal of quotas and the first advance. The first advance really means nothing because it is drawing upon the borrowing from the Reserve Bank, which must be repaid with interest. So the higher the first advance the longer the delay in the second advance and, naturally, the more the interest which will have to be repaid. I should add that the present rate of interest is somewhere about 60 per cent above the previous range obtained by the former Government.

As regards the question of quotas, according to clause 25 of the Bill this is only a postponement on delivery while growers cannot supply the full amount of wheat. I do not disagree with this, but let it not be said that quotas are gone for all time—despite today's announcement that the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation has decided against quotas and has removed them for the time being. As soon as delivery reaches a figure that will use up the agreed upon loan from the Reserve Bank, no doubt quotas will be introduced, even under this Government. I make no apology for saying that. This legislation is acceptable because the wheat industry has no troubles at the present time. But if we return to a period when the world price for wheat is low, this plan will be of little value to the wheat industry.

I wish to place a few of these things on record because I believe that the time will come when people will regret that they have accepted this wheat stabilisation plan. Many things have happened since this legislation was introduced by the Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory (Dr Patterson). The Australian Wheat Board has not been able to honour its earlier announcement to the effect that in August it would pay 20c a bushel on the 1973-74 wheat harvest. I am not critical of the Board for making that announcement. I believe that the Chairman of the Board may have been premature in making the announcement, but I think that he did it under pressure. I think that he did it in the interests of the industry in order to give people the opportunity to budget and also to give to those people who wanted to borrow money some confidence as to when they could expect to receive some money. But because of industrial unrest this payment of 20c a bushel was not forthcoming. So we have had to wait.

The Bill also includes a new provision in clause 36 (2). This sub-clause gives to the Australian

Wheat Board authority to borrow from sources outside the normal channels of the rural credits division of the Reserve Bank. I will be quite frank about this: I do not like this sub-clause. Ever since there has been a wheat stabilisation plan we have always borrowed our money from the Reserve Bank. Why should we go outside the bank now? Will we find that because we have created the precedent of borrowing from outside the Reserve Bank, on some future occasion when the chips are a bit short somewhere the wheat industry will be encouraged to go outside the Reserve Bank and to borrow privately? Honourable members who have read today's newspapers will know that the Australian Wool Corporation applied to the private trading banks for some funds to keep the new wool plan financially sound. But what happened today? The request for funds was rejected by the private trading banks. Now I understand that the Government is to call a special Cabinet meeting to consider introducing legislation to enable the Government to provide the necessary funds. I do not know the finer details of the proposal, but that is what is proposed in principle. We could find ourselves in the position where the wheat industry would be expected to go to private enterprise to borrow money to meet the first advance payments.

I support the broad principles of a wheat stabilisation plan. I realise that we are cornered and that we have no alternative. We either accept this plan or we reject it. If we reject it there will be no plan at all for the coming season. If that were the case, in the present financial situation I would naturally see chaos occurring throughout the wheat industry. The Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party has moved an amendment along the lines that we accept this legislation but that we do so under a form of protest. In view of the shortness of time I will not read the proposed amendment again. Most honourable members recall the Deputy Leader of the Country Party reading it. No doubt before a vote is taken on the second reading of this Bill the proposed amendment will be read again. I fully appreciate the concern of individual wheat growers throughout Australia. I appreciate the desire of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation to get a plan, and its accepting therefore something very much against its principles. Therefore, I believe that we on this side of the House, being from 2 responsible Parties, have no alternative but to support the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party. I hope that the Government will give consideration to it.

Mr McVEIGH (Darling Downs) (9.31)—In supporting the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party, the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair), I want firstly to congratulate the honourable member for Darling (Mr FitzPatrick) on his humane approach to a world wide problem. Whilst congratulating him and endorsing the remarks of the honourable member for Wimmera (Mr King) I severely castigate the other speaker, the honourable member for Eden-Monaro (Mr Whan) who, when the industry and the Australian people were looking for flour to bake, gave them only candy floss, which, like his promises, merely melts away. During these debates on the wheat industry we of the Opposition will expose the rural policy myth of the Australian Labor Party by giving the facts and telling the truth about its aims and thrusts. We will look at the full canvas, as it were, and analyse it. We will not accept as sufficient a cursory examination of a few features.

During the last few years, from 12 April 1972 till now, we have seen the price of a 2 lb loaf of bread in Sydney increase from 23c to 35c, with a prophecy it will be increased by another 2c per loaf in the very near future. In the baking industry there have been the following increases in costs in the last 14 months: Labour, 55 per cent; inputs other than flour, 12 per cent; interest charges, 10 per cent plus another astronomical flat 2 per cent recently; sundries, 8 per cent; paper costs, 5 per cent; payroll tax, 3 per cent; petrol excise, 1 per cent; and flour costs, 5 per cent. We have the premise established that the price of flour has increased by 5 per cent due largely to milling cost increases, whilst the price of wheat to the trade has increased only marginally.

It is rather a chaotic environment and a very sad reflection on the Labor Government's monetary policy when increases in inputs other than the main substance, wheat, have been more than twice as important in determining the price of bread, and increased paper costs were just as important. One must wonder when one realises it costs more to slice and wrap a loaf of bread than the wheat content is worth. Even if the Australian farmer gave the Australian family the flour content of a 900 gram loaf of bread for nothing, the loaf would still cost 29c in Sydney and if the price of wheaten content doubled the increase would be only 60 per cent of the increase over the period to which I have referred. It is time the pendulum swung the other way, that we dispensed with the catch cry 'Cheap bread for the people at the farmers' expense'

and we adopted the slogan 'A fair go for the Australian farmer'. It is time members of the Australian Labor Party stopped acting recklessly. Are they not aware of the winter of discontent in the rural industry? They cannot seem to realise that they performed dismally in rural areas on 18 May. Are they still blinded and drunk from their Leader's pungent comment: 'You have never had it so good'? We will not let them forget that. There is a new rhythm of concern in the rural areas and they can be assured of prickly disputes from this side of the House. As the honourable member for Wimmera said, the honourable member for Eden-Monaro agrees with the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) that the farmers have never had it so good.

In this debate we want to highlight, firstly, the magnificent contribution of the wheat industry to our overseas earnings and to the Australian quality of life; secondly, the necessity to include for index purposes the owner-operators' allowance when the home consumption price is being declared for the season 1975-76. We want, thirdly, to expose the parsimonious underwriting of stabilisation by the Government by what are, in effect, basically loans and not grants. Fourthly, we want changes in the wording of the legislation which appears to be centralistic, underhand and mischievous. Fifthly, we point to the responsibilities of other sections of the industry to control costs and to adopt similar qualities of statesmanship as the farmer; and sixthly, we want an awareness that we could lose markets through insect presence and damage.

The first point is best examined by finding an answer to the question: Who subsidises whom? No political embellishment or prejudiced bureaucratic calculations can camouflage the real issues. We can only decide this proposition by coming to a common denominator and I have used constant money values on 1972-73 prices. To emphasise the truth and reinforce the facts and arguments put by my colleague the honourable member for Wimmera one must also state that at present world prices of \$117 per tonne, and the home consumption price at present of \$71.10 and multiplying this difference by the quantity used by Australian consumers of 2.35 million tonnes, we have the nation being subsidised by \$107,865m this year by the farmers. This signifies the trend and is the basic argument behind the tables which I seek leave of the House to have incorporated in Hansard to let Australia know the truth.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lucock)—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

WHEAT MARKETING CROSS SUBSIDISATION BALANCE SHEET

Summary of Grower-Community Cash Contributions to Marketing since 1945-46 adjusted to Constant Prices (1972-73 money values)

Season (Pool Year)	Loss or gain to Wheatgrowers from artificial Home Con- sumption Prices (see Appendix A(i) for detailed calculations)	Additional Commonwealth Government contributions to Stabilisa- tion Fund (Source: Aus- tralian Wheat Board)	Net loss or gain to Wheat- growers (not at current money values)	Per cent change in Consumer Price Index all cities to 1972-73 (see Appendix A(ii))	Loss or gain to Wheat- growers at constant prices (1972-73 values)
	\$ million	\$ million	\$ million	per cent	\$ million
Post War Years—					
1945-46	—34.75	..	—34.75	264.8	—126.77
1946-47	—61.87	..	—61.87	250.5	—216.85
1947-48	—58.77	..	—58.77	223.3	—190.00
1948-49	—42.72	..	—42.72	194.1	—131.52
1949-50	—56.30	..	—56.30	171.4	—152.80
1950-51	—60.45	..	—60.45	140.1	—145.14
1951-52	—31.62	..	—31.62	96.0	— 61.98
1952-53	—22.61	..	—22.61	79.1	— 40.49
1953-54	— 0.11	..	— 0.11	75.6	— 0.19
1954-55	+ 8.15	..	+ 8.15	74.6	+ 14.23
1955-56	+ 2.90	..	+ 2.90	67.5	+ 4.86
1956-57	— 3.63	..	— 3.63	58.4	— 5.75
1957-58	+ 1.53	..	+ 1.53	56.8	+ 2.40
1958-59	+ 6.44	..	+ 6.44	54.4	+ 9.94
1959-60	+ 8.90	+ 9.0	+17.90	50.6	+ 26.96
1960-61	+ 9.33	+25.8	+35.13	44.7	+ 50.83
1961-62	+ 7.34	+21.0	+28.34	44.1	+ 40.84
1962-63	+11.26	+32.5	+43.76	43.9	+ 62.97
1963-64	+ 0.57	+ 2.7	+ 3.27	42.5	+ 4.66
1964-65	+ 8.96	+24.9	+33.86	37.3	+ 46.49
1965-66	+ 6.69	+21.5	+28.19	32.5	+ 37.35
1966-67	+ 6.73	+20.0	+26.73	29.0	+ 34.48
1967-68	+19.60	+53.6	+73.20	24.9	+ 91.43
1968-69	+21.84	+35.5	+57.34	22.5	+ 70.24
1969-70	+14.18	+32.6	+46.78	18.7	+ 55.52
1970-71	+16.37	+36.4	+52.77	13.3	+ 59.78

Season (Pool Year)	Loss or gain to Wheatgrowers from artificial Home Con- sumption Prices (see Appendix A(i) for detailed calculations)	Additional Commonwealth Government contributions to Stabilisa- tion Fund (Source: Aus- tralian Wheat Board)	Net loss or gain to Wheat- growers (not at current money values)	\$ million	Per cent change in Consumer Price Index all cities to 1972-73 (see Appendix A(ii))	Loss or gain to Wheat- growers at constant prices (1972-73 values)
	\$ million	\$ million			per cent	\$ million
1971-72	+ 19.96	+ 41.0	+ 60.96		6.0	+ 64.61
1972-73	+ 28.35	+ 25.0	+ 53.35		..	+ 53.35
1973-74	- 69.37	..	- 69.37		..	- 69.37
Total Loss (-)/Gain (+) to Growers—Post War Years Not at current money values			+ 138.40			
Loss to Growers at Constant Prices (1973 money values)						- 409.92

CALCULATION OF LOSS/GAIN TO WHEATGROWERS
Arising from Home Consumption Sales Seasons 1945-46—1973-74

Pool Year	Total home market sales	Value of home market sales	Average price per bushel	Average export return per bushel f.o.r. ports	Loss/gain to Wheat- growers on home market sales
				million bushel	\$ million
1945-46	59.2	27.8	0.470	1.057	- 34.75
1946-47	58.2	29.4	0.505	1.568	- 61.87
1947-48	51.6	31.7	0.614	1.753	- 58.77
1948-49	59.0	39.1	0.663	1.421	- 44.72
1949-50	61.2	42.8	0.699	1.623	- 56.30
1950-51	67.4	52.6	0.780	1.677	- 60.45
1951-52	60.8	73.0	1.201	1.729	- 31.62
1952-53	59.5	78.3	1.316	1.704	- 22.61
1953-54	56.1	78.6	1.401	1.403	- 0.11
1954-55	56.6	79.2	1.399	1.255	+ 8.15
1955-56	56.9	76.2	1.339	1.288	+ 2.90
1956-57	62.6	85.4	1.364	1.422	- 3.63
1957-58	54.6	77.4	1.418	1.390	+ 1.53
1958-59	53.7	77.4	1.441	1.319	+ 6.44
1959-60	59.3	87.8	1.481	1.323	+ 8.90
1960-61	54.9	83.2	1.515	1.339	+ 9.33
1961-62	52.4	82.4	1.573	1.429	+ 7.34
1962-63	51.2	80.9	1.580	1.357	+ 11.26
1963-64	56.6	81.6	1.442	1.429	+ 0.57
1964-65	74.7	108.9	1.458	1.338	+ 8.96
1965-66	66.9	101.4	1.516	1.409	+ 6.69
1966-67	61.2	94.5	1.560	1.447	+ 6.73
1967-68	70.0	114.7	1.639	1.358	+ 19.60
1968-69	56.0	94.9	1.695	1.305	+ 21.84
1969-70	58.6	91.6	1.563	1.321	+ 14.18
1970-71	61.8	97.1	1.571	1.306	+ 16.37
1971-72	67.9	109.0	1.605	1.311	+ 19.96
1972-73	75.0	134.4	1.792	1.414	+ 28.35
1973-74	84.4	163.3	1.934	2.756	- 69.37

(Data Source—Australian Wheat Board)

**METHOD OF ESTABLISHING THE INDEX BASED ON CONSUMER PRICE INDICES FOR THE YEARS
1945-46-1972-73**
(All Capital Cities Index)

Year	'C' Series Index (1939 = 100)	Retail Price Index (1952/53 = 100)	Consumer Price Index (1966/67 = 100)	Amalgamated Index (1952/53 = 100)	% Multiplier to convert to 1972/73 values
1945-46	125	49.1	264.8
1946-47	130	51.1	250.5
1947-48	141	55.4	223.3
1948-49	155	60.9	..	60.9	194.1
1949-50	..	66.0	..	66.0	171.4
1950-51	..	74.6	..	74.6	140.1
1951-52	..	91.4	..	91.4	96.0
1952-53	..	100.0	..	100.0	79.1
1953-54	..	102.0	..	102.0	75.6
1954-55	..	102.6	..	102.6	74.6
1955-56	..	106.9	..	106.9	67.5
1956-57	..	113.1	..	113.1	58.4
1957-58	..	114.2	..	114.2	56.8
1958-59	..	116.0	..	116.0	54.4
1959-60	..	118.9	..	118.9	50.6
1960-61	..	123.8	..	123.8	44.7
1961-62	..	124.3	..	124.3	44.1
1962-63	..	124.5	..	124.5	43.9
1963-64	..	125.7	..	125.7	42.5
1964-65	..	130.4	..	130.4	37.3
1965-66	..	135.2	..	135.2	32.5
1966-67	..	138.8	100.0	138.8	29.0
1967-68	103.3	143.4	24.9
1968-69	106.0	146.2	22.5
1969-70	109.4	150.9	18.7
1970-71	114.6	158.1	13.3
1971-72	122.4	168.9	6.0
1972-73	129.8	179.1	..

Mr McVEIGH—One of those tables establishes that there has been a net loss to wheat growers amounting to \$409.92m since 1945-46.

Mr Killen—Shame.

Mr McVEIGH—As the honourable member for Moreton says, shame on anyone, any scribe, any prophet of doom who tries to imply that the Australian consumer has been subsidising the Australian farmer. I hope that once and for all that nails that vicious lie and that it shall never raise its head again. Of course, we have also had the feather bedding of inefficient industries through high tariffs which have penalised the rural sector. Once and for all, I hope that we have silenced those disciples of untruth and apostles of destructive criticism.

The Minister, of course, has not given us in his speech the details we are looking for. But we of the Opposition do not need a north Australian cattle dog to yard him—he is easily yarded as was proved on 18 May. The assessed price structure for wheat for 1974-75 is \$1.91.7c per bushel and the home consumption price for 1974-75 will be obtained by indexing this price forward according to movements in cash cost and rail freight

and handling costs, and adding a loading to cover the cost of exporting wheat to Tasmania. These cash costs which will be declared in October next, consist of labour, contracts, electricity, petroleum products, fertiliser, seed, repairs, cornsacks and twine, chemicals, cartage, rates and taxes, insurance, motor registration, interest paid, miscellaneous and any movements in rail freight and handling costs. I understand a survey has been undertaken by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the data received based on a notional mid term figure as at the end of 1970-71 indicated a base price of indexing forward should be the figure of \$1.91.7 already quoted. In this figure, the owner-operators allowance was established at \$2,639 per annum, with the relative weighting being given to the wheat farming enterprise. But the owner-operators allowance has only been used in establishing this assessed price structure and is not to be part of the indexing forward for this year. We take umbrage at this. We want the Minister to assure us, not in glib hackneyed tones which seek to dodge the point and cloud the issue like the Minister in another place whom he represents, but we want a solemn undertaking that for indexing forward

for the year 1975-76 an allowance will be made for the owner-operators allowance. We want to know how it will be included as an item. Will it be under the cash costs or a separate item? We want the Minister to tell us. We do not want waffling. We want facts and we want the truth. In these days too, when the owner-operator is not only labourer, but also scientist, economist, and philosopher it is submitted that it would be far more appropriate—certainly more just—to apportion this allowance as between a factor of labour and a factor of management, with the allowance being based on a similar award and not just a labour only basis. We object to the owner-operators allowance being constant. It must vary each year in line with other wage increases. We will not stand idly by while the quality of Australian rural life deteriorates and the farmers are banished by a hostile Labor Government to economic wilderness. Surely the Government is not so blind as to be unable to see that this is not only economic madness but it is also economic blindness. I want to point out that if the owner-operators allowance had been a variable and not a fixed term item in the year 1971-72, the home consumption price would have been increased by 1.16c per bushel and in 1972-73 by another 1.73c in addition. And it would have been just—a return of increase in the economic bloodstream to where it belonged, to its rightful owner, the farmer, and it would have had very little effect on the price of bread.

The Government starts off this scheme backed by grower's money, \$48.2m. The worst possible draw on the people's fund will be \$80m, but this is unlikely to happen. But remember that the industry is already subsidising the population this year by \$107.865m. The Government contribution to stabilisation should be by way of grants as provided previously, not loans. The Government is so guarded that it requires payment to it of any surplus accruing from time to time forthwith, and will not allow the scheme to be finalised at the end of the term. What a petty outlook. If it was not so important, one could almost laugh at the Government's telegraphed poisonous views on rural people and people who depend on rural industry.

There are some changes in the wording of the legislation on which I invite the Minister's comments, either now or in the Committee stage. First I refer to clause 11, sub-clauses (1), (2) (a) and (2) (b), which differ from the relative section 10 in the previous Act. There is a change in wording, emphasis and format. What sinister reasoning is behind the inclusion of the words 'reason of misbehaviour' and the changing of the

word 'may' to 'shall' in sub-clause (2). This is obviously socialised centralistic control. No longer is the Minister to have a discretion as to what he shall do as the clause dictates. Obviously this is a reflection of left wing control in Caucus. The Minister is being told what he is to do. He is not strong enough to resist. He is letting the industry down and is recreant to his responsibilities. Will the Minister tell us what 'mischievous behaviour' is? Will a member be removed because he will not accept a bad directive from the Government? Will he be able to defend himself or will he be summarily ejected? I want to protest also at the sense of Government control that permeates the legislation. I want the Minister to tell us that the Government will not remove decent members of the Australian Wheat Board from the positions to which they have been elected by rank and file wheat growers and replace them with Al Grassby, Jack Egerton, Bob Hawke and even Jack Mundey or Halfpenny. We want the Minister to tell us what he means when he says that a member of the Australian Wheat Board can be removed for 'mischievous behaviour'.

Mr Killen—They think wheat grows on a vine.

Mr McVEIGH—I am very grateful to the honourable member for Moreton who says that members of the Labor Party think that wheat grows on a vine. They will even have it growing on trees soon. Why was the clause 15 (2) removed from the present Act? Why is it not spelt out accurately and without equivocation that personnel employed by the Board are not members of the Public Service? Is the Government trying to create a situation where it wants to dictate to the Australian Wheat Board whom it is to employ and whom it is to sack? Previously it was spelt out quite specifically that members of the Australian Wheat Board were not members of the Public Service. My electors in Darling Downs have asked me to protest about the most despicable action of the Government in employing unqualified people in certain positions. Surely the Australian Wheat Board is entitled to be master of its own destiny, captain of its own crew, as to whom it employs or does not employ? Why should it have to advertise throughout Australia from among the Public Service? I want the Minister to assure us that a mistake has been made in omitting this clause from the legislation.

We want to ask: When a directive is issued by the Minister for wheat to be sold on terms as in instrument of foreign policy, will the Minister assure us that the Government will meet all expenses including forward exchange cover at present costing 4½ per cent. Will the Government pay the loss due to interest which cannot be

expected to match the present all time high rate charged by the Rural Credits Department of the Reserve Bank on overdraft from the Board? This increased interest rate in itself will cost the wheat grower many thousands of dollars in an ordinary year. Will the Government, when it is using the wheat industry as an instrument of foreign policy, pick up the bill for increased storage and handling charges? Its actions give us no reason for confidence. Rather, they give us increasing cause for concern. We do not trust the word of the Government. We want these things down on paper where they cannot be erased and by which the Government can be brought to judgement. The honourable member for Eden-Monaro (Mr Whan) was easily torpedoed by the honourable member for Wimmera when he said: 'We have increased the first advance to \$1.20. The Government is kicking us in the teeth when we are down by increasing interest on overdraft and with inflation running at a record level, as reported in today's Press, of 20 per cent. What utter hypocrisy the Government has put forward in this debate.'

I ask: What type of Minister have we? Is it not about time that he grasped the nettle and stood up and was counted? He is a prisoner of the Treasurer. I refer to clause 35, sub-clause (2) (c) and clause 36 sub-clause (2). In the old legislation the only power the Treasurer had was to approve of a bank but now the Minister is subservient to the Treasurer. He cannot even handle

his own portfolio. The wheat industry is not a mechanical toy to be wound up or used in a game of tug-of-war with the Minister who is obviously being sawn off at the knees for having the effrontery to support Whitlam and to challenge the left wing machine. He was cleaned up and now he is letting the industry down. He will not fight for us. Can anyone imagine the great fighters for rural industry—my leaders the Right Honourable J. D. Anthony and the Honourable I. Sinclair—allowing themselves to be dictated to by Treasury or allowing Treasury to interfere in their departments? In good old dinky-di Australian language of the bush that just would not be on. But the present Minister is pushed around. He is merely a piece of flotsam gathering moss. The honourable member for Wakefield (Mr Kelly) said: 'They are statesmen'. We have only an apology now.

The final point I want to canvass is costs. I have a list showing the increases in wages paid to employees of the State Wheat Board of Queensland from 22 December 1969 to 1 July 1974. I seek the leave of the House to have that list incorporated in Hansard.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Scholes)—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

(The document read as follows)—

(The table will be published in the weekly edition of Hansard.)

STATE WHEAT BOARD AWARD

Rates of Wages

	22.12.69	5.10.70	20.12.71	29.5.72	29.5.73	8.10.73	1.7.74
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Classifier	52.36	56.54	60.89				
Classifier I/C of 6 or more	69.59	73.37	89.00	108.60
Classifier I/C of 5 or less				67.09	70.82	84.50	104.10
Assistant Classifier	45.82	49.48	53.40	58.40	61.95	73.50	93.10
Senior Terminal Operator	52.36	56.54	60.89	67.09	70.82	84.50	104.10
Terminal Operator	48.55	52.45	56.55	61.55	65.17	77.00	96.60
Assistant Terminal Operator	47.01	50.77	54.77	59.77	63.35	74.00	93.60
Stacker	47.01	50.77	54.77	59.77	63.35	74.00	93.60
Silo Attendant	47.01	50.77	54.77	59.77	63.35	74.00	93.60
Assistant Silo Attendant	44.23	47.76	51.58	56.58	60.10	68.70	88.30
Labourer	42.80	45.31	48.98	53.98	57.44	65.00	84.60

Mr McVEIGH—How can one control costs at this rate? This is still an industry where much labour is employed. It is good labour. I commend all the employees of the Australian Wheat Board and the Queensland Wheat Board for their loyalty to the industry, for their wholehearted approach of a fair day's work for a fair day's pay

and for their freedom from strikes and stoppages. But they are the victims of the savage economic proposals of this Government. The cost of standard storage construction in Queensland has increased from \$135,000 4 years ago to a staggering \$218,000 now. This is an increase of 61 per cent. How can we contain costs? Will not the stevedores co-operate? By

senseless stoppages they recently cost the flour industry in this country \$200,000 through demurrage. As my friends the honourable member for Wimmera, the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party, the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair) and the honourable member for Moore (Mr Hyde) stated, the stevedores through their scurrilous activity and completely irresponsible attitude denied the Australian wheat farmer a second advance which should have been paid about a month ago.

Mr Lucock—They nearly ruined the poultry industry too.

Mr McVEIGH—As my friend the honourable member for Lyne says, they not only ruined the Australian rural industries but also refused to allow the Australian housewife to have eggs on her breakfast table. They denied Australian children access to this very beneficial food. There must be a national reawakening of conscience if costs are to be brought under control. No wonder there is an annual increase of 3c a bushel in handling costs. There does need to be co-operation with the work force. Only last week the Australian Wheat Board issued a statement drawing attention to the situation which had developed following industrial unrest and curtailment of shipping. My final point is that Australia could lose sales on account of insect damage and presence. These sales are endangered at the present time. We are reminded of the Minister's inability to persuade his academically orientated Caucus and Cabinet colleagues of the seriousness of the situation. His actions, like so many of his statements, give positive proof that his promises are like snow in the midday sun—they glitter but they melt away.

The industry and the State governments were prepared to help to eradicate this serious insect problem provided there was matching Commonwealth finance. But rural Australia was once again sideswiped into oblivion when it mattered. I hope that sense will prevail and that the academics will not hide behind a wall of arrogance but will realise that our whole industry could be threatened because of resistance of live insects to present chemicals. I want to endorse the remarks of the honourable member for Moore (Mr Hyde). He appealed to everyone associated with the wheat industry to make sure they put forward an absolutely top quality product. The world is crying out for supplies of foodstuffs and essential eating materials. I think this was outlined in very great detail by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party.

Never before have the Australian wheat growers been let down so badly. As my Deputy Leader says, we have not got a stabilisation scheme; what we have got is an equalisation plan wherein the Government will contribute virtually nothing and the Australian wheat growers will be forced to accept in the base year as the equalised price—not a stabilised price—a sum of \$2 which, in effect, is roughly only two-thirds of the price that they could obtain on the world market. This base of \$2 in the base year will have an effect in future years because of the formula that has been adopted.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Scholes)—Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Question put:

That the words proposed to be omitted (Mr Sinclair's amendment) stand part of the question.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

Ayes	60
Noes	48
Majority	12

AYES NOES

Armitage, J. L.	Adermann, A. E.
Barnard, L. H.	Anthony, J. D.
Beazley, K. E.	Bonnett, R. N.
Bennett, A. F.	Bourchier, J. W.
Berinson, J. M.	Bungey, M. H.
Bowen, Lionel	Cadman, A. G.
Bryant, G. M.	Cairns, Kevin
Cairns, J. F.	Calder, S. E.
Cameron, Street, A. A.	Connelly, D. M.
Cass, M. H.	Drummond, P. H.
Child, G. J. L.	Drury, E. N.
Clayton, G.	Edwards, H. R.
Coates, J.	Ellicott, R. J.
Cohen, B.	Erwin, G. D.
Collard, F. W.	Fairbairn, D. E.
Connor, R. F. X.	Fisher, P. S.
Cross, M. D.	Forbes, A. J.
Daly, F. M.	Fraser, Malcolm
Davies, R.	Giles, G. O'H.
Dawkins, J. S.	Graham, B. W.
Duthie, G. W. A.	Hodges, J. C.
Enderby, K. E.	Holten, R. McN.
Eveningham, D. N.	Howard, J. W.
FitzPatrick, J.	Hunt, R. J. D.
Fulton, W. J.	Hyde, J. M.
Garrick, H. J.	Kelly, C. R.
Gun, R. T.	Killen, D. J.
Hayden, W. G.	King, R. S.
Hurford, C. J.	Lloyd, B.
Innes, U. E.	Lucock, P. E.
Jacobi, R.	Lusher, S. A.
Jenkins, H. A.	Lynch, P. R.
Johnson, Keith	MacKellar, M. J. R.
Johnson, Les	McLeay, J. E.
Keating, P. J.	McVeigh, D. T.
Keogh, L. J.	Macphee, I. M.
Kerin, J. C.	Millar, P. C.
Klugman, R. E.	Nixon, P. J.
Lamb, A. H.	O'Keefe, F. L.
McKenzie, D. C.	Robinson, Eric
Martin, V. J.	Ruddock, P. M.

AYES

Mathews, C. R. T.
Morris, P. F.
Morrison, W. L.
Mulder, A. W.
Oldmeadow, M. W.
Patterson, R. A.
Reynolds, L. J.
Riordan, J. M.
Scholes, G. G. D.
Sherry, R. H.
Stewart, F. E.
Thorburn, R. W.
Uren, T.
Wallis, L. G.
Whan, R. B.
Willis, R.
Young, M. J.

Tellers:
James, A. W.
Nicholls, M. H.

NOES

Sinclair, I. McC.
Street, A. A.
Sullivan, J. W.
Wentworth, W. C.
Wilson, L. B. C.

Tellers:
Cameron, Donald
Robinson, Ian

PAIRS

Jones, Charles
Luchetti, A. S.
Fry, K. L.
Whitlam, E. G.

England, J. A.
Chipp, D. L.
Garland, R. V.
Snedden, B. M.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Original question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Message from the Governor-General recommending appropriation announced.

In Committee

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

This Act shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by Proclamation.

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory) (10.1)—I wish to move an amendment to clause 2 on behalf of the Government. Honourable members will recall the recent announcement by the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt) that the Government had carried out an examination to see what could be done to assist the Australian Wheat Board to make progress payments on the 1973-74 season's wheat pool as early as possible. As a result, the Minister said that the Government intended to seek the early passage of the Bill that we are examining at present. Clause 36 of the Bill provides for the Wheat Board to have the power to borrow commercially. Such borrowings could be used, if necessary, to enable the Board to meet the scheduled payments. To ensure that this borrowing power is available at the earliest opportunity, I move:

Omit 'a date to be fixed by Proclamation', insert 'the day on which it receives the Royal Assent'.

The amendment seeks to provide that the Act shall operate from the date of royal assent rather than a date to be fixed by proclamation.

Mr SINCLAIR (New England) (10.2)—The Opposition does not object to this amendment. But, in indicating our acceptance of it, let me say that we trust that the purpose of the amendment is as simple as it is expressed to be. We on this side of the Committee feel that the Government has been completely neglectful of its responsibility to ensure that the Australian Wheat Board in this instance was able to proceed with the delivery of wheat through the terminals and the shipping facilities that traditionally have been the outlets for that product. If the expeditious passage of the Bill is designed so that the Government can avoid its responsibility to settle industrial disputes and to maintain the free flow of trade, I believe that that issue needs to be considered as well as the far more plausible reason which the Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory (Dr Patterson) has enunciated.

It is true that the passage of this Bill will enable the Australian Wheat Board to exercise the additional powers which it is to be given in accordance with the extended provisions of clause 36 of the Bill. But the Opposition is concerned that this extension of power should not be used by the Government purely to avoid its responsibility to maintain the free flow of trade. For that reason, this amendment is acceptable only if it is for the purpose of exercising the legitimate borrowing power and is not being proposed because the Government seeks to avoid its responsibility.

In fact, my comments pertain more to clause 36 than to the introduction of the provisions of this Bill at the earlier date. But, because the reason given by the Minister relates to powers expressed in clause 36, I think it is necessary that the Committee consider the implications of the early passage of the Bill. I trust that, in presenting the argument that he has presented tonight, the Minister will accept the proposition that the power to borrow commercially should not be used by the Government as a device to avoid its responsibility to maintain the availability of fuel to enable trains to move the grain from the inland terminals to the ports, its responsibility to keep ships handling cargoes which have been presold and on which letters of credit have been received and to ensure that industrial disruption does not prevent vessels in port from loading their cargoes, or the Government's responsibility to keep the commodity flowing in the way that it should flow and in areas in which the Government has a responsibility so to do. For that

reason, the Opposition has reservations about the reasons that the Minister advances, but accepts the amendment that he has moved.

Mr McVEIGH (Darling Downs) (10.5)—I support the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party (Mr Sinclair) and state for the record that the Australian Country Party and the other Opposition members fully support getting out advances to the Australian wheat growers as soon as possible. What we are opposed to is creating an environment wherein irresponsible trade unions, feather-bedded by a government—

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—I would suggest that the honourable gentleman speak to the clause under consideration.

Mr McVEIGH—I am just developing the point—

The CHAIRMAN—Having given the Deputy Leader of the Country Party fair leeway, I point out to the honourable member that the clause deals only with an alteration from the date of proclamation to the date of royal assent. We are not in a second reading debate; it is a committee debate and that is all that is before the Committee. The reasons for the alteration which were given by the Minister do not allow for a very extended debate.

Mr McVEIGH—Thank you, Mr Chairman. There was so much chatter in the chamber at the time that it was difficult for us up here to understand what was going on. The Deputy Leader of the Country Party made a fleeting reference to clause 36 (2) and I thought that that must have been the clause we were discussing. I want to emphasise that the reason for having to speed the legislative process is the tardiness of the Australian Government in putting through this legislation which has lain on the table, as it were, for 3 months and 2 days. We object to that tardiness up to the present time but we do support this speedy assent in order to allow the Australian farmers to get the advantage which is justly due to them and which was promised to them.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 24—by leave—taken together.

Mr McVEIGH (Darling Downs) (10.7)—In respect of clause 8 I want to make a few brief comments.

Mr Clyde Cameron—Make them very brief.

Mr McVEIGH—Having listened to my good friend the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) sickening us on many

occasions, I trust that he will have the decency to listen and so learn something about one of our very great rural industries, about which he knows nothing and cares less. I refer to clause 8. We are concerned at recent statements by the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt) that he is going to end the Country Party hold on boards. The Minister made it clear that he was going to dismantle Country Party dominated commodity boards. We want an assurance from the Minister that the personnel of the Australian Wheat Board, as provided for in clause 8, will remain the same as it has been since the inception of the Board. That is to say, the growers of the commodity, who in the final analysis are the owners of the commodity, elect to that Board people whom they deem fit to be elected as their representatives. We are totally opposed to the proposition that a Minister sitting in another place can dismiss summarily people elected by the industry and have them replaced with some second-hand petty trade union official. We want the assurance of the Minister that the people who own the wheat will still elect their own representatives.

Mr KING (Wimmera) (10.10)—The honourable member for Darling Downs (Mr McVeigh) has made a legitimate request to the Minister, but it appears that the Minister is not even going to attempt to reply. I appeal to him to give the honourable member for Darling Downs an assurance in relation to the matter he raised in clause 8. Surely we can get some sort of assurance from the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture. If we cannot get that assurance as members of the Opposition where do we go? Are we to be ignored by the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture? Will the Minister please give the member for Darling Downs an assurance in response to his request?

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory) (10.11)—I shall respond, in view of the insistence by the honourable member for Wimmera (Mr King). However, I would suggest that the honourable member read the second reading speech, which says that the Board will have the same membership as provided for in the existing legislation. This gives effect to the undertaking given to the industry in March this year. The Australian Government position is that whilst it is not prepared to tie its hands completely in respect of the composition of the Australian Wheat Board for the next 5 years, the legislation for the new stabilisation plan provides for a continuation of the present composition of the Board and there is no present intention to

change the legislation to alter that composition during the 5-year period. It is unlikely that the Government would be giving consideration to this matter within the next 2 to 3 years, and any proposals for change which might then be initiated will be fully discussed with the industry and with State Ministers of Agriculture at, of course, the Australian Agricultural Council. It should be added that the Labor Party platform, in providing for adequate representation for primary producers on all boards effecting the handling and marketing of their products, does not preclude a majority of elected growers' representatives on such boards.

Mr McVEIGH (Darling Downs) (10.12)—Representatives of the industry have asked me to ascertain from the Minister a definition of the word 'misbehaviour' in clause 11 (1). This word is included in the legislation but did not appear in the previous legislation. Men of great honesty and integrity who have the confidence of their industry are concerned that a further word has been included without a clear definition of its meaning or information on the premise on or the reason for which the Minister may terminate the appointment of a member of a Board by reason of misbehaviour. On behalf of those gentlemen, I want to know what is the strict definition of the word 'misbehaviour' so that these men can have confidence in the future. In a responsible organisation there is nothing worse than having the men in control of that organisation fearful of being regarded publicly as scoundrels because they have seen fit, in the interests of the people they represent, to oppose an irresponsible direction that could be given by a Minister. It is not beyond the realms of possibility that the Minister may direct a sale to be made on other than commercial terms and prices for the sake of domestic or foreign policy. He may direct that certain types of wheat shall be sold at certain prices. He may direct that the milling trade is to get wheat at a lower price to serve certain people. The Australian Wheat Board could be forced to give wheat which belongs to the growers to overseas countries at the expense of the growers. In that instance, if a member of the Wheat Board stuck to his guns, exercised the sacred trust that had been placed in him and disapproved of the action and direction of the Minister, he could be summarily ejected. I ask the Minister now to define the word 'misbehaviour' and state on what grounds a Minister may terminate the appointment of a responsibly elected member of the Australian Wheat Board.

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the

Northern Territory) (10.15)—The word 'misbehaviour' is not something which just happens to be used in this Bill. If the honourable member had read other Acts he would know that it is a common term used in practically all the Acts dealing with statutory boards.

Clauses agreed to.

Clause 25.

(3) The pool for a quota season (in this sub-section referred to as 'the relevant season') consists of the following wheat delivered to the Board (whether in pursuance of this Act or of a law of a State)—

- (a) wheat which is quota wheat in relation to the relevant season; and
- (b) any other wheat of the relevant season delivered in the relevant season, or any wheat of an earlier quota season that was not included in a pool for an earlier season, that is declared by the Board to have been sold by the Board, by way of export sale or sale for export, at a premium on the price of Australian standard white wheat, and paid for in full, during the relevant season.

(4) The pool for a season that is not a quota season but immediately follows a quota season consists of the following wheat delivered to the Board (whether in pursuance of this Act or of a law of a State)—

- (a) wheat of that season; and
- (b) wheat of an earlier season, being a quota season, that was not included in the pool for an earlier season.

(5) The Board may, in such manner as it considers equitable, for the purposes of a declaration under paragraph (3) (b), attribute sales of wheat of a particular kind to all or any of the wheat of that particular kind delivered by particular persons.

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory) (10.16)—Since the Bill was introduced last July it has become apparent that there is a deficiency in this clause, in that it does not authorise the Board to account for the sales proceeds of certain non-quota wheat. Accordingly, I seek to move the 2 amendments together.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

Dr PATTERSON—I move:

In sub-clause (3), omit paragraphs (a) and (b) and substitute the following paragraphs:—

- '(a) wheat which is quota wheat in relation to the relevant season;
 - (b) any other wheat of the relevant season or of an earlier quota season delivered in the relevant season that is declared by the Board to have been sold by the Board, by way of export sale or sale for export, at a premium on the price of Australian standard white wheat, and paid for in full, during the relevant season; and
 - (c) any other wheat, being wheat of an earlier quota season, that—
- (i) was delivered to the Board before the relevant season;

- (ii) was not included in the pool for a season before the relevant season; and
- (iii) is declared by the Board to have been sold by the Board, and paid for in full, before or during the relevant season.'

In sub-clause (5), after 'paragraph (3) (b)' insert 'or (c)'.

The amendments will ensure that all non-quota wheat delivered to the Board is ultimately included in a pool for a season. However, the only non-quota wheat which will be included in the pool for the season in which it is grown is wheat sold for export at a premium during that season.

Mr SINCLAIR (New England) (10.17)—The Opposition supports the amendments. I can understand the reasons for the request and I know something of the background to it. The only comment that I would make is that it seems to us that it would perhaps be preferable if, instead of referring only to premium wheat which is sold on the basis of being non-quota wheat but being readily saleable, the amendments were rephrased so that all wheat which is readily saleable could be included. It is true that generally premium wheat is the category of wheat which can more readily find export markets, but in the climate of world demand which has been so variable in the last few years and with the expected increase in demand for feed grains it is possible that some of the lower grades of wheat—second grade wheat and some of the soft wheats—could all be readily saleable in a particular year.

While in the present market circumstances no quotas are to be applied, we are really talking to a degree about an academic subject. I believe that it is still necessary, if these amendments are to be passed, that the whole of the context within which readily saleable wheats need to be included within a quota year for the purpose which these amendments embrace should be considered. It is the Opposition's view that, whilst accepting these amendments, there would be an advantage if their ambit were extended. Whilst I do not expect the Minister for Northern Development (Dr Patterson) at this stage to accept the suggestion I trust that he will bring it to the attention of his colleague in another place and consider whether the amendments might be broadened so that not only premium wheat but all wheats which might be readily saleable in a quota year and which are in excess of the quota might be included.

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory) (10.18)—Naturally at this stage I am not prepared to accept the suggestion

but, from listening to the arguments that the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair) has put forward, I can certainly see the logic in it. I assure him that I will bring those arguments to the notice of the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt).

Amendments agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Remainder of Bill—by leave—taken as a whole.

Mr SINCLAIR (New England) (10.19)—I wanted to comment on a couple of aspects of this Bill. I do not want to repeat the second reading speech as I know that we are running out of time. In the course of my speech on the second reading of the Bill I asked the Minister for Northern Development (Dr Patterson) for an assurance that the owner-operators allowance as it is now set, being based on some 1968 figures, should be reviewed as early as possible. I would hope that the Minister would give that assurance.

It seems to me that the 1968 award is hardly a valid criterion on which to base the value of an owner-operator's personal exertion in a year when inflation is running away with costs. We all are aware that inflation generally has eroded returns in other sectors of the economy with a consequential impact on wage and salary scales. For this particular rate to be a 1968 rate makes the whole of the assessment of the owner-operators allowance as the basis for the home consumption price quite incongruous. We have, in fact, been asked by some States to consider a formal amendment. At this stage because of the statement I made earlier in the evening that we were concerned with the early passage of the Bill, we do not intend to go to that length. But I would hope that the Minister might be able to give me an assurance that there will be an early revision of this owner-operators allowance.

The other part of the legislation to which I wanted briefly to refer is the concept of the repayment of contributions from the industry during the term of the agreement. It is true that at the moment the nature of grain markets around the world will certainly ensure the profitability of the wheat industry. I believe that as a result we should be doing all we can to encourage the production of grain. It is one of the few agricultural industries where there is any chance at all of profitability. The chances, of course, will be prejudiced by the degree to which this Government incites inflation and fails to keep costs under some form of reasonable control. Within the phrasing of these provisions—the repayment

during the course of the agreement and the limitation on the Government's contribution—there are inbuilt detractions for producers to grow wheat in future seasons. It is true that this year and probably next year—and, one would hope, the year after—that that particular attitude might not prevail. But if there should be in 3 or 4 years time a build-up in world grain stocks, one would not want to see the problems of repayment and would not want the wheat grower to be prejudiced because of the operations of this wheat industry equalisation scheme. We do not want to deter him from producing grain. I do not expect the clauses to be changed. I understand the Government has taken a firm position on it. But the Opposition expresses its concern that the particular method of repayment during the course of the agreement and the manner in which the whole of the stabilisation scheme is phrased will be an inhibiting factor for future grain production. We think that it is most unfortunate.

I believe, in addition, it is regrettable that there has been no reference to production of other grains or even consideration of alternative forms of agriculture in the consideration of this wheat stabilisation agreement. I recognise why this is so. But I repeat again that within the ambit of the clauses in this Bill to which we are now addressing our attention, there should obviously be an attraction for producers to grow wheat. The attraction is not as great as it was and it is not as great as it should be. In Australian agriculture it is essentially not only a matter of producing one grain but also, for the future, of producing whatever is going to be profitable. I regret that within the context of these particular clauses there is no reference to any other commodity nor even a consideration of them in the conclusion of the agreement. It is true that it would not be practicable to have them included in this scheme. But regrettably, they were not even discussed, as I understand it, in the run-up to the phrasing of these particular clauses. I would hope that the Minister might be able to give me some assurance with respect to the change in the owner-operator's allowance by, at the latest, 1975.

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory) (10.24)—I note the second point made by the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair). In relation to the owner-operators allowance, I think the honourable member would be aware that the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt) has advised the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation that he is prepared to have the matter re-examined next

year in time for a decision to be taken as to whether the matter might be adjusted for the commencement of the 1975-76 season. The Federation is apparently content with that undertaking. I might say to the honourable member, however, that I personally have some sympathy for this because, relying on my memory, I have a feeling that in 1968 I moved an amendment on behalf of the Labor Party when it was on the other side of the House that the owner-operators allowance be included in the regimen of costs, for assessing movements in costs to ascertain a new home consumption price.

Mr King—Just stick to your guns.

Dr PATTERSON—Never mind about sticking to my guns. As a member of the government the honourable member opposed my amendment. Now the position is reversed and the present Opposition wants to move perhaps the same amendment for the same reason, and, as a member of the Government, I am opposing it. I think the position is completely reversed, but perhaps our arguments may be right. What we may have to do is convince the Treasury that there are economic arguments which support the inclusion of the owner-operator allowance. On the other hand, there are arguments that other people have put forward which the Government has accepted to the degree that the owner-operators allowance will not be included in the indexation.

The point I would like to make to the honourable member for New England is that I think he and I are in basic agreement, and I think most honourable members would agree, that when we have a high rate of inflation it is difficult to accept that productivity can absorb the rate of inflation with respect to the indexing forward of specific costs and the omission of others. This is a technical argument. I think I have argued in exactly the same way in which the present Opposition would argue. The only difference is that I argued it 6 years ago. If my memory is right, I moved an amendment accordingly. The whole position is reversed. However, the undertaking has been given by the Minister for Agriculture.

Mr McVEIGH (Darling Downs) (10.27)—I want to make one brief comment in relation to clause 29 (4).

Mr Nicholls—One minute.

Mr McVEIGH—Who is talking? I want to place it on record that the stabilisation price of \$73.49 per tonne is to many Australian wheat growers far too low when we realise that the expected return from last year's crop is \$2.35 per

bushel. The maximum contribution to the stabilisation scheme by the growers will be 15c per bushel. It would appear to us that a more realistic stabilisation price would have been \$2.20 per bushel.

Remainder of Bill agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments; report—by leave—adopted.

Third Reading

Bill (on motion by Dr Patterson)—by leave—read a third time.

WHEAT PRODUCTS EXPORT ADJUSTMENT BILL 1974

Second Reading

Consideration resumed from 17 July (vide page 294), on motion by Dr Patterson:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Bill (on motion by Dr Patterson) read a third time.

WHEAT EXPORT CHARGE BILL 1974

Second Reading

Consideration resumed from 17 July (vide page 295), on motion by Dr Paterson:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Bill (on motion by Dr Patterson) read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

Family Welfare Bureau—Australian Industry—Unemployment—Steel—Electoral

Mr SPEAKER—Order! It being 10.30 p.m., in accordance with the order of the House of 11 July I propose the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr RUDDOCK (Parramatta) (10.30)—Yesterday the Family Welfare Bureau in New South Wales had its annual meeting and closed its doors. I regard the closing down of the Bureau, a voluntary social welfare organisation in New

South Wales, as a national disgrace. This organisation functioned in New South Wales after its formation during the last war. It was formed to provide welfare for ex-servicemen and their dependants. After the war its objectives and functions changed. It operated in Sydney in the area of Surry Hills, with a branch office in my electorate of Parramatta, with a number of valuable social workers. It performed invaluable tasks that were respected by the people able to use the facilities it offered and who were able to be attended by its social workers. Now all the social workers have been dismissed. There are 2 people remaining on the staff until the end of September to deal with the remaining administrative matters concerning this organisation. It operated in the areas of Surry Hills and Parramatta and advised on matters of marriage guidance and matters relating to immigrants. It had a number of special projects of an intimate nature, including a special study of migrants in car plants and their work in those plants. It also was undertaking a special study in relation to child care in the Surry Hills area. Numbers of students, particularly those in the social work departments of the University of Sydney and the University of New South Wales, undertook practical training with this organisation and gained a great deal of benefit from it. It was the only remaining non-sectarian private voluntary organisation in this field in Sydney, and it has closed its doors.

I have a short table that I have copied out of the report on the income and expenditure of this organisation. In 1969 the income it received amounted to \$34,683 and its expenditure was \$28,134. It had a surplus that year of \$6,549. In 1973 its income had risen to \$56,671 and its expenditure was \$57,161. It had a deficit of \$490. For the last financial year, 1973-74, its income was \$62,487 and its expenditure was \$65,155. It suffered a deficit of \$2,668. It was envisaged that in this financial year, 1974-75, on its budget its income still would be in the area of \$60,000 but its expenditure would rise to \$76,000. In these circumstances this organisation felt that it could no longer continue.

The Family Welfare Bureau in fact did receive grants from numbers of Government departments. It received from the Attorney-General's Department a grant of some \$14,800 for its marriage guidance work and from the former Department of Immigration it received \$9,452. From the New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services it received a separate grant of \$5,500. A total of \$29,752 was contributed this year by the two governments and some \$30,000 was raised by volunteers for

the maintenance of this organisation. That is a princely sum raised by the efforts of hard-working, sincere people. It is a sum which in the social welfare field I believe we cannot afford to lose.

As I said, only recently the organisation employed 6 social workers. More recently it had only five, but this was because of particular circumstances. One of the social workers, as I mentioned, was working in my own electorate. Now that this organisation has closed it has assets remaining of \$13,000 cash. That money will be handed to the Smith Family to enable it to continue with its work. What are the reasons for the closure of this organisation? I know it may seem trite, but the figures I have read out clearly demonstrate that increasing costs have contributed to the closure of this voluntary organisation—inflation, in another word. Inflation has meant that its expected income from donations was likely to decrease. One of its major fund raising activities was the sale of Christmas cards. One of the things the organisation feared before it closed was that postage charges would rise and that in the rush by people to cut their own personal budget the sale of Christmas cards would fall. This organisation was afraid that the income it would raise from this method would fall.

Finally it was hit with the abandonment this year of the Waratah Spring Festival, which meant that the art competition it invariably held was no longer available as a source of revenue for this year in particular. It was quite clear that in these times the deficit from which this organisation would suffer would grow, and it could see no source of income it would be able to substitute for that it lost. It approached the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) months ago and asked him whether a voluntary organisation of this sort would be able to appreciate in the Australian assistance plan and perhaps benefit from some grants in that area. However, as we all know, it is not expected that grants of any real value will flow to voluntary organisations of this sort for a number of years because of the way in which this plan is proceeding, perhaps quite properly in terms of the way in which governments act and the way in which the Government may wish to postpone expenditure in very important areas.

I know from my own involvement in the Provisional Committee in Parramatta that the social worker from the Family Welfare Bureau was endeavouring to assist in the promotion of that plan in the Parramatta district with a view to participation in it. Similar work had been done in

the inner city area to endeavour to obtain support through the Australian assistance plan, but quite clearly there was no prospect of assistance in the short term that would enable this organisation to maintain itself. Some \$20,000 would have been necessary for it to continue and to meet the prospective deficit that the organisers saw. They contacted the Minister for Social Security when the situation became desperate, and they sought assistance from the Government to enable the organisation to continue its important tasks. Although the late Mrs Henry, who I understand was one of the senior officers in the department in Sydney, discussed these matters at length with the senior officers of the Family Welfare Bureau, no means could be found whereby money could be made available for social workers to be maintained in their present positions and for this valuable organisation to be able to continue to exist.

It may well be in the plan of this Government that voluntary organisations should be done away with and should be seen as being no longer important in the plan of things for providing and meeting welfare needs. If that is so, I suppose that the rather callous view that no moneys can be made available to get this organisation out of its situation is the proper view to be taken. Certainly I consider that that is the view of the Government when I see a situation such as that I have described. This organisation is closed. It cannot be revived. It may well be that other organisations will go the same way. Voluntary organisations are important. They provide a difference in the style of things in providing welfare needs. This difference is important in developing programs that might be able to accommodate problems that a rather fixed government style might not be able to handle. Mr Speaker, I believe it is a national disgrace that the Government failed to act to prevent the closure of this organisation—one that I suspect functioned in your electorate as well as mine.

Mr ENDERBY (Canberra—Minister for Manufacturing Industry) (10.40)—I rise during this adjournment debate to raise certain matters which were dealt with during the week in earlier adjournment debates and which call for an answer. On Tuesday night the honourable member for Bendigo (Mr Bourchier) raised the question of the level of imports into the country. The matter has received considerable comment recently in the Press and from other honourable members. Honourable members will recall that last year the Government took certain action to reduce tariffs by 25 per cent, and it substantially revalued the exchange rates with regard to the

Australian dollar. Honourable members will recall also that these steps were taken at the time because of the inflationary impact that was then beginning to hit Australia and because of the universal assessment that the situation was a result of excess demand. One might attribute that excess demand to the failure of the previous Government to take action. But it happened some time ago and it is not proper to make the point again now. There was excess demand, and the problem was how to increase supply.

This series of steps was taken at that time to bring about an increase in imports. Of course, it was appreciated that certain beneficial forms of structural change to Australian industry might be brought about at that time as well. One must recall that at that time Australian reserves were at an unusually high level, and it must be emphasised that reserves are not something that, having been built up to record level, should be maintained indefinitely. If we are to steady down inflation we must make use of them. This does not mean of course that the Government will allow, or intends to allow, a flood of imports to damage Australian industry. The Government is acting responsibly to prevent undue disruption in that regard.

The honourable member for Bendigo raised the question of the effect on employment of imports and of our actions to alleviate the problems of 2 industries—the textile and apparel industries. I think he mentioned also the footwear industry. In the early months of this year the textile industry was enjoying relatively buoyant conditions—perhaps unusually buoyant conditions. Reservations were being expressed as to the long term prospects, because one knows that the industry has been in decline for many years. But there was not at that time any demonstrable injury being suffered from imports. As the year progressed the situation did, however, change.

Following complaints and investigation by the Department of Manufacturing Industry references were made to the Textile Authority, which the Government set up earlier this year, of the Industries Assistance Commission. Action was taken to contain imports of items of knitwear and woven apparel. Import licensing controls were introduced on imports from Taiwan. Similar controls were imposed yesterday on imports from Korea. The Textile Authority reported marked disruption from imports from Hong Kong, India and China, and export restraint arrangements have been negotiated with these countries. On 11 September 1974 a further reference was made to the Textile Authority on the question of whether action should be taken to

contain imports of wool and acrylic yarns, knitted fabrics and towels and towelling. Such action should of course be consistent with the GATT textile arrangement. I should mention also that references in respect of footwear have been made to the Temporary Assistance Authority.

The Department of Manufacturing Industry keeps, as is natural, an extremely close watch on developments in this ever-changing world, particularly where international trade, the patterns that emerge on textile and apparel imports, and the impact of imports in Australian industry are concerned. The Government will very promptly examine any case of the industry's markets being disrupted by imports to see whether a reference should be made to either the Temporary Assistance Authority or the Textile Authority if it is appropriate. In fact a number of such references are under consideration.

With regard to the other matter raised by the honourable member for Bendigo—unemployment in regional centres, non-metropolitan areas—honourable members will also be familiar with the actions taken by the Government. The membership of an interim Structural Adjustment Board has been announced. The national employment and retraining scheme has been announced and is getting under way. Apart from activities of that kind, a special working group of departments has been examining how the Government might provide special forms of assistance to relieve unemployment in country areas through assistance to particular firms which, because of some across the board action taken for the benefit of all Australians, are experiencing some disadvantage both at the owners' level—the management side—and the employees side so that hardship can be avoided and employment maintained. It is expected that the report from the Government's body will be received shortly. It is hoped that the Government will make a decision on it promptly. As honourable members may be aware from newspaper reports, two of the Government's Caucus committees are currently examining the implications of the current unemployment situation and the Government's job retraining scheme and industry assistance generally.

It must never be forgotten that imports play an extremely important part in our economy. They not only improve living standards by providing attractively priced goods for our people but also act as a spur to competition for our local industry. They can satisfy freedom of choice and they can be a very salutary instrument for containing the excessive pressures towards inflation that occur

in Australia and also come from outside Australia.

On a related matter—related in the sense that it was raised by the Opposition—the honourable member for Wimmera (Mr King) last night raised a number of questions concerning steel points and shortages of agricultural machinery. He went on to speculate on some reasons for those shortages. His theme was that shortages, including shortages of steel, were due to a lack of confidence by the industry concerned. That is a theme with which the Opposition seems to persist but which cannot be sustained. The facts are that demand for steel-using products is abnormally high at this time not only in Australia but also throughout the world. The major producer of steel points for agricultural machinery has reported a 60 per cent increase in production in the last 12 months alone. Recent surveys of manufacturing activity that have been conducted by the Department of Manufacturing Industry show orders in the major steel-using sectors of industry in the last year or so at levels well above normal. In some cases the orders are double the normal levels.

It is not reasonable to expect industry to gear itself instantly to substantial increases in demand, be it the industry making steel points, the steel industry itself or any other industry. In the short time available one should stop and be reminded of the troubles that some industries got themselves into by reacting or over-reacting to excessive demand last year and over-developing their capacity. As the demand levelled off they found that they had unused excess capacity that caused them very serious embarrassment and in some cases considerable hardship. Although I do not see it as a causal factor in the sense that the honourable member for Wimmera does, there has been a high level of world demand for steel. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd has, for several reasons, produced 7.7 million tonnes of steel this year—some 15 per cent below capacity. The Government has assisted in maintaining and increasing local supply by allowing by-law entry of some \$35m of special alloy steels of the types used in the manufacture of agricultural machinery. So we reject the concept or the notion that it is a lack of confidence in the steel industry that is producing the shortages.

Recently announced new investment figures for steel production also demonstrate and confirm the industry's confidence in the future. BHP has announced that it is seeking cost estimates for a major 3-stage expansion of its Newcastle steel works. That cost is estimated to be in the region of \$300m. Recently BHP announced,

with Government approval, that a \$1m feasibility study would be conducted on the establishment of a jumbo steel plant in Western Australia of a size that could be as great as to produce 10 million tonnes per annum. The program of investment clearly indicates that there is no lack of confidence as claimed by the honourable member.

Mr KEVIN CAIRNS (Lilley) (10.49)—I regret having to bring this matter forward in the Parliament, but I have made repeated efforts during 1973 and 1974 to finalise something which was brought forward in this place by the honourable member for Bowman (Mr Keogh), who has been informed that I was going to raise a matter relating to him. He said in this Parliament on 12 November 1973, as reported at page 3122 of Hansard:

He—

That is me, Kevin Cairns, whom he named—

abused every privilege that he had, including using an employee of the divisional returning officer for Lilley—a poor unfortunate woman whom he got hold of and on whom he used his vicious influence to get her to send out propaganda for him and to send out together with the ballot papers for the postal vote applicant a how-to-vote card for Kevin Cairns, the Liberal candidate for Lilley.

This was in relation to the election in 1972. He continued:

Who bore the brunt of the responsibility for what happened? Not Kevin Cairns. He knew nothing about it. He would not be a party to any malpractices in postal vote collections! No. He left it to the poor unfortunate woman who worked in the electoral office to bear the responsibility for actions taken on his behalf and on behalf of his organisation. They were the parties truly responsible for such a vicious and malicious political act. Can a sitting member for Parliament do anything lower than to send out how-to-vote cards through an electoral office in order to try to save one's political hide?

Any person reading that would realise that these are very serious allegations. They involve at least 3 people. They involve the electoral officer for the Division of Lilley in 1972; they involve a woman in that electoral office—and there are so few women in that electoral office that the woman referred to can almost be identified as one person; and they certainly involve me. Subsequent to this, through a firm of solicitors I made a request to the Commonwealth Electoral Officer for Queensland to carry out an investigation. A week later, on 19 November, a letter was written by Tully and Wilson, solicitors, to Mr Weise, the Commonwealth Electoral Officer for Queensland. I will not go through the whole letter, but this part is worth recording:

We therefore request on behalf of our client that you be so good as to make an investigation of the above statements,

and advise us in due course of your findings in respect of the following matters:—

- (a) Is there any evidence that one of your employees was coerced or influenced by our client, the then member for Lilley.
- (b) Is there any evidence that our client abused any of his privileges particularly in regard to the allegation of the mis-use of an officer of your Department.
- (c) Are you satisfied in your official capacity that the Lilley Poll was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

A letter was received from the Commonwealth Electoral Officer for Queensland, indicating that he would carry out an investigation. But he had to be prompted into doing it. A further letter was dispatched to him nearly 2 months later, on 22 January 1974. That letter concluded:

Would you be kind enough, as soon as convenient to let us have the results of your examination.

I will not read all of the letter. A further letter concerning this matter was sent on 13 February 1974. It asked how the investigation, which was to be carried out promptly, was going. It added:

Our client is willing to assist in any examination you are making by answering any questions you may wish to put to him concerning the allegation.

We must request therefore, that you be good enough to bring the matter to a determination as soon as possible.

All the initiative to carry out an investigation was taken on my behalf and at my instigation. Finally, a letter was received from the Commonwealth Electoral Officer for Queensland, Mr Weise. The second paragraph, which is at least quite indeterminate and vague, reads:

I am now able to inform you that upon receiving a complaint of a possible irregularity in postal voting procedures in connection with the 1972 Elections in the Lilley Division, the then Commonwealth Electoral Officer for Queensland notified the Superintendent of Commonwealth Police, Brisbane. The Commonwealth Police have been investigating the matter and have advised that the person responsible for including 'Election Pamphlets' with postal voting material addressed to a person in the Division has not yet been identified.

I regarded that as an unsatisfactory answer for myself and for the other 2 people who have been accused by the honourable member for Bowman. Consequently, I contacted, again through the firm of solicitors, the superintendent of the Commonwealth Police to whom investigation had been referred. Without reading the totality of the letter and reciting the events that led up to the sending of this letter on 25 March 1974—over 4 months subsequent to the original allegation being made—I will quote the last part of the letter. It reads:

By letter dated 14 March last, the Australian Electoral Officer informed us that the Commonwealth Police have been investigating the matter and have advised that the person responsible for including election pamphlets with postal voting material addressed to a person in the Division has not yet been identified. We wish to confirm that our client, Mr

Cairns, is willing to assist in any investigation of the allegation against him which is being made, by answering any questions you may wish to put to him concerning the allegation.

The Commonwealth Electoral Officer was, of course, informed that we had asked the Commonwealth Police to proceed with the investigation, as he had done. That is the last correspondence directed to this matter. But about 9 or 10 days before the double dissolution election on 18 May a sergeant of the Commonwealth Police, whom I do not intend to name, acting on behalf of the Superintendent, telephoned me and indicated that the Commonwealth Police had no evidence whatsoever in relation to this matter. I asked him to inform the Superintendent that we still awaited a reply to the letter which we had sent to him. He also indicated that neither I nor the person making the allegation had been interrogated. I wonder how an investigation can be made of an allegation without at least asking questions of that person who made the allegation. It still boggles my mind. Ten months later now, late September 1974, I have had no further communication and no further correspondence. It is not my intention to play politics with this matter but merely to bring forward to the Parliament the nature of events that have occurred. Anybody would agree, and I think anybody must agree, that a very serious allegation has been made. While I was out of this Parliament quite a precise allegation was made and it was done under privilege. It may have been thought that I would not return to this place, but events have decreed otherwise. So I make these comments: I believe the Commonwealth Electoral Officer for Queensland has erred in not seeking to clear the names at least of two of his employees who have been named publicly. The employees certainly appear not under their precise names in Hansard but they are easily identified. The integrity of his electoral officers needs to be defended and the integrity of a woman in that office needs to be clarified and, I believe, defended. Thirdly, I want to know how this matter can possibly be finalised without asking the accuser for the evidence on which he must have based those very serious allegations.

I believe that if a sincere mistake has been made and if it was made due to incorrect information, at least an apology is appropriate. An apology would be accepted and the matter would be left at that. I am not concerned to play politics in this matter or to pursue those who have made certain allegations. But if a person does this he should be man enough at least to admit an error if it has occurred. The honourable member for Bowman was informed that I would

raise something in relation to him and the honourable member for Bowman is not here. I do not know how his absence is to be regarded, but I leave to the sense of fairness and sense of integrity of honourable members how it ought to be regarded. But above all, if none of these people were involved, a public reference to their integrity and certainly to my integrity ought to be made. If that were made in terms of an apology—a simple apology without people eating humble pie or being embarrassed—it would be accepted. It is not my intention to scarify any person but merely to get at the truth. If nothing occurs I will continue with my representations to the Commonwealth Police at least to interrogate me and the honourable member for Bowman and to request him to bring forward the evidence on which he has made his most precise and what I regard as quite serious allegations. Anything

less than that, I believe, would be unsatisfactory and unbecoming a member of this Parliament.

Mr WENTWORTH (Mackellar) (10.59)—I would not have risen to speak except for an incident in the House today which I think I should draw to your attention, Mr Speaker. I spoke on the postal legislation and I informed the Leader of the House (Mr Daly) that I intended to speak for only 10 minutes. I did speak for longer than that but that was because I was interrupted from time to time with points of order, etc. A few moments ago the Leader of the House said to me: 'Look, you spoke for 15 minutes before those points of order arose'. That was untrue and Hansard will show it to be untrue.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! It being 11 o'clock the House stands adjourned until Tuesday next at 10.30 a.m. or until such time thereafter as Mr Speaker takes the Chair.

House adjourned at 11 p.m.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

The following answers to questions upon notice were circulated:

Australian Capital Territory: Land Leases

(Question No. 492)

Mr Hunt asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

(1) How many blocks in the (a) restricted and (b) unrestricted categories were offered for sale by his Department in the Australian Capital Territory during 1973-74.

(2) How many blocks were made available for (a) town houses, (b) detached housing and (c) flats during 1973-74.

(3) Does this answer vary from that given on 31 August 1973.

(4) Was this quantity sufficient to meet expected population growth in the 12 months period.

Mr Bryant—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) Auctions of residential leases were suspended by my predecessor in August 1973. One auction was held between 1 July 1973 and the date auctions were suspended. Two hundred and forty one leases for detached housing were offered at that sale, 98 in the 'restricted A' category, 44 in 'restricted B' and 99 in 'groups'.

Between October 1973 and 30 June 1974, 1685 of the people registered for land under the new arrangements have been offered residential leases. Of these 1160 have since been granted a lease or are in the process of taking up a lease, the remainder have declined to take up the offer. A further 1189 leases have been either sold or offered to freelance builders through a quota arrangement.

(2) Under the National Capital Development Commission's land development programme for 1973-74, the following numbers of sites were available for lease:

(a) 175 town house sites on which about 331 town house units can be built.

(b) 3372 sites for detached housing.

(c) 13 sites for residential flats on which about 462 residential units can be built.

(3) There is no record of an answer given on 31 August 1973. However, if the honourable member is referring to an answer given to question No. 247 on 11 September 1973, then there has been a decrease in the numbers of sites expected to be available.

(4) Leases sold during 1973-74 provide for expected population in 1974-75. The National Capital Development Commission has advised that it expects that the land made available together with land provided for Government owned rental housing is sufficient to provide for the estimated population increase in the current financial year.

Victoria: Electoral Subdivisions

(Question No. 501)

Mr Scholes asked the Minister for Services and Property, upon notice:

What is the current enrolment in each electoral Subdivision in the State of Victoria.

Mr Daly—The answer to the honourable member's question is provided by way of the following table which details Sub-divisional enrolments as at 26 July 1974 for each Victorian electoral Division.

Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74
Balaclava—	
Brighton	9,412
Brighton Beach	4,311
Brighton East	9,099
Camden	6,830
Caulfield West	7,369
Elsternwick	5,669
Elsternwick North	3,611
Hampton	5,424
Landcox	2,811
Ripponlea	4,853
Total	59,389
Ballaarat—	
Bacchus Marsh	3,418
Ballaarat	9,586
Ballaarat East	5,301
Ballaarat North	2,510
Ballaarat West	8,079
Ballan	1,403
Clunes	734
Creswick	2,225
Daylesford	3,346
Gong Gong	907
Kyneton	3,176
Learmonth	9,087
Meredith	607
Sebastopol	5,623
Warrenheip	2,346
Woodend	1,294
Total	59,642
Batman—	
Alphington	9,340
Clifton Hill	1,963
Fitzroy North	4,867
Heidelberg	3,257
Heidelberg West	6,740
Ivanhoe	13,884
Northcote	7,450
Northcote West	3,859
Thornbury	5,917
Thornbury East	5,098
Total	62,375
Chisholm—	
Auburn	9,535
Burwood	5,545
Camberwell	8,543
Camberwell North	5,372

Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74	Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74
Camberwell South	3,839	Sandhurst East	9,683
Glen Iris	7,185	Seymour	5,660
Highfield Park	8,035	Strathfieldsaye	777
Surrey Hills West	1,894		
Wattle Park	9,439		
Total	59,387	Total	60,353
Corangamite—		Bruce—	
Bannockburn	1,194	Burwood South	5,829
Beaufort	2,295	Clayton East	2,643
Beeac	1,401	Clayton West	3,722
Beech Forest	1,736	Glen Waverley	8,782
Belmont North	5,933	Jordanville	8,207
Birregurra	3,760	Mount Waverley	11,886
Camperdown	4,758	Mulgrave	21,329
Cobden	1,704	Oakleigh East	4,311
Colac	8,762	Tally Ho	11,175
Jancourt	1,636		
Linton	1,324	Total	77,884
Port Campbell	1,857	Burke—	
Queenscliff	5,089	Broadmeadows	12,061
Rokewood	387	Broadmeadows North	9,181
South Barwon	15,144	Fawkner	8,070
Terang	2,479	Glenroy	7,205
Total	59,459	Glenroy West	7,355
Corio—		Kalkallo	4,309
Drysdale	10,400	Sunbury	11,070
Geelong	10,607	Thomastown	13,544
Geelong North	9,390	Tullamarine	10,090
Geelong West	5,668		
Manifold	5,040	Total	82,885
Newtown and Chilwell	9,297	Casey—	
Norlane	9,608	Croydon West	4,667
Sutherland	5,004	Donvale	4,091
Total	65,014	Heatherdale	8,935
Deakin—		Heathmont	12,221
Blackburn	6,547	Hurstbridge	5,273
Blackburn North	12,115	Mitcham	6,301
Blackburn South	11,932	Ringwood	9,482
Box Hill	7,673	Wantirna	10,397
Box Hill North	5,105	Warrandyte	13,390
Box Hill South	5,220		
Parkmore	7,683	Total	74,757
Surrey Hills	7,710	Diamond Valley—	
Total	63,985	Bundoor	13,045
Bendigo—		Diamond Creek	11,830
Avenel	707	Doncaster	15,321
Bendigo	10,430	Doncaster West	9,530
Castlemaine	7,145	Eltham	11,877
Eaglehawk	4,332	Rosanna East	11,814
Elmore	1,961	Templestowe	11,779
Gisborne	3,294	Whittlesea	2,607
Golden Square	8,516		
Heathcote	1,586	Total	87,803
Kilmore	2,498	Flinders—	
Lancefield	1,171	Dromana	10,018
Maldon	885	Frankston	13,027
Marong	787	Frankston Heights	2,638
Raywood	921	Hastings	7,796

Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74	Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74
Nelson	6,577	Holt—	
Phillip Island	1,536	Berwick	3,904
Pines	4,880	Cranbourne	8,051
Seaford	8,649	Dandenong	13,038
Total	78,948	Dandenong North	9,873
Gellibrand—		Doveton	6,928
Footscray	5,415	Keysborough	2,242
Footscray North	8,153	Noble Park	14,414
Kingsville	8,564	Springvale	11,576
Kingsville West	1,868	Springvale South	10,635
Maidstone	8,155	Total	80,661
Newport	4,234	Hotham—	
Newport East	2,546	Bentleigh	5,832
Newport West	7,127	Bentleigh East	9,436
Williamstown	8,714	Bentleigh South	4,489
Yarraville	2,931	Cheltenham East	9,087
Total	57,707	Clayton South	2,683
Gippsland—		Coatesville	3,573
Bairnsdale	6,110	Heatherton	9,107
Bruthen	3,761	Hightett	5,424
Foster	3,842	Moorabbin	9,749
Leongatha	5,526	Moorabbin East	2,096
Lindenow	806	Total	61,476
Lucknow	1,763	Indi—	
Maffra	5,309	Alexandra	2,514
Mirboo North	2,183	Beechworth	2,801
Omeo	1,116	Benalla	8,282
Orbost	3,555	Chiltern	886
Rosedale	1,493	Corryong	1,888
Sale	7,658	Euroa	2,656
Stratford	1,599	Mansfield	2,558
Toongabbie	762	Moyhu	1,429
Traralgon	9,604	Ovens	3,717
Yaram	3,379	Tallangatta	2,041
Total	58,466	Violet Town	637
Henty—		Wangaratta	11,917
Bentleigh North	10,124	Wodonga	8,592
Carnegie	8,641	Yackandandah	3,188
Carnegie East	5,069	Yea	2,160
Glenhuntly	4,911	Total	55,266
Holmesglen	3,141	Isaacs—	
Malvern East	10,219	Aspendale	4,164
Murrumbeena	5,184	Beaumaris	6,591
Oakleigh	7,816	Carrum	3,943
Oakleigh North	2,981	Chelsea	9,588
Oakleigh South	2,515	Cheltenham West	6,347
Total	61,231	Mentone	6,973
Higgins—		Mordialloc	6,611
Armadale	10,684	Mordialloc East	6,946
Caulfield	7,550	Sandringham	10,005
Caulfield East	4,046	Total	61,168
Darling	3,343	Kooyong—	
Malvern	9,638	Balwyn	6,369
Malvern South	10,067	Balwyn North	7,662
South Yarra	9,708	Deepdene	5,979
Toorak	8,472	Glenferrie	7,378
Total	63,508	Glenferrie South	3,101

Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74	Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74
Greythorn	7,871	Rainbow	815
Hawthorn	4,381	Red Cliffs	9,869
Kew	7,029	Robinvale	2,579
Kew North	6,031	Sea Lake	1,541
Kew South	6,945	Swan Hill	7,039
Total	62,746	Wycheproof	1,274
Lalor—		Total	49,922
Albion	2,732	Maribyrnong—	
Altona	9,108	Ascot Vale	8,579
Braybrook	5,296	Avondale Heights	4,827
Brooklyn	5,007	Essendon	5,178
Deer Park	12,143	Essendon North	10,402
St Albans	13,831	Essendon West	5,135
Sunshine	6,870	Keilor East	7,197
Sunshine North	4,062	Moonee Ponds	5,033
Werribee	15,540	Moonee Ponds West	7,870
Total	74,589	Niddrie	8,758
Latrobe—		Total	62,979
Boronia	7,790	Melbourne—	
Cardinia	3,793	Abbotsford	2,631
Croydon	10,994	Brunswick South	3,563
Ferntree Gully	10,485	Burnley	2,202
Healesville	3,166	Carlton	3,290
Knox	9,918	Carlton North	4,233
Lilydale	5,817	Carlton South	1,365
Sherbrooke	10,745	Collingwood	3,416
Silvan	14,791	Fitzroy	5,073
Warburton	4,057	Melbourne	4,925
Total	81,556	Newmarket	8,421
McMillan—		North Melbourne	5,236
Drouin	3,926	Parkville	2,513
Hazelwood	1,696	Richmond	9,053
Kooweeup	1,824	Richmond South	1,598
Korumburra	3,098	Total	57,519
Loch	2,239	Melbourne Ports—	
Moe	9,743	Albert Park	7,569
Morwell	9,884	Cardigan	5,811
Neerim South	1,414	Domain	3,730
Pakenham	6,613	Elwood	6,520
Trafalgar	4,182	Port Melbourne	5,629
Walhalla	420	Prahran	8,063
Warragul	5,665	St Kilda	7,580
Warragul North	823	St Kilda North	6,570
Wonthaggi	4,452	St Kilda West	3,403
Yalourn	3,017	South Melbourne	3,572
Total	58,996	Total	58,447
Mallee—		Murray—	
Birchip	976	Cobram	3,207
Boort	1,035	Echuca	6,435
Cohuna	2,799	Kyabram	7,116
Hopetoun	2,238	Mitiamo	984
Jeparit	727	Mooroopna	3,049
Kerang	4,828	Nagambie	898
Mildura	8,507	Nathalia	1,896
Nyah West	1,586	Numurkah	4,358
Ouyen	2,601	Rochester	3,680
Pyramid Hill	902	Rushworth	2,126
Quambatook	606	Rutherglen	1,813

Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74	Division and Subdivision	Enrolment at 26.7.74
Shepparton	9,045	Murtoa	1,555
Shepparton South	6,963	Nhill	2,467
Tatura	3,217	St. Arnaud	2,862
Yarrawonga	2,776	Stawell	4,838
Total	57,563	Warracknabeal	2,336
Scullin—		Wedderburn	1,259
Heidelberg North	5,156	Total	49,416
Preston East	8,702		
Preston North	4,591		
Preston West	6,167		
Reservoir	8,528		
Reservoir East	3,147		
Reservoir North	7,779		
Reservoir West	12,091		
Rosanna	3,477		
Total	59,638		
Wannon—			
Allansford	2,076		
Branxholme	2,748		
Casterton	4,058		
Hamilton	7,732		
Harrow	3,352		
Koroit	2,483		
Mortlake	2,359		
Penshurst	2,160		
Port Fairy	2,575		
Portland	8,759		
Warrnambool	13,338		
Willaura	1,820		
Total	53,460		
Wills—			
Brunswick East	8,039		
Brunswick West	9,849		
Coburg	8,065		
Coburg North	8,186		
Coburg West	3,595		
Edward	3,837		
Moreland	1,648		
Pascoe Vale	7,788		
Pascoe Vale South	7,358		
Total	58,365		
Wimmera—			
Ararat	5,964		
Avoca	859		
Carisbrook	1,170		
Charlton	1,314		
Dimboola	1,861		
Donald	1,701		
Dunolly	1,143		
Goroke	1,339		
Horsham	8,038		
Horsham South	938		
Inglewood	900		
Kaniva	1,326		
Landsborough	542		
Lexton	557		
Maryborough	5,810		
Minyip	637		

Australian Servicemen: Foreign Awards

(Question No. 507)

Mr Wentworth asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) Is it a fact that in previous wars, including Korea, Australian servicemen have been given permission to accept and wear foreign awards for gallantry.

(2) Is it also a fact that, prior to going out of office, the previous Government prepared a submission in relation to the Vietnam war recommending that Australian servicemen be permitted to accept and wear up to four foreign awards in accordance with normal practice of the Armed Services of the Queen.

(3) Did Australian servicemen in Vietnam gain 416 United States awards and 604 Vietnamese awards; if so, what are the details.

(4) Did Senator Bishop, acting on behalf of the Minister for Defence, intimate in December 1973 that Australian servicemen would not be permitted to accept or wear foreign awards in relation to the Vietnam war.

(5) If so, was this a break with accepted custom due to a desire to downgrade all servicemen who took part in the Vietnam war.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) Yes. Foreign awards may only be accepted and worn with the permission of the sovereign. In previous wars, permission to wear gallantry awards of certain countries has been given in particular circumstances.

(2) The right honourable member for Lowe, when Prime Minister, advised me in 1972 that a proposal was being prepared for the institution of Australian regulations relating to the acceptance and wearing of foreign awards (Hansard, 26 October 1972, page 3437). I understand that the matter was not proceeded with. The wearing of up to four foreign awards is not a normal practice of the Armed Services.

(3) We do not have reliable information on the number of foreign awards proposed for Australian servicemen in Vietnam, as not every case was officially notified. The numbers of confirmed awards ran into some 250 Vietnamese and 200 United States awards.

(4) No. The Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence said in December 1973 that there is no possibility of providing additional awards, either British or foreign, for service in Vietnam. Approvals previously given for acceptance of the Campaign Medal issued by the South Vietnam Government, and of several foreign unit awards, still stand.

(5) See answer to (4). The policy on the acceptance and wearing of foreign awards for service during the Vietnam war was the responsibility of the Government in office at the time.

Public Service: Coombs Report

(Question No. 543)

Mr Snedden asked the Prime Minister upon notice:

(1) When did the Government receive the report from the Public Service Board of its inquiry into action being taken by Departments to ensure that manpower savings are achieved in the implementation of recommendations of the Coombs Report and that staff involved are transferred to priority areas of the administration.

(2) Has the Government considered the report.

(3) Is it in the nature of an interim report to be followed up by subsequent reports.

(4) What is the Government's attitude to the report.

(5) When will the report be tabled.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) The Chairman of the Public Service Board reported on this matter on 29 November 1973.

(2) Yes.

(3) and (4) The Government has not asked the Board to submit further reports specifically on this matter but, if the Board considers further such reports are necessary, it will no doubt provide them.

(5) As I told the right honourable member on 13 December 1973 (Hansard, page 4821), the substance of the Board's report will be included in the Board's Annual Report for 1973-74. I expect to table the Board's Annual Report in September.

Fire Fighting Procedures

(Question No. 548)

Mr Snedden asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) How often are exercises in civil defence preparedness conducted in Departments, for example, in evacuation procedures of office buildings in the event of fire.

(2) What form do the exercises take.

(3) Does he accept that this is an area where the Government should give a lead to other employers.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) and (2) The form and frequency of any exercises held in Australian Government Departments for the purpose of safeguarding life and property in the event of fire or civil emergency are as determined by the individual Departments themselves, with whom final responsibility for such precautions rests.

In determining the procedures to be adopted to cope with these contingencies Departments have expert technical advice available to them on request from the Australian Fire Board in respect of fire protection and prevention and from the Natural Disasters Organisation in respect of civil emergencies whether arising from fire, earthquake, flood, building collapse or other hazard. The Department of Services and Property is also concerned with the property management aspect of fire prevention facilities.

(3) The Australian Government has taken a leading role in preparedness for civil emergencies by the establishment of a Natural Disasters Organisation which will provide an adequate organisation to deal with natural disasters at a national level and, in consultation with the States, will assist

in the strengthening of their capacity to cope with emergencies.

It will be recalled that I have a long-held interest in the question of procedures and equipment for fighting and preventing fires in Australian Government establishments. Arising out of my Question on the matter (Hansard, 19 September 1968, page 1357) the Australian Fire Board and the Department of Transport are now studying developments in regard to standardisation of equipment and the question of a Fire Training Institute.

Department of Defence: Special Deputy to the Permanent Head

(Question No. 552)

Mr Snedden asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

Further to Question No. 1576 of 12 December 1973, and the creation of a new designation of Special Deputy to the Permanent Head, what powers have been delegated to each person holding this designation.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

Information in respect of the powers delegated to each person holding the designation of Special Deputy of Permanent Head, Department of Defence, is set out below.

(a) Special Deputy of Permanent Head, Department of Defence (Navy Office)/(Air Office):

delegations by the Permanent Head under the Public Service Act in respect of Navy Office and Air Office;

appointment by the Public Service Board under the Public Service Act as a Chief Officer in respect of Navy Office and Air Office to exercise the powers and functions of a Chief Officer under the Public Service Act and Regulations; the Public Service Board has also delegated to Chief Officers further significant personnel management functions;

authorisations by the Minister under the Audit Act, Treasury Regulations and Treasury (Overseas Accounts) Directions in respect of Navy Office and Air Office;

delegations by the Permanent Head under the Naval Defence Act, Clause 4 of the Naval Defence (Wages Employees) Determination and Clause 5 of the Naval Defence (Salaried Staff) Determination in respect of Navy Office only;

delegations by the Commissioner for Employees' Compensation under the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act in respect of Navy Office and Air Office;

appointment by the Permanent Head as a member of the Naval Board and the Air Board.

(b) Special Deputy of Permanent Head, Department of Defence (Army Office):

delegations by the Permanent Head under the Public Service Act in respect of Army Office;

appointment by the Public Service Board under the Public Service Act as a Chief Officer in respect of Army Office to exercise the powers and functions of a Chief Officer under the Public Service Act and Regulations; the Public Service Board has also delegated to Chief Officers further significant personnel management functions;

authorisations by the Minister under the Audit Act, Treasury Regulations and Treasury (Overseas Accounts) Directions in respect of Army Office;

delegations by the Commissioner for Employees' Compensation under the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act in respect of Army Office;

appointment by the Permanent Head as a member of the Military Board.

ILO Convention No. 100

(Question No. 564)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Labor and Immigration, upon notice:

(1) Which countries have ratified or acceded to ILO Convention 100 which relates to equal remuneration.

(2) What was the date of each ratification or accession.

(3) Does the Government intend to ratify this Convention; if so when.

Mr Clyde Cameron—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) ILO Convention No 100—Equal Remuneration, 1951 and

(2) has been ratified by 80 of the 125 member States of the ILO. The countries and dates of ratification are:

Country	Date of Ratification
Afghanistan	22 August 1969
Albania	3 June 1957
Algeria	19 October 1962
Argentina	24 September 1956
Austria	29 October 1953
Belgium	23 May 1952
Bolivia	15 November 1973
Brazil	25 April 1956
Bulgaria	7 November 1955
Byelorussia	21 August 1956
Cameroon	25 May 1970
Canada	16 November 1972
Central African Republic	9 June 1964
Chad	29 March 1966
Chile	20 September 1971
China	*1 May 1958
Columbia	7 June 1963
Costa Rica	2 June 1960
Cuba	13 January 1960
Czechoslovakia	30 October 1957
Dahomey	16 May 1968
Denmark	22 June 1960
Dominican Republic	22 September 1953
Ecuador	11 March 1957
Egypt	26 July 1960
Finland	14 January 1963
France	10 March 1953
Gabon	13 June 1961
Federal Republic of Germany	8 June 1956
Ghana	14 March 1968
Guatemala	2 July 1961
Republic of Guinea	11 August 1967
Haiti	4 March 1958
Honduras	9 August 1956
Hungary	8 June 1956
Iceland	17 February 1958
India	25 September 1958
Indonesia	11 August 1958
Iran	10 June 1972
Iraq	28 August 1963
Israel	9 June 1965
Italy	8 June 1956
Ivory Coast	5 May 1961
Japan	24 August 1967
Jordan	22 September 1966

Country	Date of Ratification
Libya	20 June 1962
Luxembourg	23 August 1967
Malagasy Republic	10 August 1962
Malawi	22 March 1965
Republic of Mali	12 July 1968
Mexico	23 August 1952
Mongolia	3 June 1969
Netherlands	16 June 1971
Nicaragua	31 October 1967
Niger	9 August 1966
Nigeria	8 May 1974
Norway	24 September 1954
Panama	3 June 1958
Paraguay	24 June 1964
Peru	1 February 1960
Philippines	29 December 1953
Poland	25 October 1954
Portugal	20 February 1967
Rumania	28 May 1957
Senegal'	22 October 1962
Sierra Leone	15 November 1968
Spain	6 November 1967
Sudan	22 October 1970
Sweden	20 June 1962
Switzerland	25 October 1972
Syrian Arab Republic	7 June 1957
Tunisia	11 October 1968
Turkey	19 July 1967
Ukrainian S.S.R.	10 August 1956
U.S.S.R.	30 April 1956
United Kingdom	15 June 1971
Upper Volta	30 June 1969
Yugoslavia	21 May 1952
Zaire	16 June 1969
Zambia	20 June 1972

* At the time of ratification, Taiwan represented China in the ILO.

(3) The Australian Government intends to ratify ILO Convention No. 100 at the earliest possible opportunity. Federal law and practice are in compliance with the provisions of the Convention and I am advised that 5 States have agreed to ratification. The situation in the remaining State is that my Department is in contact with the relevant State authorities as to several aspects of State law and practice with a view to the early clarification of that State's position regarding ratification.

I might add that I am gratified by the right honourable member's recent interest in the ratification of this most important Convention which was first adopted in 1951. I would point out that the Liberal and Country Parties were in government for 21 years following the adoption of this Convention—indeed for some time the right honourable member himself was the Minister responsible—but did not ratify it.

This Government has taken seriously its obligations towards the ILO, particularly in relation to Conventions dealing, as does Convention No. 100, with basic human rights. This attitude is reflected in the substantial progress which has been made towards ratification of this Convention since the present Government came to office.

**Australian Capital Territory Housing:
Inter-departmental Committee**

(Question No. 580)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

- (1) Is the Inter-departmental Committee on Australian Capital Territory housing policy still in operation.
- (2) Has it produced reports for the Government.
- (3) If so, what are the reports and when were they presented to the Government.
- (4) If not, is it expected reports will be produced.
- (5) Will he make the reports available.

Mr Bryant—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

- (1) There is an inter-departmental committee which examines matters related to Australian Capital Territory housing.
- (2) and (3) No. The committee has drafted a report but it has not been finalised.
- (4) The committee is expected to offer advice to the Minister on aspects of housing.
- (5) Each matter will be looked at on its merits.

State Schools: Costs

(Question No. 596)

Mr Berinson asked the Minister for Education, upon notice:

- (1) What was the date of the last calculation of average costs in State primary and secondary schools, and what were the average costs at that time in respect of each State.
- (2) Is it possible to estimate the approximate current costs at each level in each State; and if so, what are the details.

Mr Beazley—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

- (1) The last calculation of this kind was undertaken in December 1973, in respect of the recurrent expenditure estimates provided by six States and two Territories for the financial year 1973-74. The national average figures (to the nearest dollar) calculated from these estimates were \$379 per primary pupil and \$640 per secondary pupil. I am unable to provide separate figures for each State. The States made their data available solely for the purpose of enabling national averages to be calculated, and on the condition that separate State averages would not be released.

(2) My Department will repeat the calculation for 1974-75 after the Commonwealth and State budgets have been brought down.

Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly

(Question No. 599)

Mr Hunt asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

- (1) Is it a fact that self-government for the Australian Capital Territory means that ratepayers will have to finance from the municipal account the costs associated with the running of a Legislative Assembly.

(2) What are the estimated costs of operation under each of the following headings of expenditure over the first 3 years: (a) electoral, (b) Members' salaries and allowances,

(c) secretariat, (d) rent, (e) transport, (f) stationery and printing and (g) telephone and postage.

(3) In view of the concern expressed by many Canberra people, will he undertake to hold a referendum to enable the electors of the Territory to indicate whether they are in favour of self-government.

Mr Bryant—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

- (1) No. The apportioning of costs as between municipal and territorial revenues will depend on the ultimate functions of the Legislative Assembly.

(2) It will not be possible to estimate the costs of the Legislative Assembly until the powers that it will exercise become clear. The Government has reiterated that it would not determine the powers of the Legislative Assembly in advance of the Government's consideration of the report of the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory on self-government and related financial matters.

(3) I will await the report of the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory on self-government and related financial matters before considering the need for such action.

Industrial Inspectors

(Question No. 600)

Mr Malcolm Fraser asked the Minister for Labor and Immigration, upon notice:

- (1) How many people has he approved as Industrial Inspectors.

(2) What is the name and what are the qualifications of each appointee.

Mr Clyde Cameron—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

- (1) and (2) The Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904-1973 provides in sub-section (2) of Section 125 that 'the Minister may appoint a person to be an Inspector for the purposes of this Act.'

I have not, to this time, made any appointments under this provision.

Sub-section (2A) of the Act provides amongst other things, that an officer of the Public Service who occupies and office of Inspector in the Department is an Inspector for the purposes of the Act.

The Australian Arbitration Inspectorate is being substantially expanded to provide a more satisfactory service. As part of this process 46 persons have been appointed or transferred to the position of Inspector within the Australian Public Service. These appointments were made under the Public Service Act and did not require my approval.

Ministerial Staffs: Appointment of Relatives

(Question No. 659)

Mr Garland asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

- (1) What is the name and address of each person who is employed by a Minister and is a relative of that Minister.

(2) What are the duties, and what is the salary and any allowance of each such person.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

- (1) and (2) I refer the honourable member to my answer to an earlier related question (Question No. 2, Hansard, 7 March 1973, page 351).

Kingston: Proposed Multi-storey Flat Project
 (Question No. 684)

Mr Garland asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

(1) Is the proposed multi-storey flat project in Kingston by Hooker Home Units Pty Ltd now in doubt.

(2) If so, is the reason because of the Government's policy of rent evaluation and/or value added tax on re-development projects.

(3) Does the Government consider that this project is desirable and the additional accommodation it would provide likely to help alleviate the shortage of accommodation in Canberra.

(4) Will he review existing policies with a view to encouraging provision of accommodation in Canberra.

(5) Is the present situation the worst shortage of accommodation Canberra has ever known.

(6) Is it part of existing policy for the Government to take over this land concerned; if so, is this likely to be the pattern in future.

Mr Bryant—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) and (2) Approval has been given to a scheme of development subject to certain conditions. As far as I am aware the company has not yet reached a decision in the matter.

(3) The project is in accordance with a decision made by the previous Government to permit but not actively encourage redevelopment in Kingston. It would provide additional accommodation but this could equally well be provided on other sites recently offered for lease for medium density housing in which limited or no interest has been shown by private developers.

(4) Policies are continually under review. Under present arrangements leases for all forms of residential development are available at very reasonable prices.

(5) No.

(6) The Government has no current plans to acquire residential land in Kingston or other parts of Canberra purely for redevelopment purposes.

Carnarvon—Space Tracking Station

(Question No. 701)

Mr Street asked the Minister for Manufacturing Industry, upon notice:

What are the Government's plans for the future of the space tracking station at Carnarvon, Western Australia.

Mr Enderby—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The present plan for operational work at Carnarvon is to continue the phasing out of activities, which as announced in February 1973 began early this year. By 5 October 1974 the tracking staff will have been reduced to one team and the total staff, currently a little less than 100, will have been reduced to about 50. The single team will be retained until 22 December 1974 or the launch of Helios, whichever is the sooner.

Tracking and data handling equipment is being removed concurrently with the phase-down of operations and most of it is being reallocated to other NASA stations.

The buildings and service facilities will be almost entirely available to the Australian Government. The Department of

Services and Property which will be responsible for the reallocation of the land, buildings and service facilities, has their possible future use under consideration.

The Department of Manufacturing Industry is in continuous liaison with NASA on the phase-down, with a view to minimising its effect on the Carnarvon community.

Island Lagoon—Tracking Station

(Question No. 702)

Mr Street asked the Minister for Manufacturing Industry, upon notice:

(1) Has the offer by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to hand over the Island Lagoon tracking station been rejected by the Australian Government.

(2) If so, has this rejection been described by senior research scientists as a short-sighted move which is a blow to Australian space researchers and to the cause of fundamental research.

(3) What has happened to the 85ft radiotelescope at Island Lagoon.

Mr Enderby—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) Yes, the offer by the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to hand over the antenna and some associated equipment and the buildings and services at the Island Lagoon tracking station was declined in September 1973. The reason for declining the offer was that the predicted level of Australian use would not have justified the cost of equipping the antenna for radio astronomy and maintaining the facility.

(2) Such a statement was reported in the Adelaide Advertiser of 10 October 1973. It was natural that the dismantling of the antenna should cause concern. However, it is pertinent to draw attention to the fact that facilities superior in many respects to those which were located at Island Lagoon exist at the NASA tracking stations in the Australian Capital Territory and are available for use by Australia. Over the past twelve months only two Australian scientists have used the antenna in the Australian Capital Territory whereas many more users could be accommodated. The costs to the users are small and certainly insignificant compared with prorata sharing of the costs which would have been involved at Island Lagoon.

(3) The structure of the 26m (85ft) antenna at Island Lagoon was sold and dismantled late in 1973. Most of the station electronic and antenna electro-mechanical equipment was removed for use at other NASA stations.

Elections: Postal Votes

(Question No. 704)

Mr Keogh asked the Minister for Services and Property, upon notice:

How many postal votes were cast in each electoral division in (a) the 1972 House of Representatives Election and (b) the 1974 General Election.

Mr Daly—The answer to the honourable member's question is provided in the following table:

**Number of Postal Votes Admitted to the Scrutiny at 1972
and 1974 House of Representatives Elections**

Division	1972 Elections	1974 Elections	Division	1972 Elections	1974 Elections			
New South Wales								
Banks	837	1,749	Flinders	1,881	5,131			
Barton	1,638	3,280	Gellibrand	1,188	2,510			
Bennelong	1,888	3,391	Gippsland	1,320	3,369			
Berowra	2,491	3,848	Henty	1,958	4,286			
Blaxland	796	1,591	Higgins	2,822	6,060			
Bradfield	2,146	4,116	Holt	1,470	3,569			
Calare	806	1,462	Hotham	1,471	3,430			
Chifley	904	1,370	Indi	1,154	2,788			
Cook	1,331	3,179	Isaacs	1,565	4,362			
Cowper	1,133	1,764	Kooyong	2,503	6,151			
Cunningham	970	1,852	Lalor	1,067	2,359			
Darling	1,862	2,580	La Trobe	2,053	4,375			
Eden-Monaro	1,112	1,798	McMillan	986	2,437			
Evans	1,951	3,128	Mallee	1,032	2,386			
Farrer	1,581	2,882	Maribyrnong	1,604	3,780			
Grayndler	867	1,617	Melbourne	1,612	3,176			
Gwydir	831	1,303	Melbourne Ports	2,069	3,739			
Hughes	872	1,497	Murray	1,077	3,406			
Hume	856	1,314	Scullin	1,183	2,528			
Hunter	1,884	2,434	Wannon	1,145	2,776			
Kingsford-Smith	1,047	1,804	Wills	1,555	3,090			
Lang	1,081	2,018	Wimmera	1,140	2,160			
Lowe	1,936	3,273	Total	56,656	129,811			
Lyne	1,149	1,662	Queensland					
Macarthur	1,095	2,206	Bowman	2,077	3,619			
Mackellar	1,701	3,329	Brisbane	2,512	3,519			
Macquarie	1,245	2,237	Capricornia	1,336	1,905			
Mitchell	1,494	2,504	Darling Downs	1,850	2,867			
Newcastle	1,533	2,588	Dawson	1,347	1,978			
New England	997	2,000	Fisher	1,470	2,272			
North Sydney	1,906	3,605	Griffith	2,789	3,748			
Parramatta	1,617	3,563	Herbert	1,900	2,442			
Paterson	938	1,302	Kennedy	1,486	1,795			
Phillip	2,025	3,555	Leichhardt	1,353	1,960			
Prospect	672	1,222	Liley	2,452	3,750			
Reid	862	1,605	McPherson	2,578	4,094			
Richmond	1,458	2,058	Maranoa	1,330	1,837			
Riverina	1,183	1,552	Moreton	1,959	3,004			
Robertson	1,527	2,980	Oxley	1,941	3,149			
St George	1,674	2,795	Petrie	2,011	3,338			
Shortland	992	2,188	Ryan	2,384	4,095			
Sydney	1,155	1,128	Wide Bay	1,773	2,829			
Warringah	2,060	3,745	Total	34,548	52,201			
Wentworth	2,122	4,018	South Australia					
Werriwa	966	1,538	Adelaide	1,878	3,751			
Total	61,191	106,430	Angas	1,329	2,432			
Victoria			Barker	1,159	2,447			
Balaclava	2,956	5,906	Bonython	1,231	2,488			
Ballaarat	1,684	3,687	Boothby	2,474	5,320			
Batman	1,753	3,616	Grey	1,095	1,813			
Bendigo	2,811	4,721	Hawker	1,885	3,830			
Bruce	1,681	4,778	Hindmarsh	1,351	3,130			
Burke	1,065	2,802	Kingston	1,965	4,182			
Casey	1,616	4,118	Port Adelaide	1,352	2,546			
Chisholm	2,391	5,489	Sturt	1,997	4,338			
Corangamite	1,192	3,449	Wakefield	976	1,645			
Conio	2,010	3,678	Total	18,692	37,922			
Deakin	2,038	4,615	Western Australia					
Diamond Valley	1,604	5,084	Canning	901	1,264			

Division	1972 Elections	1974 Elections
Curtin	1,922	3,634
Forrest	811	1,315
Fremantle	1,707	2,753
Kalgoorlie	1,533	1,668
Moore	1,018	1,421
Perth	1,638	2,209
Stirling	1,763	1,995
Swan	1,832	2,977
Tangney	—	1,748
Total	13,125	20,984

Tasmania

Bass	1,427	2,439
Braddon	1,422	2,206
Denison	2,182	3,181
Franklin	1,526	2,295
Wilmot	1,083	1,658
Total	7,640	11,779

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra	—	6,522
Fraser	—	6,877
Total	8,104	13,399

Northern Territory

Total	2,874	3,689
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Electoral Divisions

(Question No. 708)

Mr Riordan asked the Minister for Services and Property, upon notice:

(1) What was the enrolment in each electoral division in Australia at the redistribution in 1968, and what is the enrolment in each now.

(2) What has been the percentage rise or fall in the number of electors in each division between the redistribution in 1968 and now.

Mr Daly—The answer to the honourable member's question is contained in the following table.

(Note that enrolments for the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory are included for comparative purposes although there was no redistribution in 1968 in either case.)

Division	Enrolment May 1968	Enrolment July 1974	Percentage Change*
NEW SOUTH WALES			
Banks	51,703	62,310	20.52
Barton	57,650	64,574	12.01
Bennelong	58,179	68,684	18.06
Berowra	50,719	67,731	33.54
Blaxland	55,059	64,895	17.86

Division	Enrolment May 1968	Enrolment July 1974	Percentage Change*
Bradfield	54,488	69,400	27.37
Calare	46,686	52,989	13.50
Chifley	48,842	79,078	61.91
Cook	51,207	62,878	22.79
Cowper	46,156	56,670	22.78
Cunningham	56,244	72,803	29.44
Darling	42,955	47,727	11.11
Eden-Monaro	48,092	60,913	26.66
Evans	58,296	61,264	5.09
Farrer	49,323	61,142	23.96
Grayndler	60,205	54,423	9.61
Gwydir	47,340	52,900	11.74
Hughes	50,273	64,931	29.16
Hume	47,068	50,480	7.25
Hunter	52,070	65,411	25.62
Kingsford Smith	56,021	63,631	13.58
Lang	54,150	63,158	16.64
Lowe	57,254	61,677	7.73
Lyne	45,751	59,051	29.07
Macarthur	51,140	79,352	55.17
Mackellar	51,475	72,601	41.04
Macquarie	56,055	75,548	34.77
Mitchell	52,622	83,159	58.03
Newcastle	55,946	58,552	4.66
New England	49,832	61,359	23.13
North Sydney	57,619	59,225	2.79
Parramatta	59,365	73,531	23.86
Paterson	46,783	56,989	21.82
Phillip	58,979	67,038	13.66
Prospect	50,862	71,138	39.86
Reid	57,688	60,496	4.87
Richmond	49,460	59,940	21.19
Riverina	45,637	52,116	14.20
Robertson	49,052	80,080	63.26
St. George	58,467	60,319	3.17
Shortland	50,046	61,723	23.33
Sydney	59,967	53,384	-10.98
Warringah	55,427	60,965	9.99
Wentworth	58,634	54,690	-6.73
Werriwa	55,433	73,538	32.66
Total	2,376,220	2,864,463	20.55

VICTORIA

Balaclava	56,737	59,389	4.67
Ballaarat	50,700	59,642	17.64
Batman	57,874	62,375	7.78
Bendigo	50,938	60,353	18.48
Bruce	50,274	77,884	54.92
Burke	47,472	82,885	74.60
Casey	48,379	74,757	54.52
Chisholm	56,791	59,387	4.57
Corangamite	47,625	59,459	24.85
Corio	50,934	65,014	27.64
Deakin	51,769	63,985	23.60
Diamond Valley	50,668	87,803	73.29
Flinders	48,826	78,948	61.69
Gelibrand	56,311	57,707	2.48
Gippsland	47,589	58,466	22.86
Henty	55,433	61,231	10.46
Higgins	57,124	63,508	11.18
Holt	48,446	80,661	66.50
Hotham	51,119	61,476	20.26
Indi	46,679	55,266	18.40
Isaacs	51,501	61,188	18.81
Kooyong	57,920	62,746	8.33

Division	Enrolment May 1968	Enrolment July 1974	Percentage Change*
Lalor	48,411	74,589	54.07
La Trobe	50,201	81,556	62.46
McMillan	50,881	58,996	15.95
Mallee	45,218	49,922	10.40
Maribyrnong	53,747	62,979	17.18
Melbourne	57,245	57,519	0.48
Melbourne Ports	56,770	58,447	2.95
Murray	47,956	57,563	20.03
Scullin	53,030	59,638	12.46
Wannon	47,928	53,460	11.54
Wills	58,213	58,365	0.26
Wimmera	46,234	49,416	6.88
Total	1,756,943	2,176,560	23.88

QUEENSLAND

Bowman	53,983	80,597	49.30
Brisbane	58,546	60,729	3.73
Capricornia	46,142	57,483	24.58
Darling Downs	53,989	62,454	15.67
Dawson	47,021	59,627	26.81
Fisher	52,221	70,370	34.75
Griffith	58,868	60,060	2.02
Herbert	46,115	62,785	36.15
Kennedy	41,609	51,345	23.40
Leichhardt	46,331	57,864	24.89
Lilley	56,230	64,624	14.93
McPherson	47,371	91,381	92.90
Maranoa	44,788	47,506	6.07
Moreton	51,027	60,560	18.68
Oxley	52,779	74,410	40.98
Petrie	52,751	76,895	45.77
Ryan	52,395	72,744	38.84
Wide Bay	51,692	59,649	15.39
Total	912,858	1,171,083	28.29

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Adelaide	55,580	61,287	10.27
Angas	47,657	55,995	17.50
Barker	49,103	62,902	28.10
Bonython	48,360	80,648	66.77
Bootby	54,622	62,257	13.98
Grey	45,373	58,161	28.18
Hawker	53,549	61,273	14.42
Hindmarsh	54,343	64,095	17.95
Kingston	50,199	72,042	43.51
Port Adelaide	54,576	61,052	11.87
Sturt	49,225	68,320	38.79
Wakefield	46,234	49,450	6.96
Total	608,821	757,482	24.42

WESTERN AUSTRALIA**After Redistribution 1974**

Canning	47,602	58,775	Does not apply
Curtin	54,781	67,646	Does not apply
Forrest	47,020	56,364	Does not apply
Fremantle	54,598	65,447	Does not apply
Kalgoorlie	41,529	53,636	Does not apply

Division	Enrolment May 1968	Enrolment July 1974	Percentage Change*
Moore	45,345	62,563	Does not apply
Perth	56,208	66,484	Does not apply
Stirling	53,248	58,445	Does not apply
Swan	59,091	68,568	Does not apply
Tangney	Does not apply	61,403	Does not apply
Total	459,422	619,331	34.81

TASMANIA

Bass	40,139	46,349	15.47
Braddon	41,803	52,102	24.64
Denison	42,917	51,546	20.11
Franklin	37,203	48,749	31.04
Wilmot	41,362	48,804	17.99
Total	203,424	247,550	21.69

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Canberra	Does not apply	50,532	Does not apply
Fraser	Does not apply	53,450	Does not apply
Total	53,461	103,982	94.50

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Total	19,097	37,786	97.86
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WESTERN AUSTRALIA**Prior to Redistribution 1974**

Canning	47,602	78,063	63.99
Curtin	54,781	58,653	7.07
Forrest	47,020	56,116	19.34
Fremantle	54,598	71,856	31.61
Kalgoorlie	41,529	59,901	44.24
Moore	45,345	71,370	57.39
Perth	56,208	67,081	19.34
Stirling	53,248	81,029	52.17
Swan	59,091	70,192	18.79
Total	459,422	614,261	33.70

* Percentage changes are all positive unless prefixed by a minus sign.

Elections: Informal Votes

(Question No. 709)

Mr Riordan asked the Minister for Services and Property, upon notice:

(1) What was the informal vote in each electoral division in Australia in the—

- (a) House of Representatives Election;
- (b) Senate Election; and
- (c) Referendums of 18 May 1974.

(2) What was the total informal vote in each State for the—

- (a) House of Representatives Election;
 (b) Senate Election; and
 (c) Referendums of 18 May 1974.

Mr Daly—The answer to the honourable member's question is contained in the following table:

1974 ELECTION AND REFERENDUMS
INFORMAL VOTE BY DIVISION, WITH STATE

Division	House of Representatives	Senate	Referendum No. 1	Referendum No. 2	Referendum No. 3	Referendum No. 4
New South Wales—						
Banks	945	8,436	865	845	859	935
Barton	711	6,328	591	575	584	699
Bennelong	1,132	6,265	895	864	869	946
Berowra	686	4,670	532	536	532	625
Blaxland	1,311	8,741	1,042	1,043	1,034	1,158
Bradfield	619	3,681	426	418	418	465
Calare	775	7,193	825	813	822	882
Chifley	1,640	11,003	1,295	1,280	1,299	1,428
Cook	587	5,947	524	509	502	554
Cowper	620	7,862	750	739	747	827
Cunningham	1,140	7,963	1,011	985	1,002	1,143
Darling	937	7,211	973	959	950	1,044
Eden Monaro	835	7,854	959	940	958	1,054
Evans	1,379	5,927	1,095	1,087	1,067	1,124
Farrer	795	7,724	887	876	874	999
Grayndler	1,303	8,054	1,296	1,260	1,269	1,410
Gwydir	602	9,007	652	642	647	736
Hughes	894	7,095	829	801	812	912
Hume	759	7,184	654	651	654	734
Hunter	954	9,596	809	803	808	931
Kingsford-Smith	1,191	7,778	1,182	1,197	1,182	1,377
Lang	1,136	7,225	1,041	1,020	989	1,180
Lowe	1,241	5,524	868	875	874	916
Lyne	655	9,092	722	725	716	828
Macarthur	856	8,210	766	738	762	915
Mackellar	949	6,532	792	779	775	873
Macquarie	1,084	8,439	854	857	858	932
Mitchell	1,122	7,938	873	856	860	971
Newcastle	919	6,461	929	911	911	1,066
New England	672	8,415	886	862	870	1,010
North Sydney	1,202	5,474	866	883	1,074	1,046
Parramatta	1,101	6,996	893	885	877	952
Paterson	658	8,483	730	709	717	840
Phillip	1,435	6,263	1,321	1,321	1,300	1,362
Prospect	1,513	9,593	1,125	1,115	1,150	1,277
Reid	1,264	9,382	1,202	1,200	1,183	1,347
Richmond	589	7,256	757	746	749	862
Riverina	572	6,318	895	909	901	975
Robertson	985	10,075	1,136	1,124	1,125	1,322
St George	931	6,650	827	808	814	938
Shortland	997	5,790	908	887	898	967
Sydney	1,709	9,561	1,305	1,298	1,303	1,362
Warringah	832	5,254	622	622	620	669
Wentworth	859	3,758	792	742	760	803
Werriwa	1,715	8,610	1,099	1,111	1,108	1,194
Total	44,811	332,818	40,301	39,806	40,083	44,590
Victoria—						
Balaclava	1,186	5,612	957	925	940	1,056
Ballaarat	1,077	7,389	1,001	984	988	1,176
Batman	1,629	7,579	1,375	1,379	1,389	1,587
Bendigo	868	5,983	673	656	664	817
Bruce	1,182	4,901	869	865	869	994
Burke	2,382	10,289	1,789	1,808	1,817	2,025
Casey	1,055	5,631	808	815	823	930
Chisholm	920	4,749	712	709	705	836

Division	House of Representatives	Senate	Referendum No. 1	Referendum No. 2	Referendum No. 3	Referendum No. 4
Corangamite	792	8,016	737	725	724	867
Corio	1,231	7,640	1,079	1,063	1,074	1,250
Deakin	956	5,091	717	722	734	858
Diamond Valley	1,172	6,624	876	843	883	1,014
Flinders	952	6,630	935	925	947	1,095
Gellibrand	2,054	8,596	1,604	1,586	1,603	1,811
Gippsland	899	6,800	824	815	826	964
Henty	1,093	5,063	930	941	927	1,052
Higgins	1,079	5,000	855	850	853	951
Holt	1,961	8,960	1,590	1,594	1,600	1,780
Hotham	1,118	5,641	841	811	816	979
Indi	928	6,219	910	927	930	1,060
Isaacs	1,062	5,237	741	731	752	863
Kooyong	980	4,757	709	710	708	805
Lalor	2,338	10,982	1,928	1,927	1,951	2,177
La Trobe	1,467	7,493	1,125	1,113	1,119	1,286
McMillan	1,177	6,161	882	871	877	1,029
Mallee	976	6,251	1,046	1,039	1,042	1,161
Maribyrnong	1,587	7,135	1,308	1,306	1,314	1,498
Melbourne	1,839	7,654	1,515	1,529	1,533	1,725
Melbourne Ports	1,556	7,412	1,199	1,199	1,213	1,357
Murray	1,299	7,553	1,113	1,121	1,134	1,252
Scullin	1,685	8,283	1,453	1,442	1,473	1,628
Wannon	582	5,456	622	617	619	753
Wills	1,793	7,909	1,457	1,456	1,466	1,671
Wimmera	758	5,778	633	650	654	800
Total	43,633	230,474	35,813	35,654	35,967	41,109
Queensland—						
Bowman	1,086	4,287	860	874	971	882
Brisbane	1,252	4,284	917	915	915	1,013
Capricornia	590	3,105	487	486	494	585
Darling Downs	556	3,090	596	586	596	701
Dawson	581	3,430	674	675	665	760
Fisher	923	3,831	693	690	697	772
Griffith	901	3,996	770	754	759	841
Herbert	783	4,241	744	734	737	836
Kennedy	703	3,433	665	663	663	736
Leichhardt	1,184	4,861	1,036	1,022	1,033	1,155
Lilley	939	3,266	692	680	680	759
McPherson	1,046	4,183	953	938	943	1,066
Maranoa	535	2,852	533	531	535	608
Moreton	669	3,013	513	519	520	611
Oxley	1,039	3,506	1,013	899	1,009	1,095
Petrie	1,063	4,291	680	677	687	795
Ryan	760	2,880	514	505	511	586
Wide Bay	508	3,382	525	511	514	598
Total	15,118	65,941	12,865	12,659	12,929	14,399
South Australia—						
Adelaide	1,866	6,948	1,682	1,689	1,708	1,955
Angas	1,485	6,403	1,180	1,209	1,225	1,404
Barker	1,568	6,575	1,202	1,204	1,221	1,438
Bonython	2,473	8,612	1,776	1,794	1,813	2,019
Boothby	1,259	5,684	1,104	1,098	1,114	1,262
Grey	1,344	6,789	1,290	1,315	1,331	1,536
Hawker	1,481	5,864	1,348	1,360	1,371	1,616
Hindmarsh	2,115	7,794	2,051	2,085	2,097	2,415
Kingston	1,281	6,328	1,224	1,227	1,226	1,450

Division	House of Representatives	Senate	Referendum No. 1	Referendum No. 2	Referendum No. 3	Referendum No. 4
Port Adelaide	2,463	9,635	2,162	2,194	2,197	2,530
Sturt	1,802	6,554	1,417	1,440	1,458	1,685
Wakefield	1,174	5,005	963	974	977	1,156
Total	20,311	82,191	17,399	17,589	17,738	20,466
Western Australia—						
Canning	1,427	5,692	1,091	1,102	1,119	1,195
Curtin	1,460	5,524	1,160	1,158	1,160	1,226
Forrest	1,084	5,607	1,192	1,179	1,185	1,239
Fremantle	1,554	6,709	1,546	1,565	1,582	1,656
Kalgoorlie	1,216	5,624	1,104	1,125	1,126	1,193
Moore	1,322	5,570	1,201	1,210	1,213	1,252
Perth	2,077	7,848	1,959	1,958	1,958	2,026
Stirling	1,200	5,259	1,215	1,223	1,231	1,287
Swan	1,816	6,999	1,727	1,720	1,737	1,833
Tangney	1,419	5,204	1,148	1,180	1,145	1,216
Total	14,575	60,036	13,343	13,420	13,456	14,123
Tasmania—						
Bass	877	5,138	781	790	796	872
Braddon	888	5,840	857	856	865	938
Denison	773	4,620	727	726	736	788
Franklin	758	4,929	674	673	671	735
Wilmot	917	6,139	903	908	930	990
Total	4,213	26,666	3,942	3,953	3,998	4,323
A.C.T.—						
Canberra	508
Fraser	741
Northern Territory	852

Australian Capital Territory: Child Care Services and Facilities

(Question No. 716)

Mr Street asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

Will he support the establishment of a fully representative consultative committee on child care in the Australian Capital Territory.

Mr Bryant—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The Australian Government has under consideration the question of child care services and facilities on a national basis. The honourable member will be aware of various reports, which the Government is considering. These reports and recommendations will doubtless have implications for the Australian Capital Territory.

Officers of the Department of the Capital Territory are in regular communication with the relevant authorities in the field of child care and with the various local community organisations. At present, I do not see a need to establish a consultative committee but I will keep the possibility open.

Tuggeranong: Housing

(Question No. 724)

Mr McLeay asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

(1) What is the proportion of Government to private housing development in the new district of Tuggeranong.

(2) What efforts have been made to ensure a diversification of construction.

Mr Bryant—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) The National Capital Development Commission's current plans envisage Government houses constituting approximately 30 per cent of the total Tuggeranong development.

(2) Private housing construction provides a wide range of housing types. The National Capital Development Commission advises that a variety of designs will be used for Government housing. In addition sites will be available for lease for a variety of medium density housing developments including cluster and courtyard houses, town houses and residential flats.

Australian Capital Territory: Increased Land Rates

(Question No. 717)

Mr Street asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

Following the recent revaluation of property in the Australian Capital Territory, will he ensure that adequate machinery is available to deal promptly with appeals from citizens facing increases in general rates, amounting in some cases to over 100 per cent.

Mr Bryant—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

As at 20 August 1974, 2,080 objections to valuations have been received. These will be handled as quickly as possible having regard to staff limitations.

The current practice is to revalue each 3 years. It is intended this practice will be continued and the next revaluation will then be to levels prevailing at 1 January 1976. It is expected the values will then be introduced for the rating year commencing 1 July 1977.

Increases in annual rate charges do not necessarily automatically result from increased unimproved values. The level of rates payable each year is determined by the amount of revenue required to meet the estimated cost of municipal services.

Queensland Floods: Public Service Volunteers

(Question No. 742)

Mr Snedden asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) What was the composition of the Australian Government volunteer workforce provided to assist in flood restoration work in Queensland.

(2) How long was the workforce made available.

(3) Will this assistance be provided in future national disasters.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) The Australian Government volunteer workforce which assisted in flood restoration work in Queensland was composed of employees from a number of Departments who were released from their normal duties on the authority of the Chief Officers of their respective Departments under the normal conditions which apply in civil emergencies.

In addition, 'on duty' staff were transferred on a voluntary basis from Departments (such as the Postmaster-General's Department and the Department of Social Security) in other States to perform a wide range of tasks associated with flood restoration and rehabilitation.

(2) Australian Government employees first provided assistance in February 1974 and it is likely that, in some instances, this aid will need to be continued after September 1974 because of continuing flood-caused needs in some areas.

(3) The form and level of Australian Government assistance in the event of future natural disasters will be determined in the light of the circumstances that obtain at the time of any disaster. Requests for Australian Government assistance will be co-ordinated by the recently established Natural Disasters Organisation through its National Emergency Operations Centre.

Australian Government Offices: Relocation in Suburbs

(Question No. 743)

Mr Snedden asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) Has the Government been advised that 15,000 public servants working in the central business district of Melbourne could be moved to suburban offices.

(2) If so, does the Government accept that advice.

(3) If so, when will the advice be put into effect.

(4) Has the Government been advised that 10,000 public servants working in the central business district of Sydney could be moved to suburban offices.

(5) If so, does the Government accept that advice.

(6) If so, when will the advice be put into effect.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) and (4) Yes, by the Interdepartmental Committee on Australian Government Office Accommodation (see press statement by the Minister for Services and Property and the Minister for Urban and Regional Development on 18 December 1973).

(2) and (5) In principle, yes.

(3) and (6) In pursuance of its policy to relieve pressure on the central business districts in major cities, the Government has already decided to disperse Australian Government staff from inner-city areas in Melbourne (3,000 to Ringwood) and Sydney (2,500 to Parramatta and 2,000 to Campbelltown) in the short term. Government decisions about the relocation of additional units in the longer term will have regard to the emerging needs of urban and regional development policy.

Palmerston Freeway

(Question No. 761)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for the Northern Territory, upon notice:

What is the present status of the construction of the Palmerston freeway.

Dr Patterson—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

The Palmerston Arterial Road is proposed for construction in four stages with an overall construction period of 2½ years. Each stage will be programmed so that all stages will be completed at the same time. Documentation for stage one is completed and its inclusion in the works programme is subject to budgetary considerations.

Community Recreation Facilities

(Question No. 787)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Tourism and Recreation, upon notice:

How does his Department ensure, as he himself has said is necessary, that it is providing the most urgently required community recreation facilities in their right priorities.

Mr Stewart—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

A wide range of proposals is being developed at local authority level and my Department is concerned to ensure an increased awareness of the importance of local communities

being involved in recreation planning and the necessity for local governments to set priorities on their requirements for recreation facilities in accordance with identified community needs.

All local government authorities in Australia have been advised of the Government's programme for capital assistance for sporting and recreation facilities. Local governments submit requests for assistance through the appropriate State Recreation Department, which will also provide professional guidance in the development of projects.

The State Department assesses all applications in terms of technical adequacy and the relative needs of the various communities in the State. The priority list thus established may include local, regional and State projects. This list, which will include a description of the project, the proposed management arrangements and the basis for funding is considered by my Department for Australian Government subsidy in the light of national priorities. In assessing specialised projects in the cultural or arts sphere, the advice of the Australian Council for the Arts is sought.

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet: Management Consultant Firms

(Question No. 788)

Mr Snedden asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) For what purpose has the Department used management consultant firms in the last 12 months.

(2) Which firms have been used.

(3) What was the total cost.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) and (2)

Purpose	Firm
Investigation of the funding and reporting procedures of the Experimental Film Fund administered by the Australian Film Institute	H. F. Fox and Co.
Feasibility study on the establishment of a scheme of publishing subsidies, designed to encourage the publication and sale of original Australian works of creative literature	P. A. Management Consultants Pty Ltd.
(3) \$27,834.	

Department of Overseas Trade: Management Consultant Firms

(Question No. 789)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Overseas Trade, upon notice:

(1) For what purpose has the Department used management consultant firms in the last 12 months.

(2) Which firms have been used.

(3) What was the total cost.

Dr J. F. Cairns—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) To prepare a report on the nature and scale of computing services which will facilitate the Department's decision making processes and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations.

(2) Computer Sciences of Australia Pty Ltd.

(3) \$36,000.

Department of Customs and Excise: Management Consultant Firms

(Question No. 793)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Minister for Customs and Excise, upon notice:

(1) For what purpose has the Department of Customs and Excise used management consultant firms in the last twelve months.

(2) Which firms have been used.

(3) What was the total cost.

Dr J. F. Cairns—The Minister for Customs and Excise has provided the following answer to the right honourable member's questions:

The Department of Customs and Excise has not formally engaged any management consultant firms in the last twelve months. However, during the year the Department has used on a part time basis the services of outside experts in various fields including management, accountancy and data processing. The total cost incurred for these services for the last twelve months was \$16,943.

Department of Labor and Immigration: Management Consultant Firms

(Question No. 802)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Labor and Immigration, upon notice:

(1) For what purpose has the Department used management consultant firms in the last 12 months.

(2) Which firms have been used.

(3) What was the total cost.

Mr Clyde Cameron—I am informed that the answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) (a) To undertake a feasibility study, develop and design a management and information system in the former Department of Immigration.

(b) To design a real time ADP system for applicant and vacancy information in the CES, examine the equipment requirements and carry out a cost benefit analysis.

(2) Computer Sciences of Australia Pty Ltd in both cases.

(3) \$98,200.

Department of Education: Management Consultant Firms

(Question No. 803)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Education, upon notice:

(1) For what purpose has the Department used management consultant firms in the last 12 months.

(2) Which firms have been used.

(3) What was the total cost.

Mr Beazley—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1), (2) and (3) My Department has not made use of any management consultant firms in the period specified.

Norfolk Island

(Question No. 846)

Mr Peacock asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

(1) Have certain members of the Norfolk Island Council approached the United Nations regarding the Government's mishandling of Norfolk Island matters.

(2) If so, what members of the Council made the complaint.

(3) What was the basis of the complaint.

(4) What is his attitude to the complaint.

Mr Bryant—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) and (2) No. In fact the Norfolk Island Council at its recent meeting resolved that it disassociates itself from the recent publicity in the Australian and local press concerning a visit to Norfolk Island by a United Nations delegation. In so resolving Council emphasised that it has not considered such action and that no poll was conducted to ascertain the views of all Councillors concerning a proposed visit of such a delegation to Norfolk Island.

(3) and (4) The honourable member will be aware that some sections of the Norfolk Island community reacted angrily to the closure of tax haven loopholes predicted by the previous Government and implemented by this Government.

Some persons on the Island resent Government pressure to introduce statutory land planning, a concept which had the support of the previous Government, and resent the Government's interest in encouraging effective controls over the siting, design and construction of buildings. Some people fear the spectres of taxes as future possibilities.

The Government is aware that Norfolk Island has problems which require special attention. Experts have been engaged to advise on matters such as long-term population controls, land and land use, introduction of guaranteed land titles and the development and control of ground water resources. The Kingston ruins are being restored at great expense, with great tourist potential. Education and hospital needs are being reassessed.

The honourable member will be aware that in 1960 the Norfolk Island Council Ordinance was amended to provide considerable local administrative control. The Norfolk Island Council declined to accept these responsibilities and the amendment was repealed in 1963. The present newly-elected Council hopes for some transfer of powers and I have already invited discussion on this.

Norfolk Island faces many of the investment problems of modern communities needing money to upgrade education, health, municipal facilities and social services.

As the honourable member knows the Island pays no income tax, has no sound system of municipal charging and has limited sources of revenue. The Island's permanent and transient population is increasing and the challenge is to find ways through these problems. The answers will not be found in acrimony; the problems cannot be ignored. I can assure the honourable member that the objectives of Government are fully in step with the aspirations of progressive nations.

Industries: Australian Ownership and Control

(Question No. 850)

Mr Connolly asked the Minister for Overseas Trade, upon notice:

(1) Did he, in an address to the National Press Club on 20 June 1974, state in relation to Australian ownership and control of industries that we are really concerned with industries of national importance.

(2) If so, which industries of national importance does he consider should be Australian owned or controlled.

(3) What are the criteria he would apply in defining (a) Australian ownership and (b) Australian control.

Dr J. F. Cairns—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) Yes.

(2) No exhaustive or exclusive list of industries was envisaged. There are many factors economic and other which would need to be taken into account in each instance.

(3) (a) Australians own a significant interest in the industry or enterprise.

(b) Australians exercise effective control.

Election Campaign: Secretarial Assistance

(Question No. 853)

Mr Donald Cameron asked the Minister for Services and Property, upon notice:

(1) What are the names and Party affiliations of all Members and Senators who were allocated extra secretarial assistance at Government expense during the period 29 April 1974 to 17 May 1974, what were the dates that each of those persons requested the extra help, and for how long was it given to each of them.

(2) Did Senator Marriott complain to him, at least 2 weeks prior to the election date, and then to the Departmental officer, that in Tasmania the entire pool had been allocated to members of the Australian Labor Party.

(3) Will he provide a copy of the directions to Members of Parliament in which advice as to the availability and terms of use of extra secretarial assistance was given; if not, why not.

(4) What date was the advice sent out.

(5) Were some Opposition Members in South Australia refused extra help which brought about an angry reaction from two of these Members.

(6) As a result of this reaction, is it a fact that the South Australia relieving pool had to be reallocated and members of the pool withdrawn from Members of the Australian Labor Party.

(7) Excluding any permanent arrangements for extra secretarial assistance at appointed times, what were the total extra man hours given by way of extra assistance to—

(a) Members or Senators of the Australian Labor Party,

(b) Members or Senators of the Australian Country Party,

(c) Members or Senators of the Liberal Party of Australia, and

(d) Senators of the Democratic Labor Party.

(8) Were certain members refused assistance; if so, who were they, and what was the Party affiliation of each.

(9) In which States was extra help given only to ALP Members.

(10) Did he deny any knowledge of the foregoing in a speech on Wednesday, 24 July 1974; if so, why.

Mr Daly—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

I refer the honourable member to the statements made by me on the adjournment of the House relating to his accusations in relation to the abovementioned matters, vide Hansard;

Hansard 24 July 1974, page 621;

Hansard 25 July 1974, pages 725 to 727;

Hansard 1 August 1974, pages 1026 to 1028.

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet: Research and Development Staff

(Question No. 860)

Mr Snedden asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) How many officers or employees of his Department or authorities under his control are employed on research and development work.

(2) Where are they employed.

(3) What is the nature of the work being undertaken.

(4) What is the total expenditure per annum in maintaining this research and development program.

(5) Who decides the nature of the programs or projects included in this research and development work.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

Many of the staff in my Department and in Authorities under my control are engaged from time to time on work which might be classified generally as 'research and development'. Those who have the designation of 'Research Officer' are to a very large degree engaged in research pursuits. Others, though having other designations, are also engaged in more or less degree in research.

In Authorities where the designation 'Research Officer' is used, the following information can be provided:

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

(1) 1.

(2) North Sydney.

(3) Co-ordination of research for the Council undertaken by consultants, universities or specialist research organisations, together with minor statistical analysis relevant to the work of the Council and its Boards.

(4) \$11,067.

(5) The Council's Research Committee.

INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

(1) 34.

(2) Canberra.

(3) Specialised studies of aspects of individual industries reviewed by the Commission and economic research to analyse the general effects of industry assistance policy proposals on the productive resources in the Australian economy.

(4) \$430,000.

(5) Chairman and Commissioners of the Commission.

PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

(1) 16.

(2) Canberra.

(3) General research relating to developments of policies over the full range of the Board's activities, including:

Supply and demand for staff for the Australian Public Service.

Rates of pay and other conditions of service.

Examination and evaluation of trends in public administration.

(4) \$172,143.

(5) The Public Service Board.

Attorney-General's Department: Research and Development Staff

(Question No. 864)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Attorney-General, upon notice:

(1) How many officers or employees of the Attorney-General's Department or of authorities under the Attorney-General's control are employed on research and development work.

(2) Where are they employed.

(3) What is the nature of the work being undertaken.

(4) What is the total expenditure per annum in maintaining this research and development programme.

(5) Who decides the nature of the programmes or projects included in this research and development work.

Mr Enderby—The Attorney-General has supplied the following answers to the right honourable member's questions:

(1) 10.

(2) The Research Division of the Australian Institute of Criminology, 10-16 Colbee Court, Phillip, Australian Capital Territory.

(3) Eight research projects are currently being undertaken by the staff of the Australian Institute of Criminology. These are as follows:

(a) Survey of Federal Prisoners.

(b) An Examination of the Effectiveness of Short Term Sentences in Australia, with Consideration of Recent Experience in England and New Zealand.

(c) A Comparative Study of the Merits and Effectiveness of Suspended Sentences, Community Work Schemes and Weekend Imprisonment.

(d) Bail and Remand in Custody.

(e) Principles of Sentencing Enunciated by Australian Appeal Courts.

(f) Car Stealing in Australia.

(g) Formal and Informal Arrangements for the Interstate Transfer of Probationers and Parolees.

(h) Attitudes Towards Crimes and Differential Punishments Among a Sample of Sydney Citizens.

In addition to the above, the Institute has an on-going commitment to 'give advice in relation to the compilation of statistics relating to crime' by Section 6(g) of the Criminology Research Act 1971 and in this connection is working closely with the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

(4) \$175,913.

(5) All research projects to be undertaken by the Institute are approved by the Board of Management.

Department of Customs and Excise: Research and Development Staff

(Question No. 865)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Minister for Customs and Excise, upon notice:

- (1) How many officers or employees of the Department of Customs and Excise or of authorities under the Minister's control are employed on research and development work.
- (2) Where are they employed.
- (3) What is the nature of the work being undertaken.
- (4) What is the total expenditure per annum in maintaining this research and development program.
- (5) Who decides the nature of the programs or projects included in this research and development work.

Dr J. F. Cairns—The Minister for Customs and Excise has provided the following information for answer to the right honourable member's questions respectively:

(1) to (5) No officer of the Department of Customs and Excise is engaged in work that could be described as research and development as this expression is normally used. However, certain departmental officers are employed in positions designated as 'Research Officer'. They are engaged in applied research directed towards new or improved procedures, policies or administration.

Australian Assistance Plan

(Question No. 891)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Social Security, upon notice:

- (1) Have courses been introduced in Australian universities, colleges of advanced education or other academic institutions to train personnel for the Australian Assistance Plan.
- (2) If so, where are the courses being conducted.
- (3) How many are enrolled in each course.
- (4) What is the nature of the course, and is it designed specifically for the Australian Assistance Plan.
- (5) If so, what distinguishes the course, and makes it specific to the Australian Assistance Plan.

Mr Hayden—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

(1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) Although some Australian Universities, Colleges of Advanced Education and other academic institutions provide courses in the social sciences which have a direct relevance to community development and social planning, no course has been introduced in these institutions to train personnel specifically for the Australian Assistance Plan.

Christmas Island

(Question No. 927)

Mr Hunt asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

With reference to the answer to my question No. 477 of 17 July 1974, does the Government regard the Territory of Christmas Island as having strategic significance now or in the future.

Mr Whitlam—The reply to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Yes.

Australian Advisory Committee on the Environment

(Question No. 936)

Mr Ruddock asked the Minister for the Environment and Conservation, upon notice:

(1) Did he announce the new members of the Australian Advisory Committee on the Environment on 1 August 1974.

(2) If so, were these members chosen after hundreds of suggestions had been received from many organisations.

(3) If so, what organisations made suggestions and, in respect of each organisation, whom did they nominate including in the list both those appointed and those not appointed.

(4) Are members of the Committee paid; if so, what remuneration is received, and what provision has been made for payment of expenses.

Dr Cass—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) Yes.

(2) and (3) I asked a large number of professional, academic, industrial, trade union and community organisations to nominate individuals who would be suitable to serve on the Committee in their individual capacities and not as representatives of particular groups. I subsequently held personal discussions with representatives of some of these groups and made further enquiries as to potential membership. I am not in the habit of publishing details of correspondence and discussions with organisations and individuals without their consent and I believe that the advice which I received was given in confidence and should continue to be treated as such. The members of the Committee are as follows:

Professor R. J. Walsh, Dean of Medical School, University of New South Wales.

Mr C. W. Davis, Senior Executive Officer and Chief Chemist, The C.S.R. Company Ltd.

Dr J. H. Hatch, Senior Lecturer in Economics, University of Adelaide.

Mr J. Halfpenny, Secretary, Victorian Branch, Amalgamated Metal Workers Union.

Dr P. H. Apps, Lecturer in Architecture, University of Sydney.

Mr A. A. McCutcheon, Urban Design and Planning Associates, South Melbourne, Victoria.

Professor D. C. O'Connor, Professor of Environmental Studies, Murdoch University.

Professor G. Seddon, Director, Centre of Environmental Studies, University of Melbourne.

Mr K. W. Shugg, Hobart, Tasmania.

Ms B. Sykes, Education Officer, Aboriginal Medical Service, Redfern, New South Wales.

Mr K. C. Turbet, General Secretary, Postal Telecommunications Technicians Association, Victoria.

Dr J. S. Weir, Associate Professor of Natural Resources, University of New England.

Mr M. Wilcox, Barrister, Sydney, New South Wales.

Mr L. W. Weickhardt, Chancellor, University of Melbourne.

Dr W. F. Westman, Lecturer in Botany, University of Queensland.

I believe that they represent a broad spectrum of community interest in the environment. I welcome the honourable member's interest in the Committee. If he wishes to meet the Committee members, I would be happy to arrange it.

(4) Sitting fees will be payable at the standard Australian Government rate which is currently \$40 per day for the Chairman and \$35 per day for members. For meetings of three hours or less, sitting fees are \$25 and \$20 respectively.

Air travel will be provided to attend meetings and expenses at the rate of \$28 per day will be paid if a member is required to be absent from his/her home overnight.

Stevedoring Industry

(Question No. 939)

Mr Malcolm Fraser asked the Minister for Labor and Immigration, upon notice:

(1) What progress has he made with the proposals contained in his labour relations speech of 5 February 1974 when he said that there was going to be public involvement in stevedoring operations in active competition with private stevedoring companies so as to effect greater efficiency on the waterfront.

(2) What progress has he made with his proposal that the Port of Darwin would be the starting point, with the Stevedoring Industry Commission's activity being extended there and to other ports.

Mr Clyde Cameron—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) For some time now the Government has been giving serious consideration to a number of alternative propositions affecting the stevedoring industry. In my speech of last February I outlined a wide range of initiatives being developed by the Government in labour relations and other areas, some of which have since been implemented and others have yet to be refined before implementation. Matters associated with stevedoring are in the latter category, but I can assure the honourable member that when the Government has formed its plans, he will be fully informed about what is intended.

(2) As indicated above, the matter of stevedoring operations at Australian ports is under active consideration by the Government but at this stage it would not be proper for me to elaborate. As I mentioned in presenting the Stevedoring Industry (Temporary Provisions) Bill 1974 in July last, an extensive study of legal and administrative problems associated with forms of organisations for the industry is well advanced but not yet complete.