Tuesday, 11 September, 1979

Administration of the Government—Petitions—Questions without Notice—Adjournment (Transportation of Coal)—Governor's Speech: Address in Reply (Seventh Day's Debate)—Questions upon Notice.

Mr Speaker (The Hon. Lawrence Borthwick Kelly) took the chair at 2.15 p.m.

Mr Speaker offered the Prayer.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

Mr Speaker reported the receipt of the following message from His Excellency the Administrator:

A. R. MOFFITT,
Administrator.

The Honourable Mr Justice Athol Randolph Moffitt, Acting Chief Justice of New South Wales, has the honour to inform the Legislative Assembly that, consequent on the departure on 1 September, 1979 of the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Roden Cutler, to attend the funeral in London of the late the Earl Mountbatten of Burma, he this day took the Oath of Allegiance and the Official and Judicial Oath before the Acting President of the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of New South Wales, and assumed the administration of the Government of the State.

Government House,
Sydney, 1 September, 1979.

Mr Speaker reported the receipt of the following message from His Excellency the Governor:

A. R. CUTLER,
Governor.

The Governor of the State of New South Wales, Sir Roden Cutler, has the honour to inform the Legislative Assembly that, following his return from an official visit to the United Kingdom, he has this day re-assumed the administration of the Government of the State.

Government House,
Sydney, 7 September, 1979.

PETITIONS

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

Sunday Hotel Trading

The Petition of the undersigned electors in the State of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:
(1) A referendum on Sunday trading in hotels was held in New South Wales in 1969 which showed that out of ninety-four electorates eighty-eight voted against any extension of Sunday trading.

(2) Alcohol is a contributing factor in a large proportion of road accidents and deaths. Figures released in Western Australia show a 5.9 per cent increase in road deaths since Sunday trading.

(3) The high incidence of alcoholism among our children and young people requires instant action during the International Year of the Child.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House:

Will take no steps to increase trading hours for alcoholic liquor without democratically ascertaining the will of the people by a referendum.

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

Petitions, lodged by Mr Brewer, Mr Mason, Mr Punch and Mr Wotton, received.

Sunday Hotel Trading

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

That the proposal to legalize Sunday hotel trading will increase the road toll by increasing the number of drinking drivers on the road.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House ensure that no change is made in the present Sunday hotel trading laws.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Keane, received.

Trade Unions

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

That they are dismayed by the present industrial anarchy which is forcing hardship on ordinary Australians, giving our country a bad name and undermining orderly government.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that:

The Premier and the Government take urgent action to curb the power of unions and put the control of the State back in the hands of our elected Government.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Smith, received.

Terania Creek

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

That the logging of Terania Creek, via Lismore, is being carried out without an environmental impact study being made on the effects to the environment.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House request the Minister for Agriculture to call for an environmental impact study to be carried out at Terania Creek.
And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Petition, lodged by Mr Robb, received.

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

That many people who derive their income, in whole or in part, from sawmilling and associated industries and from grazing, agriculture, beekeeping and from transport and commerce and the residents of villages involved, do humbly declare that the proposed extensions of national parks will have a serious and lasting effect on their livelihood, well-being and recreation.

We call on the Ministers involved to cease any further acquisition of lands for national parks and/or wilderness areas, and that any recent additions be revoked.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will sympathetically look at the problems of all these people in New South Wales and beyond.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Rozzoli, received.

Abortion
The Petition of the undersigned who care for kids born and unborn respectfully sheweth:

(1) That the civil rights of the unborn should be protected.
(2) That the role of the pregnant woman should be respected and given economic support.
(3) That grave concern is felt at the number of abortions being carried out in New South Wales.
(4) That the law in respect of abortion should be enforced for the protection of unborn children and pregnant women.
(5) That violence against the unborn and their mothers must cease forthwith.

Your Petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled should respect the right to life.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Gabb, received.

Caravan Parks
We, the citizens of New South Wales and more particularly the owners of caravans occupying permanent sites on privately owned and Council owned and controlled parks in the area situated within the bounds of the City of Shoalhaven, respectfully show that we are deeply concerned with certain of the recommendations from the Report from the Joint Committee of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of New South Wales Upon Parks for Mobile Homes and Caravans and we humbly pray that your humble House will not accept the following recommendations:

A. On-Site Vans
Section 8.30 (3) The occupation of such a van be limited to the owner or his family and to
(a) 70 consecutive days or 150 days in aggregate in any 12 consecutive months in a Tourist Caravan Park; or
(b) 275 days in any 12 consecutive months in a Long Term Caravan Park.

B. Annexes

Section 11.16 (e) No wall of an annexe should be closer than 3 metres to any other annexe, tent or caravan.

C. Proposals for Ordinance

To be implemented as an Ordinance under Section 288A and other relevant provisions of the Local Government Act, 1919.

21. In respect of parks coming within the classification of a "Tourist Caravan Park"—

(i) No site be made available by the proprietor for occupation by any one occupier for a period in excess of 70 consecutive days or for an aggregate of more than 150 days in any 12 consecutive months; and

(ii) No on-site van owned by the park proprietor for any other person and made available for use on payment of a fee or charge be permitted by the proprietor to be occupied anywhere on the park by any person for a period in excess of 70 consecutive days or an aggregate of more than 150 days in any 12 consecutive months.

26. There to be not less than 3 metres between the walls of caravans, on-site caravans and camps, including any annexe attached thereto.

27. All existing parks and those being established extended or redesigned after the commencement of the Ordinance to have an area of not less than 81 square metres for each site.

Your Petitioners give the following reasons for their objections:

(a) Caravans are frequently occupied by owners who are enjoying long-service leave and such periods frequently extend beyond the proposed periods for occupation.

(b) People occupying the caravans are frequently retired persons spending periods of time in their caravans away from their normal residences in the warmer months of the year in excess of the proposed periods.

(c) The persons owning caravans occupying permanent sites are frequently required to maintain the sites for a period of at least 12 months at a time and if they are unable to occupy them throughout that period this would constitute an injustice to them.

(d) Persons who have elected to occupy a caravan as a way of life either for personal health, financial or other reasons should not be prejudiced from remaining within a long term caravan park for periods in excess of 12 months and such occupation would not adversely affect other occupants of these parks or members of the general public.

Petition, lodged by Mr Hatton, received.
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

SOIL ANALYSES

Mr DAY: On 22nd August the honourable member for Barwon asked me a question relating to the soil analytical section of the biological and chemical research institute at Rydalmere. I have had an investigation made and can now report to the honourable member and the House that between 1st July and 15th August, 1978, some 1 670 soil samples were received for analysis. In the corresponding period this year 2 259 samples were received, an increase of 35 per cent. Unfortunately, the problem has been compounded by the fact that the assistant responsible for soil preparation took his annual recreation leave during the period when, unexpectedly, the greatest number of samples arrived for analysis. Notwithstanding that, in this period virtually the same number of samples was processed as in the corresponding period in 1978. Normally soil samples are not collected during rainy periods, and the July–August period is usually a wet period. This year the favourable winter season affected the number of samples, and staff have been diverted from other duties in an attempt to catch up on the backlog of samples. It is estimated that the situation will return to normal by about the middle of next month.

The problem has been compounded further by increased research activity, especially the Peel River soil survey and the Coffs Harbour land use assessment programme. In addition, a large number of samples has been submitted to the laboratory from the Trangie wheat industry project. It is interesting to note that between 1st April and 30th August, 1979, some 318 samples were submitted by constituents of the honourable member for Banvon. Of that number 13 only, or a total of 4 per cent, were outstanding at 5th September. Instead of attempting to criticize the efforts of dedicated officers of the Department of Agriculture, the honourable member for Banvon might more usefully spend his time exerting pressure on the federal Country Party Minister for Primary Industry in an endeavour to have more money made available from the Commonwealth extension services grants scheme. This year the service grants have been halved and the jobs of 47 people employed by the Department of Agriculture have been put in jeopardy. Sufficient staff are employed at Rydalmere and the technical officers of my department are overcoming the temporary problems in a most efficient manner.

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

Mr MASON: I address my question without notice to the Minister for Education. Is he aware that in June this year Mr Buchan, the deputy chairman of the Board of Senior School Studies, acknowledged that there were deficiencies in the marking of the 1976, 1977 and 1978 higher school certificate examinations? Did he also acknowledge that the board was unable to pinpoint the cause of these irregularities? Did he further acknowledge that as a result there was no way in which to compensate students who had suffered through these anomalies? Will the Minister indicate to the House, the public, concerned parents, and particularly those students who are about to sit for the higher school certificate examination, what action he has taken to prevent a recurrence of these anomalies?

Mr BEDFORD: It is true that for some time a debate has been going on concerning the scaling procedures, rather than the marking procedures, for the Higher School Certificate examination. The main problem seems to arise from what the scaling procedure is trying to establish by comparing subject with subject and level
with level within subjects. For at least the past twenty-five years some type of moderation procedure has been operating through the leaving certificate or higher school certificate examinations in an attempt to reach the goals of comparability between subjects and between levels, and between subjects from year to year. This is not a new phenomenon.

The Board of Senior School Studies, which honourable members know is a statutory board operating under an Act of this Parliament, is made up of representatives of universities, colleges of advanced education and the teaching service. In recent times this Government has introduced amendments to the Act to bring to the board people from outside that field. Representatives of parent organizations and other community organizations are about to sit as members of the board. Mr Buchan, when responding to the criticism that was raised, pointed out that it was difficult to pinpoint the causes of statistical difficulties that arise in the scaling procedures. Naturally, this caused great concern to the Government and I had discussions on the matter with the chairman of the board and suggested to him that it might be appropriate to appoint some sort of committee to review the procedures and see whether the criticisms that were being levelled against the complex features of the scaling procedures were justified. That committee would report to the board and, in turn, to the Government.

The problem was reviewed first by a committee of the Board of Senior School Studies. That seemed to me to be inappropriate, for those who were criticizing the system might well say that Caesar was appealing to Caesar. Following discussions with the Director-General of Education it was decided that this year the board's procedures for scaling would be overseen by two acknowledged experts in education and statistics who were outside the State education system. Both have been appointed. One of them, Dr John Keeves from Canberra, is already working on the procedures in the light of the various criticisms that have been made. The other is Dr George Parkyn, formerly Professor of Comparative Education at London University, who served some time in New Zealand in curriculum development and statistical procedures. I have not heard it suggested that they will be unable to monitor progress this year with a view to ensuring that where criticisms have been levelled against the procedures they do not occur again. I might digress to mention that it is only in two areas that criticism has been made; one is that of three unit English as against two unit English, and the other is that of scaling procedures for modern Greek. All subjects will be monitored by the two experts with a view to ensuring that if students were disadvantaged in 1978, that will not happen this year. The monitoring will ensure also that the board is advised on the procedures for next year, and that any further anomalies found to exist do not continue.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS' FEES

Mr PACIULLO: My question is directed to the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Housing and Minister for Co-operative Societies. Has the Minister's attention been invited to criticisms by spokespersons for doctors that the Prices Commission's inquiry into doctors' fees is unnecessary? Is the Minister aware of assertions by some doctors that the inquiry is unnecessary because doctors' fees represent only a portion of total health costs? Has the Minister any information suggesting that this negative attitude by some doctors means that the medical profession will not co-operate with the inquiry?

Mr EINFELD: I am indebted to the honourable member for Liverpool for this intelligent question, dealing as it does with an important matter that is occupying the interest of Australian citizens. I am confident—and I am delighted to be able to
tell the honourable member for Liverpool—that not all doctors share the unco-operative attitude towards the Prices Commission's inquiry shown by some of those who claim to be their spokesmen. The Australian Medical Association, for example, has made it clear that it will be taking an active role in the inquiry. It is a pity that some doctors' spokesmen are not as solicitous for the welfare of the community as they appear to be for the interests of their colleagues. Many doctors have told me of their disquiet over various aspects of the cost to the community of health care, and particularly about the level of fees charged by doctors. A vast amount of evidence has been published showing that schedule fees set by Mr Justice Ludeke are regarded by many doctors as guidelines only. Ten years ago more than 70 per cent of doctors charged the schedule fee. In recent years that figure is reported to have dropped below 30 per cent.

As the chairman of the Prices Commission said at the opening of the inquiry last week, one result is that consumers have no certain basis on which to plan their health care. Another result is that, whether their patients like it or not, doctors can charge what they like. Many patients would have been upset by the arrogant argument of the General Practitioners Society that patients can control fees by shopping round until they find the doctor who charges a fee that they want to pay. I should not think that the patient who is suffering from a broken arm or a concussed head would be impressed by that argument.

Only a few weeks ago the honourable member for Yaralla in his enthusiasm to work for his constituents, as he does continuously, showed me a doctor's bill sent to a lady in the Ryde area. That bill demonstrated the kind of high-handedness that upsets patients so much. The bill is for $18 for a house call and an extra $6 for the trouble of making out the bill. The bill looks as though it is an invoice from a business house rather than from a doctor, who was no doubt trained at the community's expense.

The bill is from a company called Western Medical Services Pty Limited, whose address is given as post office box 282, Merrylands, New South Wales. This firm also has a telephone number listed under "Medical Control" and its bill gives a separate telephone number to be used in connection with payment of accounts. The company announces that it has after hours locums servicing the Sydney area. This account, which is made out to Mrs S. Ellis of 16 Falconer Street, West Ryde, 2114, is dated 10th July, 1979. The bill refers to an account number 23020-1 and gives a reference number 24385. It refers also to a medical officer named Dr MacMahon and an item No. 51. The date of service given in the account is 7th July, 1979. The description of service is set out as, "In hours home visit, $18, plus billing fee, $6," and the bill shows a total sum due of $24.

The back of the notice again gives the name of the company as Western Medical Services Pty Limited and the same post office address. It states: "Save $6 accountancy fees by paying your account now by Bankcard, American Express or Diners Club." The notice contains a form of undertaking in the following terms:

I, the holder of credit card No. shown above agree to pay my medical account of $.

The address of the Western Medical Services Pty Limited is 229 Pitt Street, Merrylands. This company continues to advertise flagrantly that payments can be made by means of the various credit organizations mentioned in its form of account.

If that is an example of that mystical doctor-patient relationship we have been hearing so much about lately, I am not impressed by it. I have seen reports of claims that doctors' fees represent only a small proportion of total health costs and for that
reason the Prices Commission inquiry is unnecessary. I do not often find myself agreeing with a member of the present federal Government, but I think that the comment made by the federal Minister for Health on these claims is correct. I always take notice of the State Minister for Health because his word is his bond. Moreover, he knows a great deal about the total health situation in this State. Recently the federal Minister for Health said that doctors cannot be absolved from responsibility for what he called the great health explosion because they were central to it.

The fact is that doctors make most of the decisions about what treatment patients receive—in or out of hospital. The claim that doctors' fees are almost irrelevant to the cost of health care is a gigantic red herring. Not all doctors agreed with the noises made by some of their colleagues when the community reacted angrily to the latest upheaval in the national health service. Many doctors are upset at the way the health care system has been abused. They agree that it is high time that consumers were given the chance to know exactly what they are paying for when they go to a doctor.

For those reasons the Prices Commission inquiry is far from unnecessary. The inquiry will deal, in particular, with whether the Ludeke scale of fees should be considered a mere guideline or whether it should become the maximum chargeable in this State. I am pleased that the organizations proposing to give evidence cover the spectrum between providers and consumers of health care. It means that the inquiry will be fair and comprehensive. I am delighted also that—far from not cooperating—the Australian Medical Association has stated publicly that its representatives will be present every day the commission sits.

OFFENCES IN PUBLIC PLACES ACT

Mr PUNCH: I address a question without notice to the Premier. Did the mayor of Botany, Alderman Tobin, say last weekend that people may soon be forced to carry arms to protect themselves and their families when they go for a walk? Did this follow an incident in which thugs bashed a Botany council alderman and a priest and the police were compelled to stand aside because they knew that the new Offences in Public Places Act was not working? Will the Premier now admit that the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice made a major blunder in drafting the new Act, as has been stated so clearly by the Police Association and a wide cross-section of the community, and have the Act replaced immediately?

Mr WRAN: The answer to the last part of the question is, no. The answer to the first part of the question is that I did see a newspaper report substantially to the effect suggested by the Leader of the Country Party. As to the second part of the question, I did not see any report, substantial or otherwise, that suggested that police were forced to stand aside while people were assaulted. If the Leader of the Country Party took the trouble to read legislation, instead of spending most of his time at Canberra on matters unrelated to this Parliament, he would learn that these offences are well and truly covered by the laws of this State.

BOAT LAUNCHING RAMPS

Mr BANNON: My question without notice is directed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports. Last year did the Minister announce a programme under which the Government was to provide funds for boat launching facilities on Sydney's waterways? What progress has been made with this programme and, in particular, a proposal to build a new boat launching ramp at Kyeemagh near the mouth of the Cooks River?
Mr FERGUSON: I am grateful to the honourable member for Rockdale for his question. The boat launching ramp programme which I announced in December last year has proven tremendously successful. At the time this programme was announced a series of reports covering Sydney's various waterways—Botany Bay, Pittwater and the lower Hawkesbury, Port Hacking and the eastern, northern and western reaches of Sydney Harbour—were released to the public. These reports contained detailed information about facilities available as well as recommendations for more new facilities and upgrading of existing facilities. The pleasure boating industry is expanding all the time, with more than 100,000 powered pleasure craft in New South Wales. Generally speaking, the industry suffers from a lack of access to waterways compared with those available in some of the other States.

Under the boat launching ramp programme the Government provides 75 per cent of the cost of either upgrading or installation of a ramp, with local councils contributing the remaining 25 per cent. It has been largely left to local councils to decide whether they wish to participate in the programme. I am pleased to say that the Government expects to spend about $630,000 on the programme by the end of the year. The honourable member for Rockdale will no doubt be delighted to learn that the Department of Public Works offered a $196,000 grant to Rockdale council to assist in the construction of a new four-lane boat launching ramp with a parking area for 120 cars and trailers, a boarding jetty and pontoon, picnic facilities and landscaping at Kyeemagh near the mouth of the Cooks River.

The total cost of the facility is $260,000. It will replace a two-lane ramp which has been one of the few access points to Botany Bay for thousands of boat users living in the inner western and southwestern suburbs of Sydney. Construction of the facility will start this month and is scheduled for completion by December, in time for the peak boating season from January to April next year. The whole idea of the boat launching ramp programme is to ensure that many thousands of Sydneysiders who are not privileged, like some members opposite, to have their own waterfront, might have ready access to the waterways.

Three other boat launching facilities scheduled for completion by the end of 1979 are at Kissing Point, Putney; Lyne Park, Rose Bay; and Bayview Reserve, Bayview. Other projects being considered for funding are at Bayview Park, Cabarita; Gunnamatta Bay; Parsley Bay, Brooklyn; and Little Manly Point. Some councils have displayed selfishness over boat launching ramps on Sydney's waterways and indeed Sydney Harbour itself. It is all very well for some honourable members opposite to be concerned only about people who reside in their electorates. Our harbours and waterways should not be denied to other people throughout New South Wales, particularly those in the Sydney metropolitan area. I hope that more councils will show a willingness to co-operate with the boat launching ramp programme rather than be concerned only with the few of their ratepayers who have water access and deny people from the western and southwestern suburbs access to Sydney's waterways.

Mr DUNCAN: I ask the Minister for Education whether he is aware of persistent public disquiet about the scaling procedures for the higher school certificate examination. Will the Minister acknowledge that these procedures are not clearly understood by the public, parents or students? Will he explain the scaling procedures in a way that will eliminate this disquiet, and if he cannot, will he abolish immediately the whole system of scaling in the higher school certificate examination?
Mr BEDFORD: Earlier I answered a question by the Leader of the Opposition on this matter and canvassed some of the points now raised. I certainly would not countenance the idea of abolishing the procedures at the moment. As I intimated earlier, an expert committee is having a look at the whole question. Again I remind the honourable member that for the past twenty-five years in New South Wales, and indeed in the other States of Australia, the whole procedure so far as moderating marks are concerned has been carried out in some way or another. Each successive change has been in response to criticism raised about the procedure at some particular time in that twenty-five years which has resulted in new, and it is hoped, better procedures,

The honourable member for Lismore asked would I abandon the procedures straight away. The undertaking I can give to honourable members generally and the public is that if as a result of the investigation by these people it is indicated that the scaling procedures ought to be suspended either in favour of something else or, indeed, there should be the issue of raw scores only, which give meaningless marks in the long run, the Government will look closely at the recommendation with a view to changing the procedures. The honourable member for Lismore asked also whether I could explain the scaling procedures.

Mr Mason: Yes, and what is your answer to that?

Mr BEDFORD: No.

Mr Mason: That is right; you cannot.

Mr BEDFORD: That is right, and I shall give an example. I refer the House to the comments of Professor Rogers, who resigned as a member of the Board of Senior School Studies because he was unhappy with the scaling procedures. I remind the House that his colleagues from the same university, the University of Sydney, Emeritus Professor O'Neill and Professor Don Speritt, remained members of the board because they in their judgment felt that the scaling procedures were adequate. So there is a difference of opinion on this matter between professors. Professor Rogers, by way of a letter to the editor that appeared in this morning's Sydney Morning Herald attempts to explain to the general public what it is all about. If honourable members opposite can understand it, then good for them.

[Interrupt]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Gordon to order.

Mr BEDFORD: The honourable member for Lismore asked me to explain it. The professor, who resigned from the board because he said nobody can understand the procedure, attempts to explain it to the public of New South Wales in this way:

In their attempt to defend the 1978 scaling, the four members of the board pick the very high scaled mark of 135/150 or above. That represents a unit score of 45/50; in 1978 it was a relatively high score, obtained by relatively few candidates in any subject, because, as the letter states, "a lower initial standard deviation was applied in all courses."

Even so, and remembering that the 2-Unit candidature would include candidates of high ability, does it not seem odd that only 58 out of the 1,557 3-Unit candidates obtained the unit score of 45 plus, whereas 209 out of the 22,532 2-Unit candidates did?

I could go on and on. If any honourable member is starting to get an inkling of what the scaling system is about, perhaps he would raise his hand.

[Interrupt]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Gordon to order.
Mr BEDFORD: I extend the invitation to the statistical geniuses opposite. If they consider they have the answer, I should be pleased to hear it. By way of interjection the Leader of the Opposition asked why the Government does not abandon the present scaling system. The next question that might be asked is, what would replace it? Professor Rogers acknowledges that a problem is posed when conducting examinations for people doing the same subject at different levels. He acknowledges that students who take 2-unit English and do well in it will score high on the raw scale, some students undertaking 3-unit English will score quite low on that scale and an inevitable overlap will occur in between. If the Opposition wants one score to be issued without any levels at all, it is asking that one paper be set for all students in the subject across the whole of the State. The next problem to be faced is which genius will set such a paper that will be fair to all candidates.

PLAGUE LOCUSTS

Mr MAIR: I direct a question without notice to the Minister for Agriculture. In view of the wide publicity that has been given to the plague locust problem in New South Wales will the Minister inform the House of the current situation and the steps that are being taken to control the problem?

Mr DAY: I thank the honourable member for Albury for the question. A lot of publicity has been given to the plague locust problem, which could be serious indeed. I do not intend to play down the seriousness of it. Everything that can be done by the Department of Agriculture is being done. The latest reports received by the department this morning indicate that in the northwest of New South Wales, the area comprising Moree, Warialda, Narrabri, Tamworth, Pilliga and Inverell pastures protection boards’ districts, 266 properties have reported locust hatchings since 16th August. The most intense thus far are in the Warialda district where a total of 200 reports of sightings have been submitted. In the Moree district 36 sightings have been reported, with 20 sightings in the Narrabri district and 4 in the Tamworth area. Most of the locusts are about 2 weeks old although some have reached the 3 to 4 weeks stage.

In the Riverina district 11 sightings have been reported with 6 from Hay, 2 from Deniliquin, 2 from Wagga Wagga and 1 from Narrandra. Most of the locusts sighted in that area are also about 2 weeks old. In the central west 74 properties have reported hatchings since mid-August.

The department has organized a number of landholder meetings to co-ordinate the campaign. The group attack approach is being actively promoted at these meetings. Already 18 such meetings have taken place, most of which were in the central region of New South Wales. Attendances of between 100 and 200 people are not unusual. Unfortunately, only one meeting has taken place in the Warialda district, with a quite small attendance.

The Department of Agriculture has accumulated a stock of insecticide worth about $700,000 for distribution to landholders as it is required. Unfortunately, the welcome rains that have fallen in a large area of the State in the past 24 to 48 hours have resulted in a curtailment of some of the control activity though they have not curtailed the activity of the locusts. By next Monday new control centres will have been opened at Moree, Narromine and Narrandra to co-ordinate all activities necessary for control.

The situation is serious, but the plague locusts are being controlled. If landholders continue to co-operate with the activities of the Department of Agriculture and pastures protection boards, there is no reason why the threatened locust devastation should not be averted. I emphasize the role expected of landholders, particularly in
the northwest and western districts of the State. The large properties there must be monitored for locust infestation and landholders must report all sightings of hatchings. If they remain unreported, locusts will take to the wing and any infestation will be extremely difficult to control. Though this possibility is of considerable concern to me, I believe the department is geared up as never before to handle what has the potential of being one of the worst outbreaks of plague locusts.

**HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE**

Mr PICKARD: I direct my question to the Minister for Education. In view of the Minister's answers to two questions asked previously will the Minister table reports, final or interim, first of the inquiry appointed on 27th February, 1979, into the 1978 higher school certificate examination results in modern languages other than English and, second, concerning the inquiry appointed in June this year to examine procedures in higher school certificate examination marking? If there is no report, are three committees currently examining virtually the same subject—higher school certificate marking and scaling procedures? As there is much community disquiet and student dismay at possible jeopardy to students' careers this year and next, will the Minister disband the present committees and call an open, public inquiry into higher school certificate marking and scaling procedures?

Mr BEDFORD: The committees mentioned by the honourable member for Hornsby were set up by the Board of Senior School Studies, and their reports are internal to that board. They were not made available for general inspection, but were an endeavour to assist consideration of scaling procedures. In the question about scaling procedures reference was made again to marking. I am not aware of any criticism of the marking procedure; only the scaling procedure is under criticism.

Mr Pickard: They are the same.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Hornsby, having asked the question, should at least listen to the Minister's reply.

Mr BEDFORD: I have already reported on this matter to the House on two occasions. I do not understand why the honourable member for Hornsby should be so dense about it.

[Interruption]

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

Mr BEDFORD: The honourable member for Hornsby was once Minister for Education but he is so dense that he cannot understand what I have said twice before. I say it now for the third time. The two people examining scaling procedures in the 1979 examinations must report to the board which will report, in turn, to the Government. If that report indicates that the system will be improved by some changes in the scaling procedures, these will be adopted by this Government after due consideration.

**FIRE FIGHTING SERVICES**

Mr EGAN: I direct my question without notice to the Minister for Lands and Minister for Services. Is the Board of Fire Commissioners continually reassessing fire protection and fighting services throughout the State to ensure that the most efficient equipment is available? If this is so, will the Minister advise the House of any contemplated changes and improvements in the Cronulla area?
Mr CRABTREE: The Board of Fire Commissioners continually evaluates and reassesses the needs of individual areas throughout New South Wales for fire fighting and protection services. This programme is supported financially by the Government. The Government has introduced a supplementary programme that will provide twenty-two new motor appliances this year, at a cost of more than $2 million.

Already some of the appliances are coming off the assembly line and I was delighted to be in Armidale last week when a most efficient appliance was handed over to the firemen in that city. I am delighted also to advise the honourable member for Cronulla that within a matter of weeks a new fire engine, complete with a foam-making pumper, will be ready for delivery to the Cronulla fire station. This foam-making appliance will be one of seven provided this year, and its allocation to Cronulla is in recognition of the special problems that firemen could face in the area. These appliances have an inbuilt capacity of 200 gallons of foam and 200 gallons of water for first-stage fire-attack purposes. The pump capacity has been increased from a rate of 650 gallons a minute to 750 gallons a minute.

The foam-making equipment has particular application in the Cronulla area, with the station in proximity to the Kurnell complex. It is also extremely effective in dealing with fires or spillage of flammable liquids both in storage or in transit. The provision of this new appliance will undoubtedly improve the capacity of firemen to control potentially serious outbreaks in the honourable member's electorate. It is expected that the new appliance will be delivered some time in October, and I take this opportunity to invite the honourable member to join me when the engine is officially handed over to the local brigade.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS

Mr WOTTON: I direct a question to the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads. Did he advise the councils concerned that his decision to amalgamate the municipality of Gunnedah and the shire of Liverpool Plains would go to the Governor-in-Council for approval and signature on 28th August for notification in the Government Gazette on 31st August? As no such notification has been made, and in view of the petition bearing some 4,000 signatures presented by me to this Parliament protesting at the Government's action, has the Minister changed his mind, or will the amalgamation take place?

Mr JENSEN: The honourable member's question relates to a reference made to the New South Wales Boundaries Commission at a time when his party was in government in this State, and a recommendation was made by the Boundaries Commission to the former Government when the honourable member for Upper Hunter was Minister for Local Government. It was within the competence of the Minister at the time to accept or reject the recommendation. He neither accepted nor rejected it. I visited the areas for the purpose of deciding whether the recommended merger should proceed. After carefully evaluating all of the factors I considered that these two extremely well-run local government areas would be an even stronger local government unit if they were brought together. There is no reflection on the municipality of Gunnedah or the shire of Liverpool Plains, which is adjacent to it, for I regard them both as splendidly conducted local government areas. I am of the opinion that, merged together, they will provide an even better example of good local government. There is no intention to reverse the recommendation. I do not know why the procedures were not completed by the stipulated date but I shall inquire into the matter. The Government has no intention of resiling from its stand that local government in the areas mentioned by the honourable member will be greatly strengthened by the merger that it has approved.
CENTRAL COAST RAIL SERVICES

Mr O'CONNELL: Is the Minister for Transport aware that a building boom is occurring on the Central Coast? Is he further aware that overcrowding is a severe problem on some commuter trains from the area? As increasing population caused by the building boom can only exacerbate the situation, what is the Minister doing to provide additional rolling stock to overcome the problem?

Mr COX: The honourable member for Peats has raised an important issue. It is true that following the introduction of modern interurban double-deck railway carriages into the Central Coast there has been a heavy build-up of rail traffic. This has made it necessary to look seriously at the question of obtaining more interurban carriages. I assure the honourable member that within the confines of the existing budgetary provisions I shall endeavour to look as soon as possible at the question of calling tenders for the provision of additional interurban carriages for the Central Coast, and for the Blue Mountains as well.

COMPANY AT MANLY VALE

Mr SMITH: My question is directed to the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy. Has the Minister been made aware of a report in the Manly Daily on 25th August reporting that a Manly Vale business closed its doors after 54 years of operation because of a decision of the Industrial Commission of New South Wales? Is the Minister aware that the court ordered the reinstatement of a man dismissed for poor work and fined the company $2,352, and further ordered that if it started another earthmoving business it must take this man back and pay him backpay from the time he was dismissed? Is the Minister aware also that this decision caused the closure of the business and cost ten men their jobs? Will the Minister investigate this incident and give a report to the House of what action the Government will take to encourage private enterprise?

Mr HILLS: My understanding of the matter is that the question which came before the Industrial Commission was that the company had sacked the employee because he had the audacity to join a trade union. I do not question any decision made by the Industrial Commission. Every citizen is expected to obey the law.

COUNTRY LAND BOARD OFFICES

Mr McCARTHY: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Lands and Services. Did the Minister on his visit to Armidale on Thursday 6th September mention during a meeting with land board staff that further extensive delegations of decision making were being contemplated for country land board offices? Is the Minister now in a position to inform the House what these new delegations will cover and whether they will result in any staff increases to these country offices?

Mr CRABTREE: Last Thursday would be a red letter day for Armidale because the local member then proved to his constituents that they have a member who displays on their behalf much enthusiasm and vigour. In a recent issue of the Armidale Express, which is one of the greatest newspapers in the north and northwestern part of the State, two pages were devoted to my most important visit. I commend the honourable member for his continuing interest in the lands administration not only as it affects his electorate, but also as it affects people throughout New South Wales.
On Thursday 6th September when I visited Armidale I was able to make major decisions that will assist the civic leaders of that city in their progressive development programme for Armidale. In particular, the discussions held and the decisions taken about the establishment of a new commercial centre will have a major impact upon the future growth and stability of Armidale. During discussions with staff of the Armidale land board office I mentioned that the Government is ready to take further major action in its programme of decentralizing the lands administration in this State. That policy is in direct contrast with that of our Country Party friends who when in government had a programme of closing down the State's land board offices. Progressively since 1976 under this Government's administration more and more work has been delegated to the local level. Many administrative functions have been delegated, including more than thirty major decision-making responsibilities. My latest approval gives local land board officers greater opportunity to open new roads and to close and dispose of unnecessary roads.

These decisions will include powers in resumption, dedication and closure of roads, including cases where access is being paid for by private landholders, and decisions on whether unused roads should be retained for conservation purposes or disposed of to adjoining landholders or other members of the public. As a result of this decision the staffing of country land boards will be increased. The Department of Lands has a submission before the Public Service Board on the matter. I confidently expect that at least twenty new positions will be established in country land board offices.

LOGGING ON MUMBULLA MOUNTAIN

Mr FISCHER: I ask the Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources a question without notice. Did the Government impose a six months' ban on logging operators on the Mumbulla Mountain and commission a study by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the significance of Aboriginal sites there? Did that embargo end last June? Has the Government had that report on sacred Aboriginal sites for some time? In view of the turmoil in the sawmilling industry over Terania Creek and job security, and the shortage of sawn timber in New South Wales, will the Minister order a resumption of logging on Mumbulla Mountain, with appropriate guidelines if necessary? If not, why not? When will the Government make a decision on this matter, or will it appoint another subcommittee to consider the matter further?

Mr GORDON: It is correct that in June 1977 the Premier announced that an advisory committee would be established—not another one, but the first—to advise the Government on the environmental aspects of woodchipping and logging operations on the South Coast. The committee, known as the Ashton Committee, consisted of two representatives of environmental groups, two of the sawmilling industry, and the chairman, Mr Ashton. The committee submitted a number of recommendations to the Government, one of which concerned Aboriginal relics and areas sacred to local Aborigines.

The Government accepted the recommendation that the National Parks and Wildlife Service, in consultation with the Forestry Commission of New South Wales, should identify areas in the five forests that contain Aboriginal relics and areas sacred to local Aborigines. Doctor Brian J. Egloff of the National Parks and Wildlife Service conducted the investigation. My colleague in another place, the Minister for Planning and Environment, released the report of the committee in late July. All interested groups were given one month in which to submit comment on the findings contained in the report. That time has been extended, as the time allowed was insufficient and
further evidence had come forward. In the meantime, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Forestry Commission are discussing the matter with a view to recommending to the Government ways in which the interests of the local Aborigines and the timber industry can be protected. I expect that this matter will be resolved in the near future.

TRANSPORTATION OF COAL

Adjournment (S.O. 49)

Mr SPEAKER: I have received from the honourable member for Upper Hunter notice under Standing Order 49 of his desire to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a specific matter of recent occurrence and of sufficient public importance to warrant urgent consideration, namely, the decision of the Government to transport one million tonnes of coal by road from Ravensworth to Munmorah in competition with the Public Transport Commission.

Mr FISHER (Upper Hunter) [3.14]: I move:
That this House do now adjourn.
The motion being supported by five other honourable members,

Mr FISHER: Two weeks ago the Government announced a decision to let a contract to transport coal by road from Ravensworth, in the Upper Hunter electorate, to Munmorah power station through the electorates of Cessnock and Lake Macquarie into the electorate of Munmorah. The transportation of coal will cause disruption to the residents in built-up areas of Singleton, Cessnock and Morisset. They will be adversely affected by approximately 170 truck movements a day through their towns. Honourable members will appreciate that already a considerable quantity of coal is transported along the New England Highway to Branxton, and a good deal of coal is taken further to Newcastle and to Bullock Island. That usually occurs when the Public Transport Commission is not able to handle spot loads.

I understand from press statements that the contract will require the haulage of 2,000 tonnes of coal a day for two years. That will mean inevitably that an additional one million tonnes of coal will be transported from the Ravensworth No. 1 mine to Munmorah power station. First of all I express the concern and alarm of a great many people whose homes will be adversely affected. Those people reside in my electorate and the electorates of Cessnock, Lake Macquarie and Munmorah, through which these trucks will pass day and night. The Government's decision to let the contract might be acceptable if no other alternative were available. My principal reason for bringing the matter to the attention of the House at this time is that not only has the Government an alternative but also the decision will result in a contract worth approximately $7,500,000 going to a private company when it should be going to the Public Transport Commission. I obtained my information from a report in the Singleton Argus that the president of Singleton shire council had been told by the Electricity Commission of its intention to transport coal by this means. I immediately forwarded a telegram to the Minister in the following terms:

Greatly disturbed that Government proposes to transport 2,000 tonnes of coal per day from Ravensworth to Munmorah. This action will severely affect people of Singleton and is contrary to government policy of hauling all coal by rail. Strongly urge rail haulage of coal to Wyee. Alternatively coal could be transported to Wangi where unloading facilities are now available. Your urgent attention to this matter would be appreciated.
I am not aware of any action taken by honourable members who represent other electorates that might be affected. I do not know whether the honourable member for Cessnock thought the matter of sufficient importance to raise it with the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy, but it will have a serious effect on built-up areas and the narrow streets of Cessnock through which the trucks must travel day and night. It will have a similar effect in Morisset and other built-up areas. An indication of the concern being expressed by persons who might be affected is that already a meeting has been held of ratepayers in Singleton, who look to the Government for some action to alleviate a problem that has existed in that town for some time.

Honourable members will appreciate that over the past few years, and for a variety of reasons, a good deal of the increased amount of coal being exported from the Upper Hunter region has been transported by road. Additional coal-handling facilities have been constructed at Liddell and Mount Thorley. The construction of the Whittingham to Mount Thorley railway was initiated by a Liberal-Country party Government. That has done a great deal to relieve Singleton from problems created by the amount of coal being hauled by road through the town prior to the completion of the important rail link to Mount Thorley. A similar loop was constructed at Liddell to enable coal to be transported by rail. The construction of these rail links has considerably reduced the quantity of coal being moved to Singleton by road.

It is significant that the major reason for the letting of the contract to which I have referred is, I understand, that the Electricity Commission has decided to stop the supply of coal from the Awaba mine to the Munmorah power station. As a result, the amount of coal stockpiled at that power station has been considerably reduced. I understand also that contracts with R. W. Miller & Co. Pty Limited and The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, which also were supplying coal to Munmorah power station, have ceased. In addition, industrial trouble at the mine supplying Munmorah power station has resulted in a serious reduction in the quantity of coal stockpiled and available for both Munmorah and Wangi power stations.

For quite some time up to 1000 tonnes of coal a day has been moving by road from the Upper Hunter region to Wangi power station because of some difficulty with the rail unloading facilities at that power station. Those difficulties have been overcome and the unloading facilities at Wangi power station are now able to handle coal that could be transported by rail from Ravensworth. There is a limit to the amount of coal that can be handled by those unloading facilities, but they are certainly capable of handling at least 1000 tonnes a day and I have been assured by the Public Transport Commission that it has adequate rolling-stock available to handle additional coal should the Electricity Commission seek the assistance of the Public Transport Commission in transporting coal to Munmorah from Ravensworth.

Apparently the Government or the Electricity Commission decided on the use of road transport for the cartage of coal. I trust that tenders were called publicly, though I have not been able to find evidence of that. I am not suggesting there was anything improper in the tendering arrangements. The firm of Hawkins and Son, which received the contract, is a highly reputable and substantial company. But I am speaking of a contract involving $7.5 million over two years, and that is a large sum of money to be paid to any firm. I trust that the Minister will be able to assure the House that tenders were properly called to give all firms that were capable of doing the work an opportunity of tendering for this substantial contract. The contract price would no doubt be about $7.50 a tonne, though I do
not know the precise figure. That would be a matter confidential to the Government, I presume, and I should not expect the Minister to disclose it. However, I know it would be in the vicinity of 6 cents a tonne-kilometre, which would work out at about $7.50 a tonne.

The rail freight on coal hauled from Ravensworth to Wangi is about $6.80 a tonne, which is substantially less than the cost of carting coal by road from Ravensworth to Munmorah. That is one of the most important aspects of the matter that I raise today. The Public Transport Commission is losing about $450 million a year of the taxpayers' money, which has to be made up by reducing the allocation to some other important aspect of the Government's administration, such as hospitals or education or a whole range of Government responsibilities. The loss being incurred by the Public Transport Commission is enormous and serious. The coal that I have been speaking about could have been carried by the Public Transport Commission but a contract to cart it has been let to a private contractor.

The cartage of such a quantity of coal must put tremendous pressure on the private contractor, who will be called upon to provide more than eighty vehicles each day and keep them on the road in order to handle the contract. The Government should have ensured that the coal for Wangi power station was carried by rail, even though the unloading facilities there at present may be slightly inadequate to handle the additional volume of coal that is covered by the contract. Alternatively, when one considers that at this stage more than a million tonnes of coal is being handled, facilities might have been provided at Wyee, which is even closer to the Munmorah power station, rather than at Wangi.

The Government should examine the question whether all the State's power stations in the area should be linked through the Public Transport Commission. I understand it is the intention of the Electricity Commission to provide unloading facilities at the new Eraring power station. The commission already has unloading facilities at the Wangi power station and I suggest it should seriously consider the provision of coal transfer facilities at all its major power stations. With the steady increase in power generating capacity in the Upper Hunter region following construction of the new Bayswater power station and the completion of Eraring power station, and the coal mining associated with the complex of Eraring, Bayswater, Liddell, Munmorah, Vale's Point and Wangi, the coal transport facilities of the Public Transport Commission should be interconnected so that when an interruption of coal supply to a power station occurs through industrial disputation, it will be possible to transfer coal to that power station from one of the other power stations.

Obviously the problem that has occurred at this time has arisen because of the lack of such interconnection and I am inclined to think it indicates some shortsighted planning on the part of the Electricity Commission. It is surprising to me that the Electricity Commission has allowed this situation to develop for, by and large, it is one of the most efficient government instrumentalities and has served the State extremely well. I am not critical of the Electricity Commission in a general sense, but apparently it failed to foresee the problem that has occurred, and will almost certainly occur again. As a result, the commission has resorted to the expedient of road transport of coal, which will seriously disrupt the lives of many people who live on the route along which the coal will be transported. In addition, much of the commerce of the towns along this route will be seriously disrupted. The Government has a responsibility to ensure that coal is transported by rail in accordance with its stated intention.

I am disappointed and I am sure I express the views of the many people of Singleton who are adversely affected. I should be surprised if the honourable member for Cessnock and the many people who will be affected in the other electorates through
which this coal will be transported do not believe that the Government should take immediate steps to ensure that coal is transported by rail. This would ensure that their lives are not disrupted and that coal is able to be transferred from one power station to another in the proper planning processes of our total power station complex.

Mr HILLS (Phillip), Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy (3.31): The whole burden of the honourable member's argument is about carting coal by rail. There are 4,800 tonnes a day involved of which 3,000 tonnes are carted by rail. Apparently the honourable member is not aware of that. The honourable member may ask, why are the railways able to carry only 3,000 tonnes a day? The answer is because that is the total capacity of the Wangi Wangi receiving area. To say none is being carted by rail is ridiculous. Each day 3,000 tonnes are carted by rail and 1,800 tonnes by road. The Government will not cart by road one tonne more than is necessary. As soon as the deficiency at Wangi Wangi is overcome all the coal will be transport by rail.

For two years Broken Hill Proprietary Limited was supplying 2,000 tonnes of coal a day surplus to its requirements. That company suddenly said, "We are not going to supply any more coal; we want it ourselves." Therefore the Commission had to obtain it from somewhere else. I assure the honourable member that every tonne of coal that can be carted by rail will be moved in that way. The honourable member said the Electricity Commission of New South Wales is a pretty fair sort of a show, and there would not be anything wrong with what it did, but did it call for tenders? The answer is that it did call for tenders. Selective bids were sought from people who were carting in the area. The successful tenderer had been carting coal by road for the commission and the contract cut out. The Electricity Commission thought it was proper, rather than throw men out of work and because the tenderer was one of the two lowest, to award the contract to that tenderer. I think it was a fair and reasonable decision taken by the commission.

No less than 4,800 tonnes of coal is required daily for these power stations. As the honourable member is aware two new 600 megawatt generators came into operation at Vales Point in the past 12 months, which makes that power station the largest in the State. Obviously sufficient coal must be made available to it. Last week I had discussions with the chairman of the Electricity Commission to see if there were some way to avoid trucks passing through the township of Singleton. Discussions are to proceed with Coal and Allied Industries Limited. I am sure the honourable member is aware that that company is building a road of its own in order to extract coal from the open-cut arrangement that it has at Hunter Valley number one colliery. Also, it is building a bridge across the road. The access road does pass over land that belongs to the Electricity Commission. The commission thinks it is fair and reasonable that it should have use of the company's access road as, at least in part, it passes through commission land. That is one means by which trucks might be diverted from Singleton. The whole matter is being thoroughly considered by the commission. The commission proposes to improve unloading facilities within the area. From time to time it will be necessary to transfer large quantities of coal particularly when the Ravensworth source cuts out in 1983 or 1984. It may then become necessary to cart coal from Mount Arthur to Eraring power station. This will be done by rail so as to cause the least amount of inconvenience.

Two new mines are being developed in that general area to service Eraring. It is not known whether they will come in on time or not, and obviously there must be alternative interconnection. Each day the railways cart 3,000 tonnes of the 4,800 tonnes required. It is necessary to cart the balance — 1,800 tonnes — to utilize the power stations. This situation has occurred because coal previously available was withdrawn. In the shortest possible time this will be taken off road transports and put on rail. It is envisaged that it will take about two years to overcome the problem.
Mr FISHER (Upper Hunter) [3.38], in reply: I am willing to withdraw the motion following the explanation given by the Minister. I recognize that it is a complex question. I accept the Minister's assurance that coal will be taken off the road in the shortest possible time. I accept that facilities at Wangi Wangi power station will be enlarged to cope with the increasing volume of coal required. I am disappointed that some two years are necessary for the commission to make those arrangements.

Mr Hills: I did not say that; I said it would be necessary to transport that amount of coal at least for two years.

Mr FISHER: I understood the Minister to say that that amount of coal would be transported for two years. I should be disappointed if it were to take two years to make the necessary arrangements to overcome the problem. I believe it could be done in a shorter time. I am willing to withdraw the motion following the assurances given to the House by the Minister.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS IN REPLY

Seventh Day's Debate

Debate resumed (from 23rd August, vide page 596) on motion by Mr Keane:

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

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

May it Please Your Excellency—

We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our thanks for Your Excellency's Speech, and to affirm our sincere allegiance to Her Most Gracious Majesty.

2. We beg to assure Your Excellency that our earnest consideration will be given to the measures to be submitted to us, that we will faithfully carry out the important duties entrusted to us by the people of New South Wales, and that the necessary provision for the Public Services will be made in due course.

Mr McDONALD (Kirribilli), Deputy Leader of the Opposition [3.40]: In speaking to this motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, I join with other members from this side of the House in congratulating the honourable members who have made maiden speeches in this debate and, in particular, the honourable member for Willoughby. His Excellency's Speech in reality is a statement of intention of the Premier. Wherever the Speech refers to my Government it ought to read Mr Wran's Government. As a result, I
support the Leader of the Opposition in condemning the Daily Telegraph for its incredible misreporting of the intent of the Speech in suggesting on 15th August, the day after the Governor delivered his Speech, that Sir Roden had attacked the federal Government. Nothing could be further from the fact of the matter. Much should be commented on in the Governor's Speech. Its most unsatisfactory aspect was the continuing bleating and deception that has emanated for so long from the lips of the Premier and most of his Ministers, that the Wran Government is operating against a background of severe financial restrictions imposed by the federal Government. In fact, the contrary position is the case.

The Governor's Speech further attempts to blame the federal Government for the reduction in funds for welfare housing. As the Sydney Morning Herald correctly pointed out on the same day that the Daily Telegraph was misreporting the Governor's Speech: "The Government's claims about welfare housing simply will not do. Mr Wran can blame only himself". Though the federal Government reduced specific purpose grants for items such as housing, at the same time—and this is the essential point—this year it gave New South Wales an extra 13.8 per cent in general revenue for tax-sharing grants. General revenue funds, which can be used by the State as it likes, have increased dramatically from $1,327.1 million in 1977–78 to $1,464.3 million in 1978–79 and to $1,667.2 million in the present financial year. Though that represents an increase of $340.1 million, the Premier is quibbling about $30 million for welfare housing and similar purposes.

In two years the federal Government has given New South Wales an increase of almost 26 per cent in untied grants, which it may use as it likes. Coupled to that are massive hikes in revenue which the State has raised in its own secret way. For example, under this Government stamp duty on the conveyance of an average home has risen by .75 per cent, at a time when the average price of a house has also increased. The net result is that stamp duty revenue alone in New South Wales as at 30th June this year was $40 million in excess of budget estimates.

It is time to ask where this State is heading in the whole field of government financing. Simply put, the New South Wales Government has too much money. Moreover, there is too little accountability. Further, there is too much public confusion about where this money is going and I must say, regretfully, too much public apathy about how it is raised. The extravagances and excesses of this Government will be arrested only when the public starts to realize how costly and futile are many of its undertakings. Of course, with a Labor-dominated public service, with departmental heads appointed by Ministers and a Public Service Board sympathetic to the Government, what chance have we got to get efficiency, accountability and restraint in the raising and spending of government moneys?

The position is reaching scandalous proportions, with no indication that it will be redressed in the next Budget. Indeed, we are threatened with extra rather than fewer taxes, presumably because the Government intends to undertake new extravagances. On the economic front this is a government of rank deception. In spite of the enormous aggregation of economic power by the Government, it now tells us that it is unable to honour its hollow promise about death duties because it cannot find the $30 million it says is needed for welfare housing. That is a monstrous distortion.

I have already indicated the extent of increased untied revenues available to this State. Moreover, I have pointed out the new sources of indirect tax the Government is tapping from an unsuspecting public. The issue of death duties is one of greater culpability because it is tied to a fundamental economic untruth. Money raised from
duty on estates will not be available for government use until the end of the present financial year. The second stage of the abolition of death duties, which the Government has deferred, would affect money forgone in the 1980-81 financial year. How can the Government argue that it will use this second-stage referral money for welfare housing in the present financial year?

It is often uncharitable to use the word lie loosely, but it is a lie to say that money saved on death duties in this financial year will go to welfare housing. Regrettably, the same can be said about a passage on page 3 of the Governor's printed speech that "The Government has stretched its own financial resources to the limit in an attempt to compensate for the drastic cuts by the federal Government." I have already shown where money can be gained for welfare housing purposes. If that money is not forthcoming from the untied grants to which I have referred, it is simply because the Government does not give welfare housing its proper priority. After abandoning those priorities it is an economic lie to suggest that welfare housing will be funded from the money available from death duties. The Treasurer must state where the $30 million is to come from if it will not be made available from death duties.

When I mentioned the increased revenues—which the Government has not revealed—available at 30th June this year from stamp duty, I could also have said that revenue from death duties is up $9 million and revenue from payroll tax is up $15 million on budget estimates. Those two items together with the $40 million from increased stamp duty total approximately $65 million. How can the Government conceivably argue poverty? How much money does the Government expect? Does it have any notion of the limits of government? Does it believe that economic and political power must be as one in this fast-growing totalitarian State?

We are moving into dangerous political territory. Having assumed political power in excess of its mandate, having moved in a massive grab for economic power, the Government now chooses to tie up its allegiance to the media magnates of this world to give it the third tier necessary for totalitarian control, namely, subservience to and supplication before a powerful media. Those are directions in respect of which the Government is not opposed, simply because of the people involved. It is not a question of personalities; it is a question of principle. The principle of buying political, economic and media power and placing it in the hands of one man—namely, the Premier—is abhorrent to Liberal philosophy and it runs counter to the interests of every real thinking person in New South Wales.

Other manifestations of this position are apparent. What is happening to the money made available to the Government? The Minister for Health—or as he is now more commonly known, the Minister for fear—has cried poor mouth about the reduction in funds for hospital services under the Commonwealth-State Hospital Cost Sharing Agreement as part of a programme of rationalization through bed reductions which has effected savings in the order of $11 million. During the year health expenditure was to be financed, in part, by a run down of $75 million in the hospitals fund. It was proposed that by June 1979 the balance in the fund would be $10 million. But now the fund is to be run down by only $38 million. That means that $37 million more was available than the Minister for Health was willing to admit. That is consistent with the financial manipulation taking place in this State. Either the Government does not know what it is doing, in which case it is guilty of mismanagement, or, if it knows what it is doing, it is guilty of gross distortion and deception.

Mr McDonald
Only today the Treasury said, "It also became apparent that revenue on several other items would also exceed the amounts estimated"—that is over and above last year's Budget. The Minister for Health, in his explanation to the Public Accounts Committee of this Parliament, has said:

In the light of the unexpectedly buoyant revenue situation it was possible to support a much greater part of the 1978–79 current expenditure on hospitals from the Consolidated Revenue Fund than originally anticipated. It was therefore decided to limit the run down in the Fund to $38 million. That is a disgraceful sleight of hand. It highlights that the Premier has been fiddling the books and that he should have come clean about having $65 million more revenue than he budgeted for. Why did the Premier not tell the House that he had extra money from stamp duties, death duties and payroll tax? He should have honoured the Government's commitment on death duties and not told lies about needing funds for welfare housing.

I could go on citing examples of extravagances and financial deceptions on the part of this Government and its continual failure to give adequate explanation of where the public's money is going to and where it is to be spent. Last year in my budget speech I argued that a complete overhaul of the accounting procedures of this Government is necessary. What has happened in the subsequent twelve months is further proof that the position is no longer urgent but critical. In the meantime, I wish to draw the canvas, as it were, about the style of this Government and the performance of its leader who provided the Governor with the language and substance of his Speech.

In the short time available to me I shall attempt to give weight to the clear thesis that this is not only a government of extravagance and broken promises, it is a government which bends in the breeze to suit the whim and political expediency of the Premier, whether it be Kurnell, Terania Creek, Botany Bay or wherever. Shortly after last year's election, an Australian Labor Party official described the Premier to be "not a crusading liberal at heart—in fact he is profoundly conservative, he has no commitment on any political issue at all," except of worse, I would hasten to add, to himself and his own personal self-aggrandizement. This was exemplified in his desire to be paraded before those who watched Channel 10 last Friday night. Members of his Cabinet are incapable of nominating any single commitment with which the Premier could be identified, other than his own projection.

The Government, through the Premier, now known as the minister for good news, at the moment enjoys the adulation of the unthinking and the rewarded—the rewarded being in all sections whether it be on Lotto, the Public Transport Commission employees, the Buildings Workers Industrial Union on the sub-contractors inquiry or the Australian Workers Union in relation to Kurnell, to name but four. Now we have the Premier's backers wanting to transfer him to the federal level while the shine is still on the product. They had best be swift because as the Financial Review said:

Amongst the handful in the community who bother actually to read and to listen to what Mr Wran has to say about economic management, there is a sense that he is nothing more than a simplistic populist.

But he does have superb and thoroughly cynical political managers.

Regrettably, certain sections of the news media cannot see through this charade and, in fact, have even described the Premier as a practical capitalist. Another recent example of sycophantic garbage that was trumpeted by media was a major headline,
an unsupported editorial, that read, "Happy Days Are Here Again". Surely there must be a political party somewhere behind the Premier. He is said to lead a party whose philosophy and formal platform seek to impose a socialist system by parliamentary means. This socialist road is towards much more interference by the State at all levels; the proliferation of controls; the burgeoning of bureaucracy and the stifling of the individual.

Up to the election last October the Government’s socialist philosophies remained somewhat muted in practice. But we can now see, in spite of the playing down by the Premier, that he does lead a socialist party and that, from the Governor’s Speech, the game plan has changed. It is simply no good for the Premier to say behind his hand that the socialist objective is a dead letter. It is central to the Labor platform and is the basis upon which all legislation that will be introduced by this Government into the House in this and forthcoming sessions must be measured and assessed. Apart from the thrust of future socialist legislation announced by the Governor, as a measure of the changes which emerged during the 45th Parliament we have the indictment levelled in the secret report into the structure of the State’s economy by the Premier’s own New South Wales economic study group which, after 18 months of Wran’s socialism, reported in a most critical way on the activities of the Government and semi-government bodies. Apart from stressing that the rate of unemployment in New South Wales should be in the order of 10.3 per cent by 1981, the Premier’s own advisory group report stressed:

There has been a growth in government regulatory functions both in the areas where regulations have long been operating (health, wages and working conditions, safety) and in new areas (consumer protection, corporate affairs, planning and environment protection).

There is evidence for the view that some areas are over-regulated and in others the regulatory intentions are unclear.

Certainly the private sector experiences confusion and delay.

There is nothing in the Governor’s Speech to give any encouragement at all to the private sector by way of a definite strategic economic plan for the State. There is no indication that the massive growth of government employees and the inordinate level of governmental inquiries are likely to cease. Talking has become an excuse for action. This State is becoming over-bureaucratized and over-regulated through the extravagance and waste of this Government. The economic study group report went on to criticize State and local government for being too legalistic, non-commercial and remote from the public. The report stressed the need for government to take an active role in assisting business, and that does not mean to compete against it. It concluded that the delays experienced by businessmen in getting approvals and so on are more due to bad administration by public servants than to faults in the regulations or Acts they administer.

The Premier has made continuing and great play to create the impression that he is a good economic manager and that New South Wales has been treated badly by the federal Government. We see this stressed principally on the first page of the report, and there are other references on that page to such phrases as severe financial restrictions, impositions and the like. This deception is the central tenet of the Governor’s Speech. The facts, however, give the lie to the Premier’s trumpetings in this area especially, as I have said, to the notion that the holding down of State taxes has been successful. The State’s tax powers should be linked to a much better deal. Not only does New South Wales not need more money but New South Wales taxpayers are
the hardest hit in Australia. In June 1978 each taxpayer in New South Wales was paying $805 per year in State charges compared with $573 in Queensland, $584 in Tasmania and $642 in South Australia.

It is time to halt this constant bleeding of the taxpayer. It takes away his incentive to work and often only provides goods and services he may not need or want. Far from asking the taxpayer in the months ahead to tighten his belt and try to justify that pre-budget comment of taxation increases in the forthcoming budget, the Premier owes it to the people of New South Wales to lessen the Government's grip on their money rather than to produce further shock waves through the community with persistent threats of unjustified increased taxation. Unemployment in New South Wales has begun to accelerate again—the annual growth rate is now over 6 per cent and on a par with Victoria. It seems that the predictions of the Government's own economic study group of unemployment in excess of 10 per cent for New South Wales within the next two years may well be on target. Again thanks to fresh food prices, New South Wales once more has the highest inflation rate. No doubt with the Premier's capacity to organize the timing of the applause for himself he will not seek in the short term to claim credit for these.

Uncontrolled expansion in State Government spending is not in the best economic interests of the State or the nation. Everything projected by the Premier takes us in the direction of bigger government. We will constantly make the point that the State does not need more money. It needs more accountability, smaller government and a greater capacity by people and companies to determine their own priorities. At the beginning of my speech I stressed the fact that the least satisfactory portion of the Speech was the attempt to blame the federal Government for this Government's lamentable performance. So poor in fact is its performance that the Housing Commission did not draw all the money that the Commonwealth Government gave it last financial year. In point of fact, it has to pay the Commonwealth an interest bill on undrawn down funds of $1,687,438.

Mr Mason: That is disgraceful. The Minister ought to resign.

Mr McDONALD: So much for the Minister complaining that he has been shortchanged by the Commonwealth Government, or indeed that there is a shortage of funding when the State is paying interest to the Commonwealth Government because the Minister for Housing cannot organize his own department.

Mr Mason: And the dishonouring of the promise on death duties.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition is not affording any assistance to his deputy.

Mr McDONALD: The Government is bereft of a definitive policy to provide accommodation or shelter for people. Without doubt the greatest unmitigated disaster in recent years has been the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Housing and Minister for Co-operative Societies. Although I could never accept the logic of having the combined portfolios of Minister of Justice and Minister for Housing, at least when the Minister for Mineral Resources and Development was Minister for Housing there was a sensitive and responsible understanding of the housing problem. Further, the private sector, which is responsible for some 90 per cent of new residential construction in New South Wales, could feel a sense of confidence in the former Minister for Housing. New South Wales now has a Minister for Housing who is out of touch with reality and intent on honouring a deal done with the communist dominated building trade group of unions, in particular the Building Workers Industrial Union, prior to the last election. As a result of this deal with the unions, and by the Minister's failure to recognize the merits of the present sub-contract system and to resist the
attempts of the totally selfish motivations of the BWIU, as had been exemplified by
the strength of the former Minister for Housing, housing costs will rise by 25 per
cent or even as much as 30 per cent.

The BWIU stated clearly in its preliminary statement to the building inquiry
its five open intentions. That union's aims are, first, to change the structure of the
homebuilding industry so that it may exercise greater power and increase membersh-
ship; second, to force the building industry into confrontation with employers and
workers; and third, to replace the present free enterprise system of the builder and
the self-employed building worker. The Government's moves under the Minister for
Housing are clearly an industrial ploy to knock the sub-contract system, which is
grounded to high productivity, low overheads and flexibility and incentives for those
engaged in it. If union rates are forced up to the comparable agreements and rates
of pay applicable for the construction of Housing Commission homes, young home-
seekers can expect to pay at least 25 per cent more. This will result from added
costs incurred for holiday pay, wet time, sick time, public holidays, annual leave
loading of 17½ per cent, workers' compensation and so on. The teams of sub-contract
carpenters, plumbers, bricklayers, electricians and similar tradesmen who make up
the whole building industry will be destroyed as a result of the bias built into the
terms of reference of the inquiry and, more important, because of the attitude of
the Minister for Housing.

Significant and all as these deleterious effects will be on the industry and on
new home-seekers, if possible greater consequence is the continuing failure of the
Government to produce a defined housing and urban development policy and to
establish a properly functional ministry that should not only effectively co-ordinate
the present fragmented government activities relating to housing but also provide a
clear means of contact for the private sector to communicate with government. Cer-
tainly a step in the right direction is the creation of a development division under
the present Minister for Mineral Resources and Development. I would beseech the
Premier to transfer the housing functions away from the incumbent Minister and
create a special ministry of housing and urban development under the honourable
member for Penrith. There is much that can and should be done not only to provide
housing and other forms of residential accommodation for the public but also to give
a much needed boost to the economy of this State and to reduce significantly levels
of unemployment, particularly in the building and construction industry.

There must be a political will to act. The Government must desist from
blaming its inaction and incompetence upon the federal Government. To date all we
have heard from the Government are trite platitudes as it has presided over a decline
in public sector housing completions from 7,068 when the former Government went
out of office to an estimated 1,100 this financial year. In spite of or perhaps even
because of the Land Commission, according to the latest annual market report of
the Valuer-General developed land prices have jumped in the last year by up to
45 per cent or by an average of 25 per cent.

Bereft as this Government is of ideas and in spite of the fact that housing
remains clearly a low Government priority and of little real concern to it, much can
be done to provide the incentives necessary for the private sector to bring about an
improvement. Eight months ago the Minister for Housing admitted the point that
I have been stressing now for nearly three years: that there was a crisis of accom-
modation in Sydney and that virtually no rental accommodation had been built in three
years. He said that he was happy then to provide incentives for investors to build
special housing. If neither he nor the Premier comes up with proposals, certainly the
Opposition proposes to do so.
The Opposition's plan to encourage the construction of rental accommodation, which we are quite happy for the Government to take up, is that for all private rental accommodation constructed for the next three years, with particular emphasis on provincial cities and subject to annual reviews, the Government should waive the payment of land tax and eliminate the 13 per cent loan duty on all loans with an interest rate greater than 14 per cent. Further, the Government should enjoin the federal Government to at least adopt a more positive attitude and to adopt the recommendations of the Asprey Committee of Inquiry into Taxation by providing for depreciation provisions on new construction of residential accommodation.

The Landlord and Tenant Act should be rewritten and new legislation introduced to provide protection and simplification for the rights of tenants and property owners alike. Pending such action the Government should provide by statute an endorsement of many of the conditions in the Real Estate Institute's amended 5A lease and require a tenant's bond money to be held in trust by the landlord or his agent and invested with a permanent building society, with interest being credited to the tenant. As part of this proposal to encourage new construction the Rental Bond Board should be eliminated.

One hears much from the Government of its quite logical intentions of urban regeneration and rehabilitation. These proposals are but utterances from the mouth of the Minister for Planning and Environment. The special division of the new ministry for housing and urban development, under the honourable member for Penrith, should be directed to the task of encouraging significant private sector involvement directly or in participation with the Government, whose role should be essentially limited to property aggregation as required. In designated regeneration or rehabilitation areas, which should be determined by the ministry in consultation with local councils, local government provisions should be suspended and land use control systems revised. Future residential redevelopment would then be based on a balanced mix of housing types and variable densities with a high degree of flexibility in governmental attitude and no statutory zoning. The Opposition could make many more suggestions in the housing area and other areas to get New South Wales moving again and remove it from the stagnant, no-growth position that it has occupied for too long.

At the beginning of my speech I referred to the fact that New South Wales had a government of broken promises. Most of these promises have a financial or economic orientation. For all of its dishonoured promises the Government should receive the severest censure, particularly so far as electoral undertakings are concerned. The four breaches of government promises that stand out are in respect of the Public Transport Commission deficit, death duties, pensioner electricity rebates and handicapped and disabled persons. Other broken promises include those given to the truckies at the time of their dispute, the young unemployed, the tourist industry, particularly in respect of taxation relief for hotels, and the Council of Churches concerning gambling and, in particular, casinos.

Mr CLEARY (Coogee) [4.10]: I join other honourable members in extending congratulations to the honourable member for Woronora on moving the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech, to the honourable member for Willoughby, who seconded the motion when making his maiden speech, and to the honourable member for Miranda on his maiden speech. The Opposition has consistently criticized His Excellency the Governor for his reading a prepared speech. I interpret that sort of comment as an insult to His Excellency the Governor, Sir Roden Cutler. I regard the Governor as a man who speaks his own mind and who would not read anything that was handed to him if he did not believe in it. The remarks
the Governor made when addressing both Houses of Parliament in the Legislative Council were made with a full understanding by him of something in which he believed, as a man of character.

Mr Schipp: The honourable member for Coogee has to be joking.

Mr CLEARY: I regard the interjection by the honourable member for Wagga Wagga as an insult to an honourable man. The honourable member for Wagga Wagga is saying that the Governor would present an address with which he did not fully agree. If there had been any part of the Address the Governor made with which he did not agree he would not have read that part of it. Because the Governor made a criticism of the federal Government, with which the Opposition is affiliated, the honourable member for Wagga Wagga had the audacity to say that the Governor read the words written by the Premier without questioning them at all. The honourable member for Wagga Wagga is criticizing His Excellency and should stand condemned for it.

Mr Cameron: He changes his comments after every election.

Mr CLEARY: The Governor does not change his character after every election. He is a man of honour and character who speaks his own mind. He does not have to say something that is written for him by somebody else. The criticism levelled at the Governor is an insult to him.

Honourable members have heard remarks of the honourable member for Kirribilli about the economy of New South Wales and Australia. I shall quickly relate some of the economic achievements in New South Wales under the leadership of Premier Wran. The Australian economy continues to show no signs of sustainable recovery, though the situation in New South Wales is more encouraging. The number of wage and salary earners in civilian employment, excluding those who are self-employed, employers, persons employed in agriculture and those employed as private domestic staff, in the past year in New South Wales rose by 32,200 or 1.9 per cent. The figure for the rest of Australia rose by only 1 per cent. Private sector employment accounted for nearly 90 per cent of the increase in New South Wales. After a fall during the period from 1974 to 1976 employment in New South Wales has again begun to grow. Unemployment continues to be a source of national concern in Australia. Commonwealth Employment Service figures continue to show a worsening situation. Figures of the Australian Bureau of Statistics show a stable situation. [Quorum formed.] Before that rude interjection of the honourable member for Wagga Wagga I was dealing with unemployment. The forming of a quorum has enabled me to have an audience from my own party.

Mr Schipp: The honourable member for Coogee ought to get his facts right.

Mr CLEARY: My facts are right. The trouble with the honourable member for Wagga Wagga is that his tongue trembles before his mind functions. According to the Commonwealth Employment Service in New South Wales 6.53 per cent of the work force is unemployed. In Australia about 6.4 per cent of the work force is unemployed. On the figures of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in New South Wales 5.8 per cent of the work force is unemployed and throughout Australia 5.9 per cent of the work force is unemployed. Nationally, unemployment at best has only stabilized and will almost certainly set a new record in January 1980 flowing from the economic policies of the federal Government.

Over the past three years prices have risen at a slower pace in New South Wales than the national average. That is determined by reference to the consumer price index. Nationally over the past year prices rose by 8.8 per cent compared to 7.8 per cent for the period ended December 1978. Inflation in Australia is pushing
towards an annual rate of 10 per cent again. In New South Wales things are improving. Over the past year motor vehicle registrations in New South Wales rose by 9,303 or 4.7 per cent. For the rest of Australia the increase was only 2.2 per cent.

In the March quarter retail sales in New South Wales rose by 14.1 per cent over the March quarter of 1978. Throughout the rest of Australia the rise in retail sales was only 8.8 per cent. In New South Wales both retail sales and motor vehicle registrations are improving. That indicates that the economy of New South Wales performed better in 1978–79 than did the Australian economy as a whole.

In his speech the honourable member for Kirribilli touched on building approvals. In New South Wales the number of new houses approved, including flats, town houses and so on, rose by 11.1 per cent. That is the highest rise since March 1975. For the rest of Australia a decrease of 0.6 per cent occurred. The value of all buildings approved for construction in New South Wales rose by 19.9 per cent but the figure for the rest of Australia indicated a rise of only 3.6 per cent. Building investment in New South Wales is moving forward strongly. That is indicated clearly by the figures I have given. The building industry has faced problems. The rising cost of welfare housing and housing generally has resulted in people finding difficulty meeting the rents that are demanded in New South Wales.

The subject of death duties has been raised on a number of occasions during the Address-in-Reply debate. Part of the amount saved by not proceeding with the total abolition of death duties will be allocated to welfare housing to assist the Minister for Housing to carry out his worthwhile project. The Treasurer has given the assurance that the New South Wales Government will abolish death duties during the life of the current Parliament. At the last State elections the Premier promised to abolish death duties during the term of this Parliament. That promise will be kept. Unfortunately, because of savage cutbacks by the federal Government in allocations for welfare housing the State Government has been forced to defer its programme for the abolition of death duties for twelve months. The Government will honour the election promise and abolish death duties during the life of this Parliament.

The Government has made considerable advances in reducing the burdens imposed by death duties. In 1976 it abolished death duties on estates passing between spouses. In last year’s State Budget the Treasurer announced that remaining death duties would be abolished in three stages. The first stage, a one-third reduction in death duty, took effect from 1st January, 1979. The second stage, a further one-third reduction, which was to take effect from 1st January, 1980, will take effect on 1st January, 1981. The third and final stage of the abolition of death duties will take effect not later than 1st January, 1982.

Though, unfortunately, the abolition of death duties has had to be delayed, the promise the Government made during the 1978 State elections will be kept. The Government has deferred the abolition of death duties for twelve months in order to allocate $30 million for welfare housing in both city and country. In the current financial year the contribution of the federal Government to New South Wales for welfare housing has been cut by $40 million in real terms. As a result the Housing Commission of New South Wales will be able to build only 1,100 homes compared to the 2,800 homes it built last year.

To thousands of families on the waiting list of the Housing Commission the cutbacks by the federal Government will result in extra years of heartbreak and hardship before they can have homes of their own. The State Government has a firm commitment to provide housing for low-income earners. It will not let the
meanness of the federal Government interfere with that commitment. With stringent financial management and by stretching its resources to the limit the State Government has been able to find some funds to offset the federal Government’s cutbacks.

After all these measures there remained a shortfall of $30 million in the amount needed to maintain the construction programme of the Housing Commission. The only option open to the Government was to defer abolition of death duties for twelve months—a difficult decision, but one that had to be taken for the benefit of people without homes and low-income earners.

We must pay regard to some of the other development that has taken place under this Government. Construction of the entertainment centre at the Haymarket has commenced. Also, the New South Wales Government has completed preliminary planning of the recreation area and sports stadium in the Homebush Bay area. The three main parts of the complex will be the sports stadium, playing fields for a wide range of sports, and a large area of parkland. The sports stadium will seat 70,000 people. It will have numbered seats that can be reserved in advance. Parking will be provided for 10,000 cars. Facilities will be available for all major spectator sports, and numerous other features will ensure the comfort and convenience of spectators and players.

The playing fields will cater for district and school teams playing rugby league, rugby union, soccer, netball, softball, hockey, cricket and other field sports. Facilities for indoor sports such as squash, basketball and weightlifting will be provided as part of the sports stadium complex.

The parkland will have paths designated for horse riding and bicycle riding and a large area of open space for walking and family picnics. The creeks and mangrove swamps in the area will be cleared of rubbish to provide a sanctuary for the large number of water birds already found at Homebush Bay. The honourable member for Yaralla raised this point in his contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate. When completed, the recreation area will be larger than the Moore Park–Centennial Park complex. Being close to the population centre of Sydney, it will be readily accessible, by either public or private transport, to most people living in the metropolitan area.

The project will be carried out under the direction of the Government, with private enterprise responsible for the funding and construction of the sports stadium. The site of the sports complex is near the junction of the main northern and western railways, approximately 1 kilometre from Flemington railway station on the western line and Concord railway station on the northern line; within 35 minutes’ driving time of most of the metropolitan area; bordering the Concord–Penrith Western Freeway currently under construction; near both Parramatta Road and Concord Road.

Additional road and rail works are already planned to be co-ordinated with the development. These include the construction of Ring Road 3 between Marlborough Road and Concord Road with direct access to the car park of the sports stadium; a new rail link between the main western and northern railways from a point west of Flemington station to north of Concord West station, utilizing existing railway bridges over Parramatta Road and the Western Freeway; a new combined railway station and bus terminal adjacent to the sports stadium; and the diversion of Bennelong Road to connect Parramatta Road via King Avenue, north of the proposed stadium, with the termination of Underwood Road at the southern boundary of the stadium. There will be also a planned diversion of Bennelong Road along the northern side of the new rail link to connect King Avenue to Ring Road 3. This road will serve the new bus Mr Cleary]
terminal and will permit access to Bennelong Road. Direct access points to the stadium car parking areas will be distributed evenly around the site. Access will be from Ring Road on the west and north, from the Western Freeway on the south, and from Underwood Road on the southeast.

Details of the proposed sports stadium include seating for 70,000 people, 35,000 being under cover. There will be individual seats for all spectators, colour coded to assist identification of seat locations, and numbered to allow advance reservation. The average spectator distance from the centre of the arena will be a little more than 80 metres; this compares with 100 metres at the Sydney Cricket Ground and 110 metres at the Victoria Football League Ground. There will be a dual purpose arena of international standards for football and athletic events. Access will be provided to elevated concourses by moving footways for ease of pedestrian movement in terms of comfort and speed. There will be glass enclosed viewing lounges and eating places, and a wide range of additional facilities.

Indoor sporting features of the sports stadium will include a 25-metre swimming pool, players' changing rooms and waiting lounge, twelve squash courts, sauna baths, and for gallery sports there will be areas for archery, bowls and cricket practice.

The sports hall of the complex will provide for table tennis, basketball, net ball, volley ball and badminton. Leisure activities will include yoga, judo, weight training and body conditioning. Administration and management areas will include club meeting rooms. Provision will be made for television and other news media. The people of New South Wales and members of the Government can be equally proud of the complex.

I refer now to the decision taken by the New South Wales Government as a result of the reduction of $28 million for New South Wales public hospitals in the 1979–80 federal Budget under the terms of the Commonwealth-State hospitals cost sharing agreement, as announced by the federal Treasurer in May. The severity of the cutbacks, as originally announced, has been subsequently modified under pressure. I congratulate the New South Wales Minister for Health on his intervention and his efforts in indicating to the federal Minister for Health the effects that would be felt in his electorate.

The New South Wales Government has decided to proceed with a programme of rationalization of hospital services in accordance with a plan developed by the Health Commission of New South Wales and approved by State Cabinet. The main purpose of the rationalization programme is to enable the Government to proceed with the commissioning of essential new hospital facilities.

A statement to the Commonwealth Parliament by the federal Minister for Health, following the delivery of the Budget statement by the federal Treasurer, included an edict that there should be a nil growth factor in hospital services throughout Australia during 1979–80. This means the federal Government will not agree to cost sharing of any new beds or services introduced during the current financial year. This State will have an additional 450 beds ready for use this year at Westmead, and some 300 other beds will be ready for use in other places, including Gosford and Wyong. Also, new services such as assessment and rehabilitation centres are now under construction.

In consequence of the federal edict that there should be a nil growth factor in hospital services, these units will have to remain unopened unless State Government savings are effected of a magnitude equal to the cost of bringing the new services on line. The decision of the Government is largely one of deployment of resources to
meet the requirement that services be available to people closer to where they live. The programme of reallocation of resources is also intended to prevent duplication of services and ensure their proper utilization, including highly sophisticated medical services. The rationalization programme will affect mainly the larger teaching hospitals and for 1979–80 will include cuts in services to probably fifteen or more hospitals. One of those, in my electorate, is the complex of Prince Henry—Prince of Wales—Eastern Suburbs hospitals. The group operating costs of that complex of hospitals in 1978–79 was $69.7 million; the proposed reduction for 1979–80 is $1.32 million, but for a full year will be $2.64 million. The occupied bed reduction will be 100.

I should like to reassure people employed in those hospitals that the Minister has indicated no jobs will be lost; there will be a freeze on the recruitment of staff from outside the public hospitals system. If special circumstances arise, a new position will be created. I am able to say to each person employed in those hospitals, "Your job is secure". There will be no loss of employment of those currently employed.

I assure the people of the Coogee region that I strongly believe that the 100-bed cutback will not unduly affect them. The Minister has given that assurance. The grants scheme is assessed on the bed-occupancy rate. At times people have been kept in hospital a little longer than, was required. The hospital receives the grants money to which it is entitled under the Commonwealth-State cost-sharing arrangement. The extension of the Westmead Hospital will alleviate problems experienced by people coming from Parramatta, passing a number of hospitals on their way and finding themselves at Prince Henry Hospital, the Prince of Wales Hospital or the Eastern Suburbs Hospital. Instead, they will go to the hospital that is nearest to them, which has facilities the equal of any hospital in New South Wales.

I shall now deal with some local issues. The Governor's Speech referred to public transport. I compliment the Minister for Transport on the outstanding success of the eastern suburbs railway, the patronage of which has been beyond all expectations. I congratulate also the people of the eastern suburbs for their patience in adjusting to the rearranged bus services and for using this excellent rail system. I inform the Minister for Transport that I shall continue to press for the extension of the railway beyond Bondi Junction to Randwick and Kensington. High fuel prices leading to an avalanche of increased patronage of public transport make it imperative that the eastern suburbs railway be extended. I realize that the cost of extending the railway beyond Bondi Junction will be high.

In addition to pleading for the extension of the eastern suburbs railway, I ask the Minister to consider the proposal—which has not yet been sanctioned by Cabinet—that the land that was purchased during the initial planning of the railway in the Coogee—Randwick—Kensington area be retained by the Government. There has been a suggestion that this land would be offered for sale back to the original owners because a further extension of the railway is not envisaged. Some of the open space could be used as parkland or for the provision of car parks. This would help the local chamber of commerce, and particularly the people who use the Belmore Road shopping centre at Randwick. However, some day the eastern suburbs railway must be extended. I know that the provision of money for the work will be a problem, for other tasks must be carried out, including the electrification of the line to Waterfall, the completion of electrification to Newcastle and the extension of the line to Port Kembla to transport coal.

I realize that the Government is committed to expenditure for many things that have to be done quickly. Neither the Minister, the Cabinet nor the Government can give an assurance that the eastern suburbs railway will be extended, and I am slot asking that a date be set, but I urge the Government to keep its options open.
Because of the high running costs of motor cars, the necessity for quick access to the city and the stimulation that a railway gives to business, one day the eastern suburbs line will have to be extended. I compliment the Randwick chamber of commerce, which consists of an enterprising young group, on the pressure it exerts on behalf of the people of the municipality of Randwick. The chamber is right behind me in my endeavours to have the eastern suburbs rail link extended. To coincide with the opening of the eastern suburbs railway, new bus services were introduced and others were diverted. This created problems, and I congratulate the people of the area on their patience in adjusting to the new services.

Over the past three years an alarming situation has developed in the Housing Commission area in Elphinstone Road in the Coogee South subdivision, where 3500 people, some of them elderly, have no direct access by bus to the major shopping centre in Coogee Bay Road. I have presented petitions on this subject to the Minister. Last week Mr Bowen, a Public Transport Commission officer for the eastern suburbs area, informed me that he had recommended the provision of six bus services a day to convey the people in Elphinstone Road direct to Bondi Junction and back, passing along Bundock Street, Randwick. As honourable members may be aware, there has been a large naval store adjoining Bundock Street. Also in this part of the Coogee South subdivision is a community centre where many elderly people gather from all parts of my electorate to spend their leisure time in activities that keep them happy and help to fulfil their day. There is no bus service along Bundock Street. I ask the Minister to endorse the recommendation for the proposed bus services. If they are well patronized perhaps more could be provided. Coogee is a hilly district and without buses it is a hardship for people to go to the shopping centre in Coogee Bay Road up the hill to their Housing Commission homes in South Coogee laden with parcels. This bus service is much needed and will be appreciated by the people of my electorate, particularly those in the Coogee South subdivision.

In the sphere of education my constituents have seen some great improvements. Class sizes have been reduced, more teachers have been employed and much renovation work has been done on the schools in the area. Although Randwick boys high school was painted recently, its buildings are old and a new school is needed. I know that the department is considering it and that it has a high priority. I should like to inform parents of children who attend Randwick boys high school—and there are many of them—that a rebuilding programme for the school is planned and should become a reality in the very near future.

I assure the people of the Coogee electorate that I am watching their welfare closely. I shall continue my endeavours to represent them in the way they wish to be represented, as they indicated at the last elections. Regardless of anyone's political persuasion I shall take pleasure in assisting him. I commend the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply and I compliment His Excellency the Governor on the way he presented his Speech.

Mr DUNCAN (Lismore) [4.38]: I join with other honourable members in extending congratulations to the honourable member for Woronora, who moved the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I offer special congratulations to the honourable member for Willoughby, who seconded the motion and delivered his maiden speech. As one reads through the Speech by His Excellency the Governor one should remember that the people of New South Wales are becoming tired of this Government's continual criticism of the Fraser Government over its inability to fulfill an election undertaking to complete capital works or to provide additional services for
the people of this State. The State Government seeks to find the blame for its problems in the financial constraints and the fiscal policies of the Fraser—Anthony Government. The third paragraph of His Excellency's Speech contains this statement:

The financial and legislative measures for this Session have been prepared against a background of severe financial restrictions imposed by the Federal Government, particularly in the fields of capital works, health, housing, and education.

I invite Government members and other members who are interested to do so to refer to His Excellency's Speech in 1978.

Mr McIlwaine: I was not here then.

Mr DUNCAN: Listen and you will hear it. He said:

This year's Budget is being prepared against the background of unparalleled financial stringency imposed on the State by the Commonwealth Government, a depressed national economy and the highest unemployment in Australia since the Great Depression.

Despite the fact that the present Government knew before the last election, or claimed that it knew, that financial constraints were to be imposed by the Fraser Government, it let it be known—no doubt because there was an election in the air—that it would abolish death duties. Despite that, it has the hide to come forward again, knowing exactly what it was to receive from the Commonwealth, and say that because of lack of funds it will have to defer the promise that it gave, clearly and without reservation, on the question of death duties.

The honourable member for Coogee, who says that he has all the faith in the world in the Wran Government, knew that this promise was not to be kept. Whatever reason the Wran Government had for deferring the abolition of death duties, it could not fairly claim that it was because of lack of funds. With that thought in mind, members of the Government, as well as the people of New South Wales, can certainly look forward with a great deal of pessimism to a possibility that the Government will fulfil its promise on death duties.

What are the financial constrictions that daily members of the Wran Government claim the Commonwealth is imposing? Last year New South Wales received $1,464 million in revenue-sharing assistance, and I understand that this year it is to be increased by no less than another $200 million. Is that an exercise in financial constriction by the Fraser—Anthony Government? I suggest that the Wran Government is doing very well indeed. What of State taxes? Since this present Government came to power in 1976, liquor tax has been increased by 89 per cent, property tax by 50 per cent, gambling tax by 44 per cent, motor vehicle taxation by 54 per cent and stamp duties by 74 per cent. That, of course, does not include payroll tax, which last year was estimated to bring $682 million to this State, and poker machine tax, which the other States have not got that last year was estimated to swell the coffers of this State by $100 million. And so I could go on.

The Opposition claims that not only does New South Wales have the highest taxes but also the Wran Government is providing for the people of New South Wales the worst level of services of any government in Australia. One hears continual claims from the Wran Government that it has no money because of the financial policies of the Commonwealth. When one looks at the money the State has received—particularly in the light of its failure to fulfil the death duties promise—one should ask not where the money is coming from but where all the money has gone during the administration of the Wran Government.
The question of finance is certainly relevant when one comes to talk about education. I do not care what is done for education in other parts of the world; all the citizens of this State can be justly proud of the education system that has been built up here over the years. At the same time the Government and the Opposition need to appreciate that in education there is a crisis in confidence. People are concerned whether they are getting value for the many millions of dollars that are spent annually on education. Often it is argued that not enough priority is given to teaching children the basic skills. People are calling for the appointment of more remedial teachers to the secondary schools to teach children to read and to write correctly. That is an indictment of the system. Whether in government or in opposition one needs to accept the need for ensuring that the people of this State get value for the money spent on education.

The Opposition welcomes particularly the part of the Governor's Speech that deals with education, in which he states that the Government will restore progressively the State living-away-from-home allowance to people who qualify for the Commonwealth isolated children's allowance. I am proud to say that the Opposition's policy at the last elections contained a similar undertaking. The Opposition has noted in His Excellency's Speech the proposal to legislate for an education commission. Again for the benefit of the honourable member for Yaralla, who stated that he was not present last year when the Governor read his Speech, I refer him to this year's Speech. Although that legislation was promised last year, it did not see the light of day. The Opposition will be waiting with bated breath to see whether it is introduced this session and will be particularly interested to see its detailed form.

I remind honourable members that in 1976 the Labor Government promised that it would establish a genuine education commission to determine aims and objectives, curriculum, planning, the allocation of funds and all matters related to the educational development of the child, as well as the participation of the community in its own educational development. I understand from a press statement released by the Minister a few months ago that that policy has been watered down a great deal; that there is now to be an advisory commission, which Government members opposed when they were in Opposition. The Teachers' Federation boycotted the appointment of such an advisory commission. It is said that the commission will be the employing authority of teachers and will set their wages and conditions. In 1969 the Minister opposed the Teaching Service Bill, which was introduced by a Liberal-Country party Government, for not providing sufficient representation of the Teachers' Federation. If sufficient representation is given by the proposed legislation, the commission will virtually be the union and the employer. There can be no doubt that one of the great aims is to provide not for more professionalism in education but rather for higher salaries and better conditions for teachers.

Although the State Government might have the money to meet those costs, I am more concerned with the effect that increased salaries will have on the non-Government schools. Non-Government schools are managing on what could be termed shoestring budgets. They do not have available to them the unlimited funds of Government schools; they depend upon assistance from Commonwealth and State governments. One should remember that New South Wales lags lamentably behind other States in the assistance given to non-Government schools. According to the Schools Commission, in 1979 the average cost of educating a primary school student is $962 and a secondary school student, $1,520. Government assistance to a primary student is 16.3 per cent, or $157, and to a secondary student 17.5 per cent, or $266. This year Tasmania will provide $176 for a primary student and $250 for a secondary student; Queensland will provide $180 for a primary student and $285 for a secondary
student: South Australia, $190 for a primary student and $320 for a secondary student; Victoria, $197 for a primary student and $326 for a secondary student; and Western Australia, $200 for a primary student and $355 for a secondary student. Clearly this State is running a bad last in the assistance it gives to non-Government schools. Next year the cost of educating a primary school student will be $1,007 and a secondary student, $1,607.

Opposition members hoped that His Excellency's Speech would contain some indication in black and white of additional financial assistance to be given to the non-Government schools. At the last election the Liberal Party and the Country Party promised to increase aid to non-Government schools by 25 per cent. One other matter that should be mentioned when considering the Government's assistance to parents is the way that this Government lags behind the other States in textbook allowances and library grants. At the primary school level no assistance is given in the form of a textbook allowance. From years 7 to 12 the allowance ranges from $4 to $16 a student. In Victoria the Government provides a textbook allowance ranging from $15 for a kindergarten pupil to $30 for a student in year 6. From year 7 to year 12 the Victorian Government provides an allowance of between $40 and $70 for each student. The Government of New South Wales should assist students and parents realistically in respect of library grants and textbook allowances. Students in State non-Government schools are being sold short by the Government. In April 1976 the Premier of New South Wales, whilst Leader of the Opposition, said in his policy speech: "Let us have at last truly free schools, Government and non-Government alike." The figures I have quoted to the House show that statement to be nothing less than hypocritical.

Another aspect of His Excellency's Speech that concerns me comes under the heading of environment and law and order. I refer to a matter that has been much in the news in recent weeks—the forest at Terania Creek. I do not know how many Government supporters or Opposition members have visited Terania Creek, but I know that the Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources has visited the area. I place on record my admiration for the strong stand that he has taken on the logging of this area. Until the end of 1973 I lived on a property at Konorigan and almost daily was able to view the area in question. It comes as a surprise to me that the Terania Creek rain forest has achieved statewide and nationwide publicity and been involved in much controversy. Many persons who are anti-logging suggest that if the area is logged it will spoil an excellent tourist attraction. In the years that I have lived in the district no one has come to me and said, "We are going to have a day at Terania Creek." It has not been a tourist attraction. It may become one if the Forestry Commission proceeds with logging, places roads within the forest and provides recreational facilities and walkways. Then some persons might go to the area.

Contrary to what many people are reported in the press as saying, the area has been logged on previous occasions. It was logged prior to World War II and has been logged twice since. Instead of casting aspersions at the Forestry Commission of New South Wales and making disparaging remarks about what it has done or will do to rape the forest, such persons would be better off getting up on the stump and giving the commission the credit that it deserves. If it were not for the Forestry Commission and its responsible schemes of management, the forest would not have regenerated to its present condition and we would not have this bitter controversy. It should be recognized that if it had not been for the Forestry Commission, the forest would have been clear felled and there would be no forest to argue about today. Three former Ministers for Lands are still members of the Opposition—the present Leader of the Opposition, the honourable member for Upper Hunter and the honourable Mr Duncan]
member for Maitland. They endorse the Forestry Commission's proposal that the forest should be placed on what could be termed a sustained yield basis to log the area selectively.

Since 1976 the matter has been subject to representations. The present Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources virtually endorsed the recommendations of the former Liberal–Country party Government. I am certainly not opposed to people in the community who are genuinely concerned with conservation. But I suggest that if one wishes to become involved in controversies of this nature, there are proper channels open by which one can make representations. And when a decision is made, as was made in this case by the former Liberal–Country party Government and endorsed by the present Government upon the recommendation of its Minister for Conservation, that is an umpire's decision and the people who go out to bat, whatever side they represent, should accept it.

In recent weeks we have seen a protesting element in the community involved in the Terania Creek area that has not been willing to accept the decision. I do not propose to deal at length with the capers, antics or tactics in which they have indulged, but I say that they have alienated much of the support they may have won from genuine conservationists by engaging in what I would describe as childish, irresponsible and repulsive actions that are quite foreign to the hard-working citizens who have lived and worked adjacent to the forest over a long period. The thing that annoys me most is to be told that Terania Creek residents are involved in these protests. To my knowledge, the name of only one such person appeared in the first list of those who were arrested and charged for sitting in front of vehicles and obstructing the road, and that person was from The Channon. The rest came from Kogarah or Queensland or from some different part of the district. It was a case of rent a crowd. These are the people who claim that 83 per cent of those in the Lismore electorate are against logging the forest.

I understand that today Cabinet established a subcommittee of six to consider the future of the forest. That is further procrastination after a decision has been made. In my view, responsibility for the debacle at Terania Creek can be laid at the feet of only one person—that is, the Premier. He has failed to support the Minister for Conservation, who made a responsible and considered decision. It is wrong, after such a decision has been made, and with protests taking place, that the Premier's door should remain open to protesters; that they should be still talking to him and that the Premier, in turn, should be saying: "I do not believe in the logging, I shall look after you." By doing that the Premier is giving credence to the type of actions in which these protesters have been involved.

If any honourable member denies that, let him examine the copy of the Nimbin News that I have in my possession. It is published by the alternative society and referred to as the Rainbow Info Weekly. The Government has recently provided a $2,000 grant to this organization. My time is limited and I shall not read the whole of the article dealing with the Terania Creek rain forest, but it contains the following comment:

The ALP branches are muttering. Lin Gordon, Minister for Conservation, comes across on the media as a man under pressure, a man beginning to doubt, a man feeling the skewer of his bigotry.

I do not agree with that. At least he has had the guts to stand up for his convictions. The article continues:

And the Premier continues to be personally briefed by delegations from Terania Creek and their Sydney embassy.
When the Premier, the leader of this State, makes a decision, he should stand by it. I trust that the 6-man committee is not merely a delaying tactic or a whitewash, for I can assure honourable members that the genuine people in my electorate want the decision made by the Minister for Conservation upheld, logging proceeded with, and law and order observed.

Mr FLAHERTY (Granville) [5.6]: I congratulate the honourable member for Woronora, the mover of the motion being debated by the House. I congratulate also the honourable member for Willoughby, who seconded the motion, and the honourable member for Miranda, who made their maiden speeches in the course of this debate. In the short time since the last State election both honourable members have proved worthy representatives of their constituents, well suited to press the claims of their electorates on the floor of the House, and I wish them a long stay in this, the mother of Parliament of Australia.

I take the opportunity of thanking the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Housing and Minister for Co-operative Societies and the Government for recommencing a responsible housing programme in the Granville electorate. Some years ago when Villawood was transferred to the Granville electorate following one of the many redistributions by the previous Government, I was surprised to learn that approximately 100 Housing Commission homes off Tangerine, Normanby and Hercules streets were being demolished to make way for a new housing project of the Liberal–Country party coalition Government at that time. Unfortunately, when all the homes had been demolished, the former Government decided not to go ahead with the project. I am pleased to say that immediately after Labor was elected, the Minister for Housing at that time, the honourable member for Merrylands, ordered planning for the area to commence, and his worthy successor, the present Minister for Housing, the honourable member for Waverley, called tenders several months ago for 105 dwellings. Since then, further tenders have been called and tenders will continue to be called until the project is complete.

Why the previous Government failed to build on this valuable land for so many years is beyond my comprehension. Probably it was because its members had little interest in providing homes for the low-income earners of this State. Unfortunately, the same lack of interest in housing is shown by the Canberra colleagues of members of the Opposition, and this year welfare housing funds have been cut to $75 million from $105 million last year. In fact, the federal Government has cut funds for welfare housing by 60 per cent in the past four years. I wonder how long it will take the Liberal–Country party coalition, federal and State, to wake up and realize that workers will not settle for less than social and economic justice, particularly in welfare housing.

The federal Treasurer, Mr Howard, when introducing his recent budget, admitted that there will be further increases in unemployment. By next January the number of people unemployed will be over 500,000, or 8 per cent of the work force. This means that next January there will be more than 200,000 more people out of work than there were when Mr Fraser took office, and that unemployment has increased by 60 per cent under the Fraser Government. In my electorate unemployment is a big issue. I am vitally concerned to know that the federal Government has no plans to solve the problem and no intention of dealing with long-term structural unemployment. If the Fraser Government wanted to help the unemployed, it would increase, not decrease, funds for job training schemes, particularly the Special Youth Employment Training Programme for the skilled unemployed. The Labor Party makes no apology for its policy that every person of working age has the right to be gainfully employed. The sooner that principle is adopted by the Fraser Government the better it will be for the business houses of the State, for the unemployed cannot spend money
they have not got. Unemployment adversely affects all businesses. It leads to a lack of confidence in the economy. Companies are reluctant to expand their activities, and employment opportunities associated with such expansion are lost. That situation can be described only as disastrous.

Mention is made in the Governor’s Speech of the implications of federal Government policy for the future of the health and hospital services of this State. It is public knowledge that the federal Government recently announced its intention to conduct a national inquiry into the efficiency and administration of hospitals, and that the New South Wales Labor Government agreed to take part in the inquiry. My concern is that the cost of hospital and medical services is rapidly moving beyond the reach of the average family, and that no encouragement is given by the federal Government to income earners to cover their families. Previously all fees paid into medical and hospital funds were allowable taxation deductions; today they are not. For a family to be fully covered under Medibank Private the yearly cost is approximately $800.

The Fraser Government has virtually destroyed Medibank, and in doing so has taken away from families adequate medical and hospital cover at a price they can afford to pay. Workers and their families, particularly those in the lower income bracket, cannot afford the excessive costs associated with health care. All governments will have to look at the current health costs, for the present position cannot be allowed to continue. If costs continue to increase over the next two years, adequate health care will be beyond the average income earner. The federal Government must conduct its inquiry into the efficiency and administration of hospitals as quickly as possible, and leave no stone unturned to ensure that adequate health care is available at a reasonable cost to all citizens of Australia.

In education, Granville has done reasonably well, although some dissatisfaction with staff arrangements exists at the Granville Technical College. Recently I have received a number of deputations from teachers at the college, and have referred their complaints to the Minister for Education, who I know will do his utmost to overcome their problems. In my earlier remarks I referred to the new Housing Commission project in the Villawood area. I invite the attention of the Minister for Education to the fact that when the project is completed there will be an increase in the number of pupils wishing to attend the Villawood North Public School. The school is of weatherboard construction and needs a number of urgent repairs. I should appreciate it if the Minister would arrange for an inspection of the school in the near future so that all restoration necessary can be attended to before the Villawood housing project is completed.

Public transport is causing grave concern in the Granville electorate. Bus operators are carrying fewer passengers and this results in their seeking a reduction in services from time to time. At present some routes in Granville have no service at all on Sundays. That is causing some hardship and inconvenience to a number of my constituents, particularly pensioners who rely on bus transport. I ask the Minister for Transport to investigate the possibility of providing a mini-bus service on Sundays on routes 105 and 5. The latter route operates between Guildford and Auburn railway stations and has never provided a service on Saturday afternoons or Sunday. Until recently route 105 did have a Sunday service. If the operators of routes 105 and 5 got together they could provide some relief for bus commuters who want a service seven days a week.

While on the subject of buses I take the opportunity of congratulating the Minister for Transport for his strong stand in rejecting a request by the operator of bus route 96 to cease all services on Sundays. The only complaint I receive from train commuters is about the four-carriage express trains that operate in offpeak
periods, particularly during school holidays. Those trains are generally overcrowded and it is often impossible to board them at Granville. The problem has existed for many years and I would appreciate it if the Minister would investigate the matter with a view to providing extra cars on them during the school holidays. As much as it grieves me to do so, this being the International Year of the Child, I must refer to the increasing problem in my electorate of children who are unlicensed riding unregistered motor bikes on the roads, on the footpaths and in recreation reserves, where the riding of such machines is forbidden. In recreation areas alone they do thousands of dollars worth of damage yearly. The problems created if they are involved in a road accident of any sort need no emphasis. As these children are unlicensed, unregistered and uninsured, the mind boggles at the legal problems that could arise. Yet parents whose children day in and day out ride these machines in such places seem oblivious to the danger involved. Now and again local police are able to apprehend some persons riding on the footpaths and roads, but they have no hope of doing so in the parks and recreation areas. The only hope there is for police on trail bikes. There are heavy demands for their services and it is obvious more men and equipment are needed. If these young people are killed, they are of no benefit to their families and themselves. The Government should protect them; if it does not, they will go unprotected.

In the normal course of events I would not concern the House with pockets of press publicity from time to time unfortunately portraying firearms adversely. However, I watched such a presentation recently on television that was so misleading and prejudiced against the shooting fraternity of this State that I feel some criticism of that programme is warranted. To purchase a firearm today it is necessary to fill in an application form at the local police station. It is up to the police to decide in accordance with the Firearms and Dangerous Weapons Act, 1973, whether the applicant qualifies for a gun licence. If the applicant meets the requirement of the Act, in that he is of good character and repute, is a fit and proper person to hold a shooter's licence, and can be trusted to have firearms and to use and carry them without danger to the public, he gets the licence. If he fails to meet those requirements he does not get the licence. That approach is fair and reasonable.

Nobody objects more strongly to criminal acts with firearms than the sporting shooters of this State; that is why they emphasize that criminal acts with firearms should be met with the full fury of the law. It shocks me when I see prisoners being released on parole after serving three years of a ten-year sentence for armed holdup, or being allowed bail while facing a charge of armed holdup. This is an area that needs attention, instead of worrying about the number of firearms owned by a sporting shooter.

The organizers of the programme to which I am referring surely do not believe that if the sporting shooters of this State have to register each firearm and are limited to three guns, the criminal element will be unable to obtain firearms. I am sure that criminals like the late Phillip Western would be most impressed if sporting shooters had to register all their guns and were limited to three weapons. I cannot understand the media trying to force this stupid, illogical situation on the Government. Every country in the world has found that it does not matter how restrictive firearms legislation may be to the general public, it will not stop criminals getting access to them. The programme referring to the shooting of the bank manager at the Westfield shopping complex in Parramatta was television at its worst. I was at the home of friends on the night of the screening and the whole family was upset at the way in which the gory details were presented.

In my opinion television is the main culprit in teaching violence. If a murder or fatal accident takes place, television reporters and film crews are usually first on the scene. The more gory the accident or murder, the more television stations appear to enjoy showing it to the public without giving any thought to the relatives of the

Mr Flaherty]
victims. Though sporting shooters believe in teaching the safety aspects of firearms, television films show men, women and children shooting each other. Often a shoot-out between criminals and police shown on television is a child's introduction to firearms—and what a damnable thing that is. If the news media want a more law-abiding society they should first clean the mulgadooley off their own doorstep. They can do so by showing less violent television programmes and advocating stronger penalties for murder and armed robberies.

I have been a member of this House for more than seventeen years. During that time I have received many letters and petitions containing thousands of signatures protesting against drunken driving, the extension of liquor hours, abortion, and other problems too numerous to mention. I have never received a letter from any individual or organization seeking to register firearms or restrict the number of firearms allowed to one person. The general public knows what the media chooses to overlook, and that is the indisputable fact that while we have criminals, they will obtain firearms irrespective of how restrictive gun laws may be.

Air pollution still presents a major problem in Granville, particularly to those who live close to a chemical works or a yeast factory. For a number of years I have been concerned with the problem of air pollution in my electorate. During that time I have reached the conclusion that if the company creating the pollution is a big organization, it is hard to get it into court. Further, if the authorities are successful in bringing a large organization before the court and securing a conviction, the penalty imposed is generally equivalent to the cost of a bag of peanuts. Recently I was advised that a firm operating in Ferndell Street, Granville, had sold out to a competitor that does not propose to process yeast after 1981. Many asthma sufferers in the area were pleased to hear the news. However, the question I am asked is, does this company have a free rein to pollute the atmosphere until 1981? My reply to that question is that only time will tell. After all, fermentation industries of that kind have had a free rein for the past nine years—most of that time being during the administration of the former Government.

For some time I have received many complaints about soot emanating from a chimney stack at Goodlet and Smith's brickworks in Merrylands. Engineers from the air pollution control branch have worked hard to overcome the problem. I trust that their efforts will be successful and that my constituents in that locality will not have to suffer for much longer the inconvenience of soot ruining their washing and entering their homes. Some companies operating in the proximity of Duck River are still frequently polluting that waterway. Although initial complaints are generally attended to speedily, as with complaints about air pollution, there never seems to be a sufficient amount of back-up inspection. Much is to be done if we are to control effectively every form of pollution in this State.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made a cowardly attack on the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Housing and Minister for Co-operative Societies. I assure the House that the Minister enjoys the confidence of every supporter of the Government. Not so long ago the Granville State electorate council—which does not lightly throw bouquets—passed a vote of confidence in the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Housing and Minister for Co-operative Societies. The council praised him for his administration of the housing and the co-operative societies portfolios. When I hear people like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition making that type of attack, I wonder what they have been doing all these years. It seems as though the honourable gentleman must have had his ears plugged and shutters put over his eyes when he was a boy—and now he must have mushrooms growing where his brains
ought to be because no one in his right senses would criticize the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Housing and Minister for Co-operative Societies in that way. At all times the Minister does his best for the underprivileged people of this State. I congratulate him on the way he administers his portfolio and on having the confidence of every member of the Government.

I was amazed to hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Lismore claim that governments were never short of funds. Do those honourable members forget their cries when the former Government was in office? Do they forget the excuses they gave when that Government did not go ahead with certain projects? I remember the Minister for Housing in the former Government telling me that he could not go ahead with the project at Villawood, which I mentioned earlier, because of lack of funds. As soon as some honourable members are relegated to the Opposition benches they claim that adequate funds are available and that a government is never short of money. The Leader of the Opposition has often spoken to me on the quiet, saying: "You realize, as I realize, that we are now saying all the things you used to say in Opposition. Moreover, now that your party is in office you are saying the things that we used to say." My approach is straightforward: the Government is sincere about its claim that it has inadequate funds. When the former Government said that it could not proceed with certain projects because of a lack of funds, we always made a detailed study of the position. If we found the claim to be incorrect, we attacked the Government for not protesting to the federal Government against inadequate funding. The Liberal and Country parties have shown their insincerity by not backing this Government's administration. Some Opposition members have the audacity to claim that adequate funds are available to the Government.

Politics being what they are, no government—including the former Government—would not go ahead with necessary projects if sufficient funds were available. Governments want to please the people; they want to gain their confidence. If the former Government had sufficient funds when it was in office, it should not have whinged about the lack of funding from Canberra. It is a fact of life that the Labor Government has not had sufficient funds to carry out many worthwhile projects. The federal Government, which is the tax collector for the Commonwealth, has not given this Government sufficient money. The Premier and his Ministers are continually hammering at Canberra seeking adequate funding. The Government has put its position through the news media; it has informed the public about the inadequacy of the funding it has received from Canberra. There is no doubt about that message being accepted by the people before the last State election. One has only to look at the seventeen gallant members of the Liberal Party and the sixteen members of the Country Party opposite to realize that the people got the message. Moreover, I am confident that the message will be repeated in the future.

I have great pleasure in participating in this debate. I congratulate the Government on its achievements. I am certain that it will have the confidence of the people of this State for many years.

Mrs FOOT (Vaucluse) [5.30]: I have great pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, moved by the honourable member for Woronora. Also I wish to congratulate the honourable member for Willoughby and the honourable member for Miranda on their maiden speeches. As I, too, reach the end of my first year in this Parliament, I should like to express my appreciation of the considerable courtesy accorded to me by the Premier and his Ministers and honourable members on both sides of the House. However, I would be remiss to neglect to censure the early weeks of the second session of this Forty-sixth Parliament. Accusations, personal attacks, claims and counter claims made in this House have justified the general public's worst fears.
concerning parliamentary conduct. I can say only that I find this deviation from the real business of Parliament to be an abhorrent abuse of parliamentary privilege. Such melees reflect badly upon the individual members involved and on the Parliament itself. In these instances, no-one is a winner: we are all losers.

I now turn to a matter which I feel demonstrates that constructive and positive results can be achieved when party bias and personal vituperation are put aside. The matter I refer to is the report by the Select Committee upon Liquor Trading. I was privileged to be a member of this select committee, together with six Government supporters, the member for Ku-ring-gai and the member for Sturt. Specifically, I should like to refer to certain of the select committee's recommendations which, owing to the news media's preoccupation with the issue of Sunday trading, have not been widely publicized. In the early stages of its report the select committee stated:

After critical examination of the evidence, the committee is satisfied that the implementation of recommendations contained later in the report will not bring about any increase in the per capita consumption of alcohol nor in alcohol related health and social problems.

However, the committee conceded an existing need to arrest per capita alcohol consumption trends and urged the Government to consider six specific preventative measures to achieve this end.

I am pleased that the Minister for Health has supported the fourth recommendation which called for assistance in the development and promotion of beverages of low alcohol content. Only today he gazetted regulations which will mean that beer designated as a low alcohol drink will have at least 30 per cent less alcohol in it than conventional beer sold in New South Wales. I call on the Minister for Education, as well as the Minister for Health and the Minister for Youth and Community Services, to do all in their power to implement the report's first three recommendations aimed at preventing alcohol abuse. The first of these is that personal development programmes in high schools and all driver instruction courses should include the best possible information on the dangers of the use, and particularly the abuse, of drugs including alcohol.

I belong to a political party which seeks a minimum of government interference in the lives of its citizens. However, I feel confident of the support of members of the Opposition in pointing out the Government's special obligation to the teenagers of this State faced with poor employment prospects on leaving school and a bewildering array of moral choices. I believe our high school students are in need of well thought out personal development programmes. At present, introduction of such courses is left to the discretion of high school principals. I query the wisdom of the Department of Education in permitting such an option at a time when parental responsibility is being abdicated. In some families both parents work full-time and are often absent or too tired to give their teenage children the guidance they deserve. Obviously certain information on the dangers of the use, and particularly the abuse, of drugs and alcohol should be imparted to youth. However, both American and Australian research reveals that if such information is too detailed and explicit, it serves to incite experiment rather than act as a deterrent. Informed opinion now favours personal development courses which seek to develop the young person's self-esteem.

A successful living skills programme has been devised at Mount Druitt high school to assist pupils to understand various aspects of their personal, family and economic lives. This course involves parent, teacher and community involvement. I have been encouraged by recent discussions with the principals of Vaucluse high
school and Dover Heights boys high school in my electorate where broad based personal development courses have been introduced. I urge the Minister for Education to ensure that courses in physical and mental health care; sexuality and family planning; personal development and child care; drugs and alcohol abuse; budgeting and managing money; career and employment; work experience programmes and the constructive use of leisure time are included as an integral part of the high school curriculum.

I invite the attention of the Minister for Health to the second recommendation which calls for greater financial allocation to be made to programmes aimed at the prevention and early detection of alcohol abuse. May I point out to honourable members that in the course of this century dramatic changes have occurred in the nature and treatment of disease. At the turn of the century, infectious diseases caused 30 to 40 per cent of deaths. Now the so-called diseases of civilization account for about four-fifths of deaths in Australia. Many of these deaths are contributed to by social and environmental factors, such as alcohol, smoking and the use of drugs. While the clinical symptoms of heavy drinking can be treated with skill, the underlying social problems may remain untouched. The disease label on the alcoholic relieves him of responsibility while the social approach involves the family as well as the patient and calls for counselling and rehabilitation. Community based care in local areas tackles health problems before they start. The greatest problem confronting the community health programme has been the need to change the attitudes of those concerned with health care delivery—doctors, nurses, health administrators and politicians. It is necessary to convince them that new values in health care are emerging. It is to be hoped that the 1979–80 State contribution to health programmes will improve on the 1978–79 ratio of 91.2 per cent for public and psychiatric hospitals as against only 8.8 per cent for administration, community and aboriginal health services.

The third recommendation calls for the establishment of drop-in centres staffed by trained personnel and at which no alcohol will be available. As the name suggests, drop-in centres are casual meeting places for young people, usually run by community volunteer workers. Some provide direct welfare counselling while others offer purely recreational facilities. Such centres are designed primarily as alternatives to licensed discos, the pub music scene and the street. In the mid-seventies I supervised a number of federally funded drop-in centres in Sydney's inner city and western metropolitan region. My work in this area has led me to believe that such centres can play a vital role in preventing the adolescent's abuse of drugs and alcohol and his loss of self-esteem through unemployment. There are forty-five known drop-in centres in New South Wales with only one-third receiving any form of State funding through the Department of Youth and Community Services. I have frequently heard the Minister berate the Opposition for its lack of humanity and for deserting the young people of this State. I urge the Minister for Youth and Community Services to examine closely the need for State funding of drop-in centres throughout metropolitan and country areas.

I welcomed mention in the Governor's Speech of the New South Wales State council of youth which has been set up to advise the Government on the needs, attitudes and aspirations of the young. I welcome the opportunity to make a contribution to the recently established youth work training service which provides training courses for community youth workers. In his speech, the Governor referred also to significant progress in the prevention and treatment of drug and alcohol related problems. I commend the Government on the completion of the first major phase of the drink-drive and drug diversionary programme and the integration of the management and resources of the drug and alcohol authority and the division of drug and alcohol services of the Health Commission. I believe it is my responsibility to assist the Government in its endeavour to stem alcohol and drug abuse in this State. It is for this reason that I have amplified these particular recommendations which the select committee saw fit to include in its report.

Mrs Foot
The subject of extended hotel hours, including Sunday trading, raises another issue which is causing concern in the community and in the business sector. While the Government is set to legislate for weekend hotel trading, the retail industry is facing depression under new legislation which restricts large retail stores from weekend trading. As predicted in this House by my colleague the member for Wagga Wagga, the Government's new legislation on retail trading hours has already begun to break down. There is widespread abuse of the new laws with a recent report naming thirty major stores for trading illegally. This report, released recently by a committee of retailers, described New South Wales as a State where people will soon be able to buy alcohol freely and gamble on weekends, but if they want to shop with their families for household goods they will be outlaws. This Government, from the Premier down, has turned itself inside out to accommodate Lotto which, at best, probably caters for only 20 per cent to 30 per cent of the community. Shopping hours are something which affect everyone yet the Government has allowed a totally inequitable and discriminatory situation to develop.

Let me quickly refresh honourable members' memories of the situation on retail trading hours. In 1977 a committee of inquiry was set up to inquire into retail trading hours. During 1978 and the first half of 1979, amnesty was granted by the New South Wales Government during which stores could trade for any hours they wished. During this amnesty many large discount stores traded on weekends. Some traded for seven days a week. This amnesty period created a public expectation and accustomed the public to weekend shopping. Indeed, most people expected that when the new laws came into effect, there would be provision for longer shopping hours. However, the Factories, Shops and Industries Act, 1979, which became effective from 1st July, closed as from noon each Saturday all stores with more than two owners and two employees. The new legislation returned trading hours to the traditional shopping week that applied before the committee of inquiry commenced its deliberations, with the exception of some extensions for small stores.

Evidence on which the committee of inquiry based its recommendation referred to a period preceding the amnesty and therefore did not reflect changing public attitudes brought about by the amnesty. Further, many of the original premises on which arguments against extended shopping hours were based have been contested in recent months. One such premise is the belief that weekend trading would increase prices. Even the belief that opening large stores at weekends would send some small stores out of business is being contested by many retailers. It is also significant that some retailers who originally supported closing large stores on weekends are now advertising illegal weekend trading.

In the past few months, several major retail groups have gone into receivership. Last month alone, Col Buchan's Pty Limited and Cost Less Imports went to the wall. Sydney Wide Discounts, a firm with twenty years' retailing history, ran into severe trading difficulties. One of the first stores of the Sydney Wide group to close was in the busy centre of Bondi Junction where many of my constituents shop. It is not tenable to argue that longer shopping hours would have saved these retail firms from financial disaster. However, longer shopping hours could have played a part in financial recovery for the retail industry. In each case, the stores reported a continuing slump in sales. Consumer spending has continued to fall and unless the situation is reversed, many more retailers could go to the wall. This will lead to greatly increased unemployment, which must be avoided at all costs. Savings bank deposits as at 30th June this year were a record $19,833 million which is almost $2,000 million more than the figure for the same time last year.
Today 50 per cent of married women under 54 years of age are employed. The two-career family is a phenomenon of the 1970's. However, shopping hours have changed little to meet this new social trend. It is little wonder that in recent years the retail share of consumer spending has declined disproportionately. One must remember that because of the more competitive prices available most families prefer to do the bulk of their shopping at larger stores. The current shopping week coincides with the times during which the majority of families are at work. This means that two-career families have only Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings to shop. This period represents but 14 per cent of the retail trading week and it is characterized by rush, crowded parking areas and totally unsuitable conditions for comparative shopping.

I am concerned that working women in particular are not being catered for in existing shopping hours. There are few times at which the family can shop together. This undesirable trend is having an adverse effect on retail spending. Examining the current retail trading hours from an economic viewpoint, one sees that the only people who can fully avail themselves of shopping hours are pensioners, the unemployed and non-working wives without their husbands. Ironically, these groups are those with the lowest disposable income. The group with the highest level of disposable income—the two-job family—is at work and unable to shop during the traditional shopping week. It is logical to argue that until shopping hours legislation is amended to embrace this group, retail spending will remain low. There already appears to be a case for drastic changes in retail trading hours and the Government should be looking at this problem closely. The new legislation denies families suitable times to shop. It suppresses consumer spending; it is contributing to bankruptcy and growing unemployment.

A number of other serious questions arise with regard to policing current retail trading hours legislation. A committee of retailers formed to lobby for extended trading hours has been ignored by the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy. Instead, the Minister's department has proceeded to prosecute selectively certain retailers who have traded openly in protest against the new laws. The Minister stated that the current regulation on retail trading hours will be changed only after consultation with the two interested parties: the union and the Retail Traders' Association. One has to look only at the inbuilt bias of both these groups to see why they are unlikely to recommend any change to retail trading laws to meet the public's interest. First, the union opposes any extension to the working hours of its members and refuses to acknowledge the needs of the unemployed who would welcome the opportunity of part-time work over the weekend period. Second, the breakup of the R.T.A. shows an obvious bias. Of the 3 500 members of the New South Wales Retail Traders' Association, 80 per cent to 85 per cent represent small stores or specialty stores which can already trade legally seven days a week. It is fairly obvious that these members would defeat any motion to allow longer shopping hours for their larger competitors. The small proportion of larger retailers accounts for about 80 per cent of the retail business in this State. This is a totally inequitable situation.

The current legislation on retail trading hours is a farce. The legislation was outdated even as it was enacted. The Government can continue to prosecute retailers who trade illegally to serve a demonstrated public demand, or it can take more responsible action. The Government should urgently review retail trading hours in the light of the demands of modern society, particularly working women; the nature of goods sold and their selling patterns; and the future of the retail industry in the light of depressed consumer spending. We have seen how this Government has pandered to the union movement in its handling of the retail trading question. By the Governor's Speech making no mention of penalty rates or technology, the Government has further revealed

Mrs Foot]
its abject submission to the trade union movement. The honourable member for Granville repeated the attacks on the federal Government which the House has become accustomed to hearing from Government supporters. If he really wishes to solve the unemployment problem, he should look at the attitude of the party to which he belongs.

The subject of penalty rates being phased out in favour of alternative work patterns cannot be swept under the carpet any longer. The growth in alternative work patterns overseas has reaffirmed the timeliness and importance of the findings of the Future Lobby's permanent part-time work study of which I am still the convenor. In my maiden speech last year, I outlined findings which stressed the need for alternative work patterns to meet Australia's changing social and economic needs. The vexed question of penalty loadings for work done out of normal hours continues to hinder the introduction of permanent part-time work. Although the hotel industry is a twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week industry, its dilemma illustrates that experienced by many employers in regard to penalty rates. The Australian Hotels Association fears that if the five days worked over the seven-day week were to be paid for at the same rate, the unions would force a base rate increase of some 20 per cent to 30 per cent plus additional benefit payments of 12½ cents in the dollar. By threatening disruptive strike action in support of such claims, the unions have employers boxed into a corner and most politicians bluffed.

The unionized employee is being protected at the expense of many non-unionize4 groups seeking more flexible working patterns. This demand is reflected by the continued increase in part-time work relative to full-time work. Undoubtedly, Australia's present system of penalty rates is contributing to unemployment, particularly in the service sector. I urge the Government to look to the United States of America where a completely different union system exists. With firmly entrenched attitudes, there can be no quick solutions but at least our retail and hospitality industries should shift to the American model. For example, in that country in the past three years the number of wage earners, excluding farmers, has increased from 76 million to 84 million. That is 8 million more jobs and 58 per cent more in the service sector. Australia's crippling penalty rate system would not permit such expansion.

Although no mention of technology was made in the Governor's Speech, I note that it has been a preferred subject for debate by honourable members on both sides of the House and in another place. The honourable member for East Hills devoted the major part of his Address-in-Reply speech to the subject. I share the honourable member's scepticism concerning the submission by the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy to the Commonwealth Government's Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia. It would be a tragedy if New South Wales seriously challenged the concept that technological advancements are necessary and presumptively beneficial. It is twenty-five years since the computer came out of the scientific laboratory and became a tool of industry-

I refer the House to a study of the American economy over the past twenty-five years published by an economist, Roger Binner of Data Resources, which found that high technology industries have consistently outperformed those with low technology on every count—productivity, growth, price inflation and employment. This conclusion was supported at a recent conference of economists at La Trobe University in a paper by two of the economists involved in the impact project, Professor Peter Dixon and Dr D. P. Vincent. They concluded that nearly every industry would grow more rapidly in an innovative economy than in a Luddite economy. That is, Luddism would destroy more jobs than any conceivable rate of technological change. However, it seems clear that the jobs displaced as a result of technological change will be different from the
jobs created and therefore structural unemployment will occur. Some skills will become obsolete; there will be a demand for new skills and a reduced demand for unskilled labour. Although it is never possible to predict the future accurately, we can prepare for the likely eventualities. I believe the federal Government's inquiry into technological change will give a clear indication as to how Australians can adapt to the benefits of technology.

I should like to put the member for East Hills' mind at rest regarding the inquiry's concern for the real social impact of technological change. In preparing a submission for the inquiry I have been impressed by the concern of the three members to see that new technology is suited to the human needs of the Australian workforce. The three members of the inquiry represent a wide range of Australians. One is Professor Myers of the University of New South Wales, another is Mr Alan Coogan, general manager of Nabalco and the third member is Mr Mansfield of Telecom. Great foresight was shown in the choice of those members.

Governments, employers and unions should examine a number of questions relating to technological change. The New South Wales Government should not confine itself to monitoring the employment and the organizational impact of technology through its technological information and research unit. Why not consider the transfer of payroll tax from human beings to computer controlled machine tools? Employers should not be secretive about their intentions to use labour-saving technology. Why not negotiate with the unions between fewer hours for an existing wage or fewer hours for less wages?

Unions should cease protecting the status quo of the fully employed. Why not consult with employers about new work patterns as an alternative to retrenchment and a chance for others to gain employment? History has shown that events often coincide to bring about desirable change. I believe technology is coinciding with a demand for new work patterns to meet changing social and economic needs. I trust that our mutual responsibility to be responsive to these needs will not be drowned by the personal mud-slinging honourable members have recently witnessed in the House.

Mr WHELAN (Ashfield) [5.53]: I join with my colleagues in congratulating the honourable member for Woronora on moving the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. I congratulate the honourable member for Willoughby and the honourable member for Miranda on their maiden speeches. Those honourable members were part of the team responsible for the great success of the Labor Party at the election held on 7th October, 1978. If one can judge by the fervent feeling and content of their speeches those honourable members will make contributions to the Parliament for a long time. I am sure they will represent their electorates well and that the people will reward them with continuity of parliamentary service. One can only commend the Government for its endeavours since it has been elected to office. The developments referred to in the Governor's Speech show that one can look with confidence to the future of the State of New South Wales.

I shall refer to some of the matters raised in the Governor's Speech. I shall talk about the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and oil prices generally. It is evident that the Government is mindful that future generations in New South Wales will need a variety of energy sources that have been available to the State but have not been developed to any major extent. The Government has not only been active and provided investment encouragement to Australians and to overseas sources but has also arranged loans from overseas to finance in part major projects such as the Balmain coal loader, the Port Kembla coal loader and the Eraring power
station. Vast coal deposits have been lying dormant for years in New South Wales but are now being developed. Tenders have been called for the development of five coal areas. The drilling and assessment programme costing $1 million at Denman–Scone and Muswellbrook is half completed and a bulk sample of coal is to be sent to Germany within one month. I await with interest an announcement from the Minister for Mineral Resources and Development that a sizable contract will be let to a German company as part of a joint venture with the State for the development of a project to convert coal to liquid fuel.

The Electricity Commission of New South Wales is negotiating for joint ventures in export oriented coalmines in New South Wales. It is important to note that in 1976 prior to the elections the Labor Party promised the people that if elected to Government it would restructure the Energy Authority. The Government has done that. Continued progress in the energy field is part of the commitment made in 1976. I shall refer to some other remarkable projects. A project to extend the natural gas pipeline from Sydney to Newcastle at a cost of $55 million is one such venture. The joint venture with Total Australia Limited at the Matraville oil refinery is another venture. The pilot solar power station is a matter to which I shall refer in more detail later.

One should commend the State Government for its positive initiative and endeavours though gross condemnation should be levelled at the federal Government following the budgetary programme announced recently by the federal Treasurer. When one puts the federal Government under the spotlight one finds it has received increases in revenue though it has broken several meaningful promises. The first promise it broke was one to restore tax indexation. That broken promise will result in the federal Government receiving about $2.2 billion more in revenue. Motorists throughout Australia are paying money that will go to the federal coffers by virtue of the ridiculous oil parity price that was instituted by the federal Government. The amount involved is about $2,006 billion. If one takes the $2,234 billion that the federal Government will receive from the levy on oil the total increase in revenue is about $4 billion.

Had Australia not had discoveries of oil the nation would have been bankrupt. The federal Government has not only broken promises relating to tax indexation but it has also tried to gloss over the problem. The Treasurer was found out the day after the budget was announced. Mr Risstrom of the Australian Taxpayers Association pointed out that people who earn a taxable income of $10,000 now pay $2,045 in taxes. With the anticipated increase of 9 per cent through inflation those people will pay about $250 additional tax. Clearly, no abolition of the surcharge will occur. At best a reduction could occur in the amount of the impost that was introduced by the federal Government twelve months ago to bolster its coffers. The sting is in the tail. The tax surcharge will not be removed until 1st December, 1979. Of course, the federal Treasurer may change his mind again, as he has done on many other occasions.

The people of Australia will realize that the delay in the removal of the 2.57 per cent tax surcharge to 1st December means that the removal then will result in a benefit only to the extent of 1.07 per cent. Those are two promises that the federal Government has broken. But, the federal Government has broken another commitment: tax indexation will not be restored until 1st July, 1980, at the earliest. The promise was made that it would be restored in the 1979 Budget. How can people trust a government that has changed its mind about three promises? When, one looks at the receipts of the federal Government one realizes that the crude oil levy will produce $2 billion, a windfall of $600 million over the amount that was forthcoming last year.

[Mr Speaker left the chair at 6 p.m. The House resumed at 7.30 p.m.]
Mr WHELAN: The lie perpetrated by the federal Government is that the oil producers pay, but this is clearly not so. The motorists of this nation are paying for the federal Government's inefficiency and inability to control the cost of living and rescue this nation from its present malaise. Tragically, it is the introduction of oil parity pricing that has largely accelerated the cost of living irrespective of industrial unrest in the manufacturing industry. That is where the high costs of oil are being felt.

Hypocrisy is evident in the federal Treasurer's claim that unions and other employee organizations must be silent and not seek increased benefits, because these would threaten any proposal to restore tax indexation. That is not a threat; it is plain and simple blackmail. What audacity for the federal Treasurer to suggest that workers' salaries and conditions should be tied to a promise or series of promises that we know will not be kept or, if kept, will be so much modified as to destroy the original intention.

The attempt to use control of inflation as a cure of our economic ills is simply a device to hide the federal Government's inefficiency in the mal-management of the economy. The usual cry is, "Where is the money coming from?" With the present federal Government we know where the money is coming from: it comes from us, the taxpayers and motorists.

The federal Government is using the oil levy as a direct and alternative source of revenue. The Budget provided for some $2 billion in extra taxation revenue because of the oil levy. Clearly, that is not only immoral; it is iniquitous. It is also immoral because the federal Government's domestic oil pricing policy is a massive ripoff of the Australian motorists, designed for the sole purpose of funding an incompetent government. The federal Government does not even have a national energy policy. Mr Fraser has conscripted every Australian motorist to meet the federal Government's insatiable demand for revenue.

The motorist pays the federal Government, and the major oil producers in this country enjoy a large windfall profit. Incongruously, while total production of oil in 1979 will fall, revenue for the oil companies will increase. Esso-BHP receives $2 per barrel gross profit from oil produced, while the mid-eastern producers receive a profit of only 22c. Why the disparity? In the year 1981 revenues of the oil magnates will increase by some 100 per cent yet the reserves being held by this nation are likely to increase by a mere 25 per cent. The profits to the oil producers are allegedly to help defray capital costs of exploration.

The federal Government does not have even a national energy policy but continues to allow energy research and development to languish while the taxation benefits continue to accrue. Ironically, it was a mid-eastern country that came to the federal Government's assistance and provided financial funding for a major solar energy research programme after the federal Government had refused financial assistance.

What I am saying is not said because I am a member of the Australian Labor Party or a supporter of the New South Wales Labor Government. Let me quote from a Livestock and Grain Producers' Association report:

Without doubt the most controversial aspect of the 1978 Budget was the decision to increase the price of Australian crude oil to world parity levels in one year rather than over four as previously planned.

Another broken promise. The article continues:

L.G.P.A. objected strongly to the move on the grounds that it was an inequitable method of raising revenue for the Government——
It is not a Labor Party organization. If anything its attributes would be close to those of the Country Party. The report continues:

— it would add greatly to the living costs of the Australian community and the operating costs of farmers;

that it would erode Australia's rural export income in the long term by significantly reducing our competitive situation;

that there was no guarantee that higher prices in themselves would lead to either increased exploratory activity in Australia or reduced usage of fuel in the most wasteful area, i.e., that of the private motorist.

What about the well-known socialist marketing manager of BHP's oil and gas division, Mr Foster? He described his thoughts about the crude oil levy being a key source of income for the federal Government as follows:

This growing dependence seems to have put the level of future (oil) producer profits more in the hands of those in government responsible for short-term financial management of the country than those responsible for ensuring that our energy needs can be met in the future. . . . Unfortunately this new scheme seems to have been devised by people with little understanding of the goose that lays the golden eggs.

It is fallacious to assume that the windfall will ensure any increase in exploration.

Mr Mason: On a point of order. I remind you, Mr Speaker, that when I was speaking in this debate on the Address in Reply, on no less than three occasions you interrupted me, without points of order being taken from the floor, to indicate to me that the scope of this debate was limited. You said that no matter could be raised in the debate unless it had been alluded to by the Governor directly in his Speech. Consequently, I had to change the whole thrust of my speech, at your direction. Subsequently I had to point to each aspect of the Governor's Speech to which I addressed my remarks. When indicating that this debate was limited, you drew attention to previous rulings on the point. You ruled that my speech must be completely relevant to the Governor's Speech. I have been listening to the honourable member for Ashfield for some time and——

Mr WHELAN: You were not listening before dinner.

Mr Mason: —-and I was hoping to hear you interrupt him, Mr Speaker, as you did me.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition is reflecting on the Chair in all he has said so far. If the Leader of the Opposition wishes to do something about that, he can do so under Standing Order 161. That deals with dissent from the Speaker's ruling. In all he has said so far he has not indicated to me that the honourable member for Ashfield is out of order. The only matters he has raised deal with a ruling I have made previously. I rule the Leader of the Opposition out of order.

Mr Mason: On a point of order. The honourable member for Ashfield——

Mr SPEAKER: On a point of order. The honourable member for Ashfield——

Mr SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition must indicate to me how the honourable member for Ashfield is out of order. If he does that, I shall rule on the point. I shall not rule on something that has previously happened in the House on a point of order.
Mr Mason: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the fact that the honourable member for Ashfield is now speaking directly, and has been doing so since the dinner adjournment, about matters completely relevant to the federal Government. He has been alluding to the income of the federal Government in its Budget and the way in which the federal Government raises its income. Specifically, he has been alluding to funds that have been raised by the federal Government in a particular way. I draw your attention, Mr Speaker, to previous rulings on this subject, particularly those of yourself. I ask that you rule the honourable member for Ashfield completely out of order, in the light of your previous rulings.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! For the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition I remind him that the ruling that I gave previously was that the debate should be confined to matters contained in the Governor's Speech and to omissions from the Speech, provided those omissions related to subjects that could properly be included in it. The honourable member for Ashfield is referring to funds collected by the federal Government by way of fuel tax, and the fact that the federal Government is raising the price of oil in parity with the price received by oversea oil producing countries. It is in order for the honourable member for Ashfield to refer to those funds because of the effect they have upon the State Government.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If the Leader of the Opposition continues to scoff at the Chair as he is doing now, I shall have no hesitation in naming him and directing that he be removed from the Chamber. The honourable member for Ashfield is in order.

Mr WHELAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Another iniquitous tax, fortunately spoken of on only two occasions and twice rejected—

Mr Mason: It is not mentioned in the Governor's Speech.

Mr WHELAN: It is. You do not know what is in it.

Mr Mason: I know that the honourable member for Ashfield is out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order.

Mr WHELAN: Probably the most damaging, disappointing and discouraging aspect of the Budget—

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order.

Mr WHELAN: —was the federal Government's continued arrogance in not devising a national energy policy. Australians have a great history in oil exploration. It is not widely known that it was an Australian, William D'Arcy, who obtained a 60-year concession from the Shah of Persia over an area exceeding 500,000 square miles. Our nation's interest in exploration has waned dramatically since that time. It is patently clear that the federal Government is no better than the giant oil companies that it seeks to protect. The seven sisters—the international oil monopolies—and a dozen members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, or OPEC, are given a pat on the back with one hand and presented with a fat wallet with the other. Let us never forget that it was these people who between October 1973 and January 1974 raised the price of crude oil four times. Unlike the federal Government—if the Leader of the Opposition had been listening to the debate before the dinner adjournment he would have heard something about this—we are actively
developing our existing energy resources and planning for the future. I do not intend to recapitulate that but I shall send the Leader of the Opposition a copy of it tomorrow. It is contained *ad nauseam* in the Governor's Speech.

In terms of quantitative performance and essentiality, energy is outranked only by agriculture. There are many institutions in this nation that are concerned with agriculture—various State and federal governments, *schools*, post-graduate organizations and the like—but everyone admits that, contrasted with needs and the essential nature of energy, little, if anything, has been done. What can we do? We can develop the existing field to a maximum. We have vast resources of both oil and coal. Shale oil deposits, once thought to be non-viable, should be reassessed. Companies in this field should be given concessions both as to taxation and depreciation. The major oil companies have been deliberately slow in this field because they are now receiving a guaranteed income and all of the taxation perks that go with big business. Direct financial concessions should be granted in respect of solar energy plants, whether they be exemption from sales tax, exemption of the manufacturer from payroll tax, or even a direct payment by the Government to the purchasers who buy the utilities now operating exclusively in the field of electricity or gas in this State. The use of smaller and lighter vehicles should be encouraged. The use of public transport should continue to be encouraged.

I return to a consideration of solar energy. I am grateful to my colleague the honourable member for Wakehurst, who in his short time in this House has made a dramatic impact on the Parliament. He has supplied me with some figures, which I should like to relate to the House. They demonstrate what some other nations are doing in regard to solar energy. In Sweden the Government underwrites 35 per cent of the cost of domestic solar units up to a maximum of $650. In Britain a parliamentary committee has urged cash grants of up to 50 per cent of the cost of solar devices. It is incumbent upon this Government to form a parliamentary or departmental committee to study solar energy in this State. Perhaps the federal Government might take a leaf out of our book if we do.

Germany is enacting 100 per cent taxation credits. Switzerland already operates these. Germany has 500 solar producers who in 1977 had a turnover of $20 million and in 1978 approximately $50 million. That is quite an expansion. In France the Government spends $30 million a year on research and development aimed at commercializing its solar industry. It foresees 200000 homes converted by 1981. The European Economic Community has spent $70 million in projects aiming to commercialize collectors and cut sharply the cost of photovoltaic cells. Japan has 2 million buildings with solar devices; 20 per cent of all Israel homes have solar units. In the United States of America thirty States give tax credits and other incentives and the National Energy Plan grants federal tax credits of up to $2,150 to homeowners installing solar equipment. The President's Council on Environmental Quality has estimated that solar energy can meet 25 per cent of United States energy requirements by the year 2000.

Liberal and Labor governments alike have been a bit slow in recognizing that solar energy is the energy of the 1980's. I cannot understand why solar energy cannot be installed in Housing Commission flats and government buildings as a matter of policy. Perhaps this can be taken up by the committee that I hope the Government will create. Statutory bodies should be required to install solar units wherever possible. The Government should make available low interest loans and tax incentives to homeowners, especially those on low incomes, for installation of solar and other energy conservation devices. The Government should make available loan funds and introduce tax incentives to encourage small businesses to enter the solar industry. Preference
should be given to businesses engaged exclusively in solar and related services. Loan funds should be made available for cities and municipalities for solar conversion of municipal buildings.

Shortly after entering this Parliament I placed on notice the question whether the Government would give consideration to the solar heating of Ashfield Olympic pool. Not only is that pool of olympic standard; it is also one of only three full size olympic water polo pools in New South Wales. Regrettably, the answer that I received at that stage was, no. Because of renewed interest in solar appliances and the general increase in costs, especially of fuel, it is now time that Ashfield pool was heated by solar energy. So also should some of the other wonderful swimming pools that we have in this State.

The State Government should pass legislation requiring county councils to grant offpeak rates for solar water heaters. It should legislate also to protect the homeowner's right to sunlight. I shall be speaking in the debate on planning and environment legislation that is to be brought down. When I was mayor of Ashfield one of the best decisions that was ever made on environment matters was made by Ashfield municipal council. It was decided that one of the factors for refusal or approval of the density, bulk, shape and size of buildings was the effect of the absence of sunlight at the construction stage.

Two centuries ago the Industrial Revolution burst upon the world. Since that time we have had the interaction of coal, oil and steam. Now, as we approach the 1980's, we are at the dawning of a new revolution involving the interaction of new sources of energy and materials such as plastics, fibreglass, high performance batteries and fuel cells which have the combined effect of helping to solve the energy problem, abating pollution and reducing costs. My concern is that the problem of the future revolves around whether institutions and governments will accept the challenge now or whether conservatism or, as in the oil crisis, the greed of the oil companies will be pandered to by governments.

Mr TAYLOR (Temora) [7,51]: It cannot be said that I am opening batsman in this debate for I think about fifty honourable members have already spoken in it. However, like other speakers I congratulate honourable members who have made their maiden speeches. Perhaps they were not the best speeches they will ever make but they will be among the most important. Those honourable members made a creditable effort. As one goes along, changes take place. Maiden speeches are often a challenge but when they are over members must develop new attitudes. Despite the fact that I am about the fiftieth speaker, I take this opportunity of expressing on behalf of my electorate loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen. I do so for several reasons, one of which is the recent tragic assassination of Lord Mountbatten.

Over the past few days many people in my electorate have expressed admiration for the manner in which members of the Royal family have suffered their tragic bereavement. All Australians—with, unfortunately, one exception—deplore the violence that occurred when that great man, who has done much for the world, was assassinated. We cannot help but admire the courage of the Royal family. Often in recent times Her Majesty the Queen has shown her courage by travelling to countries, despite the advice of her advisers, to try to carry through the great tradition of democracy that we are proud to be a part of.

As I say, there have been about fifty speakers in this debate from both sides of the House. A great number of their speeches have been well researched and extremely valuable. Out of those fifty speeches, three have attracted the attention of the press which, unfortunately, has run editorials and news items condemning this House
and the Parliament itself. I deplore that state of affairs, and I think you, Mr Speaker, made a public statement deploiring it also. I am in agreement with you. One of the tragedies of this situation is that our image as a democratic parliament has been damaged by these types of speeches. Some newspapers have filled their number one and two pages for two days in a row with these stories and then have had the temerity to run editorials condemning this Parliament and the people in it.

Though some excellent speeches have been made from both sides of the House, the newspapers have published little of them; they were not sensational enough and did not throw mud. Many unfortunate people in the community are unable to obtain work. They must be suffering great trauma, because it is a trauma to be without a job. For people to think that members of this Parliament conduct themselves as the media present them must undermine the morale of the community.

All members in this Parliament should have a transcript of the recent speech by the President of the United States of America in which he emphasized the point that the American people have lost confidence in their churches, their parliamentarians, public figures and the government's policies, and even have lost confidence in themselves. Parliamentarians in the State and federal fields should give confidence to the people that the democratic system that we live under will serve them well whenever humanly possible, and we will deliver the goods to the best of our ability. They should have confidence that Parliament serves them, that this country has a future and they will play a part in it.

Because many young people cannot get jobs, they do not feel part of the community. Unfortunately, but naturally, a number of them are falling by the wayside. Those who do fall by the wayside may become involved with drugs. For that reason the whole of the younger generation is being condemned. I reject that condemnation because there are many young people whom I am proud to know; I am proud to say I am an Australian with them. Members in this Parliament should avoid the sort of situation that led up to the type of publicity that came out of these three speeches. Whether they were right or wrong, in the interests of New South Wales and certainly of this Parliament it would have been better if those three speeches had not been made.

We all know the qualities of His Excellency the Governor: he is a great Australian. Nonetheless the speeches delivered by Her Majesty the Queen or His Excellency the Governor to open Parliament are prepared for them by their Ministers in the Government. The Speech of His Excellency the Governor was prepared for him by the Government of the day, just as he delivered speeches that were prepared by the Opposition when it was in government. The Speech of His Excellency is disappointing to me in that it does not give a lead to where New South Wales is going. It does not set out a blueprint for the future. It falls short because it does not mention many side issues that are alive and important to the people. I am not quibbling with your point, Mr Speaker, or the point that has been taken by other members, but I am concerned that, though His Excellency spoke of the economic climate, he did not deliver a budget speech, and this should not be a budget debate.

I remind the honourable member for Ashfield and members of the Government that these days State governments have a greater opportunity to set their priorities with the money they have available, whether it is enough or not. I try to run a farm. If I had twice as much money, I would not have enough to do all the things that I want to do. In the course of running that property as a business I have to set my priorities, just as any government should. No one inflicts his will on the Government; the Government has to set its priorities. The Opposition's complaint is that there are
areas where wrong priorities by the Government are causing some of the disappointments and difficulties that are associated with government expenditure. Various areas of government expenditure should be examined. It could be said that more money should be spent here and less there. However, it is the Government's right as a government to decide those priorities. Member after member has whinged because the State Government wants more money from the Commonwealth Government. The real problem is how this Government is spending the money.

It is natural that I should look at His Excellency's Speech to see what will happen to rural industries and the Government's planning in that direction. I might be considered to be pinpricking, but I was disappointed by the comment that the rural industries in New South Wales have been enjoying good seasonal conditions. That is stretching the longbow a little. Something like nineteen of the State's pastures protection board areas have been declared drought areas and the wheat crop in a large area of the State has been virtually wiped out. Also, certain other areas of the State look like having a poor wheat crop. In some areas not a lot of natural feed is available for stock. When one examines that sort of comment in His Excellency's Speech, which was supplied to him by the Government, one immediately realizes that there is a lack of true knowledge and appreciation of what is happening in country areas. My criticism goes further than that. The Government does not understand the economic difficulties of rural industry, though I believe that the Minister for Agriculture has an understanding of the problem.

The Minister has an understanding of the problem. I shall not buy into his problems with conservationists on the North Coast. He would realize that people in country areas must get work and become productive. One of the basic problems is to try to recognize the economic difficulties of the rural sector. Over the past two or three years the State has increased costs for primary and rural industries. At the moment most sections of the rural, beef, mutton and wheat industries enjoy favourable markets. Despite that, and despite the fact that last year in my electorate farmers had one of the biggest ever wheat crops and it resulted in one of the biggest first payments to farmers, the level of business activity in some towns in the area during May, June and July has been low. It indicates that the primary producers were not able to retain much of the funds that became available to them. To some extent that is a result of the need to make payments on machinery and to repay debts to financing organizations. It must be remembered when talking about the prosperity of the rural industry that although primary producers might have good seasons and good markets, many of them make little profit.

Mr Gordon: Some of them are doing better than that.

Mr TAYLOR: Yes, but I am talking about the ordinary small farmer who is not doing all that well. If the season holds up he will do all right. When I answered the Minister's interjection by saying that some of them are doing all right I should have added that anyone who lives inland or in the western areas of the State would know that it is inevitable that Australia will experience droughts. They have occurred before and they will occur again. I do not mean a one-year drought. I am speaking about a drought that might last for three years. From 1971 a vast area of the State round Condobolin experienced three years of drought. Before then the farmers were doing all right, but after the drought more than seventy farmers received letters from the Rural Industries Assistance Board, the lender of last resort, saying that they would have to sell their farms. They could not get enough money to buy seed to sow in 1973. They did not get any assistance from the federal Government at that time although they were promised assistance by the Minister's colleagues in Canberra.
Farmers are not able to build up a capacity to withstand the effects of drought. Freight costs and charges are always increasing, and I accept that all of these things are related to the general cost structure of the State's economy. If the State's railway system is to run efficiently, the Government must meet the costs of higher salaries and other rises. However, the fact remains that the farmer is at the end of the line and cannot pass on his increased costs. When the seasons are good and he can produce good crops he is able to exist; but he cannot exist when he gets back to the normal situation of producing a smaller, less profitable crop. This year a lot of farmers will be in that situation.

In my electorate, surprisingly because of too much rainfall in the past two years, some farmers have not produced much wheat. I know that those who produced good crops of wheat received a massive injection of funds, but little came in for those who did not produce good crops. They are the people who are finding it difficult to meet rising costs. The farmer has to meet not only the increased cost of transporting the wheat he has produced, but also he has to meet higher licence fees and heavy charges for storage. The increases might be small individually, but collectively they represent a heavy impost on the farmer who has to pay them. Yet, the federal Labor Party is talking about applying a capital gains tax. The farmer in dire straits sees little prospect in the future. Anyone who knows anything about the small farmer would know that the only superannuation he can ever receive is in the equity that might be left in his land after he has sold it and met all of his commitments. I do not know many farmers with small holdings who have much money in the bank and I do not know many who have unencumbered farms. If a form of taxation were introduced in that area it would be virtually a taxation on the farmers' superannuation, an area of taxation that should be avoided at all costs.

The honourable member for Bathurst mentioned an important matter which was part of Country Party policy. The average age of farmers is becoming greater, simply because young people see no future in going on to the land. I do not necessarily refer to farmers' sons, but young people generally see no way that they can make a living from a farm, because of the capital required to make a start. As a result, farmers are continuing on their properties until later in life than was the case in the past. Anyone who studies a graph of farming will see that people in their early thirties are progressing and developing and the productivity of their farms is rising. When they get to their fifties productivity starts to level out and when they reach their late fifties the level of productivity falls. Unless something positive is done to make it possible for young people to take over and operate those farms the productivity of the farms will fall below an economic level. It should not be forgotten that the money earned from the export of farm products is a vital part of the country's economy. The level of productivity of a small farm will fall when the management of the farm has passed its prime and reached the stage where it is not progressing. Countries such as Canada acquire farms to operate schemes for training young persons in farm management. Such schemes have been suggested by the Livestock and Grain Producers' Association of New South Wales.

I am disappointed that the blueprint for the Government's proposals in the next twelve months does not mention any such scheme. When one talks about primary producers, rural industries and the welfare, development and expansion of rural towns one must think about ensuring that the level of productivity is maintained or increased and that young people have an opportunity to become part of that productivity. The only way to bring that about is to implement schemes such as those that have been working successfully in other parts of the world. His Excellency's Speech mentions a proposal by the Grain Elevators Board of New South Wales to increase storage
capacity. Although such a proposal is welcomed, farmers would rather have the grain that they produce flow to the seaboard and loaded on to ships so that vitally necessary oversea markets are not lost. That would necessitate overcoming a massive industrial problem.

There are still industrial troubles in the Grain Elevators Board, but whoever is at fault and whatever the cause, the State cannot afford a continuance of the difficulties that have been troubling the industry for more than twelve months. Another wheat-harvesting period is approaching. Wheatgrowers should not be faced at the railhead or at terminals with a shortage of capacity to handle the harvest or facilities that cannot maintain the throughput that they were designed to achieve.

In the Speech of His Excellency reference was made to health services and to the fact that the federal Minister for Health has initiated an inquiry into the hospital system of Australia. I welcome that inquiry. The State Government is participating in the inquiry. I cannot divide health services into hospitals and other services. I believe that health, welfare, hospitals and all the other associated segments of the health-care field should be included in one category. A health and welfare scheme operating efficiently throughout the Commonwealth could result in the cost of hospital beds being seen in a different light. A proper health-care scheme is aimed at keeping people out of hospitals. The federal Government inquiry should be looking at the whole picture of health care. Our Minister for Health has announced that it has become necessary to reduce the number of beds in inner city hospitals because the Commonwealth Government has decided not to increase funding for hospitals. He has stated that the reduction is necessary to enable the Government to bring on line hospital beds in outer metropolitan areas like Westmead and Gosford.

Country people are concerned because drastic cuts have been called for in the number of hospital beds in many country regions. This has been done on the basis of figures taken from reports that originated in Great Britain where it was concluded that a certain number of hospital beds were necessary for each thousand of population. By way of example I shall refer to a small town in my electorate that is 500 miles from Sydney and 75 miles from the nearest hospital of any size. The people of Hillston have virtually been told that their hospital will become something less than a hospital. That will probably mean that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to keep a doctor in the town. The people of the town have been told already that the maternity section of their hospital is to close. That may not sound so bad, for the road from Hillston to Griffith is fairly good at present, but it was not always like that. It must be remembered that the roads coming into Hillston are not very good and after thirty or forty points of rain a woman can find herself isolated from Hillston. She could probably get to hospital on a tractor, but she would certainly not be able to traverse the roads in an ordinary motor vehicle. That aspect of conditions in the country should not be overlooked.

No matter what rule of thumb is chosen, the fact remains that health-care services can be brought down to only a certain level. If one takes a figure of three hospital beds per one thousand of population and applies it to a town of 1200 people, the result is that the people of the Hillston area will have no hospital and no health service worthy of the name. I have written to the Minister for Health and asked him to grant time to the regional director of the Health Commission and the hospital boards in the area to work out a plan to meet the Government's requirements and to do it in the most efficient way, without depriving the people of the area of necessary health-care service.

Mr Taylor
It is easy for the Government to issue an edict that costs must be cut across the board as the State cannot afford what is being paid for health-care services. But we must not forget the impact of those cuts on the people who live west of Hillston. Some people living in the electorate of the Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources come to the hospital at Hillston, as do some people living in my electorate and even further out than that. To those people, whatever the Hillston hospital may be costing, it is their only hospital and their only chance to get medical treatment in an emergency. Any proposal to reduce hospital services should be looked at very carefully.

Another aspect of health under consideration is the training of registered nurses in advanced colleges of education. That proposal was being discussed when the party of which I am a member was in government. It would mean that in some country areas registered nurses would be enrolled in colleges of advanced education and would undertake their clinical training at a base hospital or the largest hospital in the area. The result would be that when they became qualified they would not have had the experience of working in a small hospital that did not have all the facilities available in a base hospital.

I appeal to the Minister for Health and the Health Commission, when they are establishing a scheme to train registered nurses through the colleges of advanced education, to allow these girls to gain clinical experience in the smaller district hospitals as well as in the larger base hospitals. I do not decry the need for higher education or the greater skills and higher qualifications and experience that nurses can get in the larger hospitals. But if honourable members have ever been in one of these smaller hospitals they will appreciate that the nursing staff have to be able to make do in treating patients. They have to cope with a situation without all the facilities that are available in the larger hospitals. If nurses have not had training in a smaller hospital, there could be some difficulty in inducing nursing sisters to go to small country towns, as happens with medical practitioners. It is almost impossible to get a medical practitioner to go to some of the smaller country towns. No honourable member wants to see that happen in relation to nursing sisters.

The repeal of the Summary Offences Act is causing some real problems in my area. Some police have expressed grave concern about it. Considerable concern is certainly being expressed in my electorate about the fact that in some country towns juveniles are becoming alcoholics or are drinking to excess. It would seem that few of these young people are obtaining alcohol directly from licensed premises or are drinking on licensed premises. Letters have appeared in the local press from people who have seen children of ten and eleven years of age drunk at football matches. These young people are drinking in public places. They are supplied with cans of beer by friends eighteen and nineteen years of age who have a motor vehicle with a boot full of liquor. I have been told by police officers in my electorate that the way the law stands the police can do nothing about it. I have spoken to some of my colleagues on this side of the House about this matter, which is not easy to overcome legally. I know that the police in my area are concerned about it and that parents are worried about it too. This is one problem that parents can do more to resolve than the law. I was disappointed when many of the points I have touched upon and many others that I should like to touch upon were not included in the Speech of His Excellency, which is intended as a blueprint for the future prosperity and security of the community of New South Wales.
Mr ANDERSON (Nepean) [8.21]: I join with members of the House in congratulating the honourable member for Woronora on the competent manner in which he moved the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I congratulate also my colleagues the honourable member for Willoughby and the honourable member for Miranda on their maiden speeches. I well recall when I made my own maiden speech not so long ago and the relief I felt when it was all over.

Several weeks ago, it will be recalled, His Excellency the Governor outlined in his Speech the Government's programme of reform and progress on behalf of the people of New South Wales. Unfortunately, I will not have enough time to mention many of the matters to which His Excellency referred in his Speech. However, I am able to say that this Government recognizes the problems confronting people who live in the outer western areas of Sydney. It has moved to overcome many of those problems, including the need to provide additional health-care facilities, to increase the number of schools, to upgrade major roads, to provide employment opportunities and to upgrade public transport. Despite all this and more, the New South Wales Government is unable to do the one thing that would provide an enormous number of benefits to the people of the outer western areas of Sydney. That one thing is to remove the present outdated telephone zonings. It is here that the federal Government has broken yet another promise. It is here that the federal Government has ignored calls from members of this House, local government and all of the people residing in the 047, 046 and 045 telephone zones, for equitable treatment.

The New South Wales Government does all it can to attract industrial and commercial activity to my area, but what businessman will elect to pay huge subscriber trunk dialling telephone accounts when he does not have to do so if he sets up business in any other part of Sydney? The recent announcement of the federal Government's community-access-80 proposal is a sham and a farce. After all the promises, after all the letters and deputations, after almost everyone has acknowledged the logic of our claims for inclusion in the Sydney metropolitan telephone zone, the federal Government has announced that next year subscribers in the 047, 046 and 045 zones will pay only 9¢ for every 3-minute call, while all other Sydney subscribers will pay the same rate but with no limit on the time of the call. We are not asking that other metropolitan subscribers should have a 3-minute limit, but I think it only fair to warn honourable members on both sides of the House who represent metropolitan electorates, that it is obvious that that is what Telecom wants to do.

In an article in the Sunday Telegraph on 29th July, 1979, Mr Warren Owens indicated that Telecom was installing computerized equipment in Sydney that will allow it to charge for every three minutes of local calls. Within a few years the equipment could be used to limit 10¢ local calls to three minutes, though Telecom insists that it has no immediate plans to do so. Surely no honourable member would suggest that the community-access-80 proposal could not have been introduced almost immediately. It will be introduced as an electoral carrot a few months before the next federal elections. What happens afterwards in the unfortunate and unlikely event that the federal Government is returned to power? Clearly telephone charges will rise, and attempts will be made to impose 3-minute unit charging on all telephone subscribers. Promises by the federal Government in regard to the STD system are worthless. Immediately prior to the last federal election, the honourable member for Macquarie, a member of the federal Government, had this to say in his election pamphlet:

City zone for your phone! Reg does it again! It's a fact. If the Libs stay in power, Penrith phones will be city zone.
When the community-access-80 proposal was announced the honourable member galloped round the electorate telling everybody what a great job he had done in getting it. Unfortunately, the people in the 047 zone did not read the local newspapers in the Macarthur electorate when the Hon. M. E. Baume was running round making his claim. It amazes me that people can make that sort of promise and not honour it. The people of Macquarie realize what has happened and will not sit back and continue to accept what has gone on for all too many years. Some people will say that we have nothing to complain about in the outer western suburbs, but statements such as that deny reality and deny the validity of our claims for inclusion in the Sydney metropolitan telephone zone. Telecom had this to say about the community-access-80 proposal:

Since 1960 many areas outside the capital cities have changed from rural to urban. These areas have important social and business links with the central city. It was suggested to Telecom that the radius of the local call area applying to metropolitan areas be extended to cover these areas. This was carefully considered in searching for a solution to this urban fringe problem.

Telecom goes on to say:

The existing zoning and charging scheme was shown in the review to be essentially sound and suitable.

Sydney is being treated differently from every other capital city in Australia. Basically, each capital city has a circular telephone zone with a substantial area of land covered by that zone. It is relevant to compare each capital city to see whether Sydney is being discriminated against. In Perth over 240 degrees of the zone covers land; the radius of the zone is approximately 20 miles. In Adelaide approximately 240 degrees of the zone covers land; the radius of the zone is approximately 20 miles. In Brisbane over 270 degrees of the zone covers land; the radius of the zone is approximately 20 miles. In Melbourne approximately 270 degrees of the zone covers land; the radius of the zone is approximately 28 miles. Compare those figures with the position in Sydney. In Sydney approximately 180 degrees, or 50 per cent less than Melbourne, of the zone covers land, with a smaller radius, this time 25 miles. Clearly Sydney, the largest capital city in Australia, is being discriminated against.

Since 1960 Penrith city council has been trying to have Penrith brought within the boundaries of the Sydney telephone district. The population of the city of Penrith has grown from about 30,000 to its present size of 90,000. In the next 19 years it will double, bringing the population to almost 180,000 people, and still our requests for the telephone area to be brought within the metropolitan zone have been ignored, despite detailed statistics about the disincentives to industry and to retail and commercial enterprises. In the field of commerce and for every other government purpose—for example, statistics, insurance, education and planning requirements—Penrith is classified as metropolitan. Yet, the city of Penrith, and the city of Campbelltown, are divided by an arbitrary line drawn many years ago. It is interesting again to compare Melbourne with Sydney. Melbourne has approximately 500 square miles more land area in its local telephone calling system than Sydney. In other words Melbourne has 50 per cent greater area in its local call system. So far, development in Melbourne has taken place within that area and it is expected that development within the immediate future will be also within that area. Melbourne will be able to develop without the local call boundary being much of a problem. In Sydney, Windsor and Richmond are badly affected by the telephone system. Unless it be thought that my colleague the honourable member for Blue Mountains and I are the only people...
complaining about it, in recent months we have been heartened to see that the major Sydney newspapers have supported the claims we have been making for many years. The *Sydney Morning Herald* of 13th July, 1978, contained this statement:

Residents of such populous areas as Penrith, Campbelltown and **Windsor** are entitled to feel that they have been shabbily treated.

It is intolerable that those who live in Penrith, Campbelltown and **Windsor** should have to go on being treated as second-class citizens. How much longer must they wait for a fair deal?

The *Sunday Telegraph* of 28th May, 1978, had this to say:

It is past time that telephone subscribers in Sydney's outer suburbs areas were given a fair go.

Their case is irrefutable.

But there is no doubt that the people of the western growth areas are being discriminated against.

Their campaign has been going on for more than eight years. They deserve to win it now.

Again in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 11th June this year continued this statement:

The discrimination against them remains.

At one stroke this would have eliminated the blatant discrimination from which the near-metropolitan areas now suffer.

These newspaper articles refer to the proposal that the whole of the 047, 046, and 045 telephone zones be placed in the metropolitan area, or that the centre of the Sydney metropolitan area should be moved from the GPO at Martin Place to Parramatta, which is the demographic centre of Sydney. As things stand, with the Sydney **GPO** as the centre of the zone, to the east the zone covers a large area of the Pacific Ocean. That might be convenient for fish but it does not help people who want to make telephone calls.

In his Speech, His Excellency referred to the fact that the New South Wales Government would maintain its firm commitment to a modern and efficient public transport system and noted that legislation to restructure the Public Transport Commission would be introduced. Let me preface what I am about to say by stating that **nobody**, including myself, can have anything but praise for the Government's initiatives over the past three years with regard to our rail services. Any commuter from my electorate will acknowledge the outstanding efforts and achievements of the Government and, in particular, those of the Minister for Transport in this regard.

Mr Maddison: The trains still run late.

**Mr ANDERSON:** If the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai will wait for a moment he will hear me concede that point. It is my firm belief that something is radically wrong within the Public Transport Commission in regard to on-time running of trains to and from the Blue Mountains. I believe that on occasions commuters will tolerate trains running up to five minutes late. However, one cannot justify trains continually running more than five minutes late. In fairness, I must point out that the Government inherited a rundown, ramshackle transport system from the previous Government.

Mr Maddison: The honourable member should put the position fairly.
Mr ANDERSON: The honourable member for Ku-ring-gai should cast his mind back to that so-called magnificent Shirley timetable, which resulted in people waiting on railway platforms—and at places like Emu Plains in particular—for hours. I concede that our morning train services do not operate as one would like them to. Dealing with morning trains from the Blue Mountains, one need only refer to the services that operated on 116 days in the six months ending 31st July. In the morning the "Fish" ran on time only on seventy-three trips. The "Chips" ran on time only on fifty-three journeys. In the afternoon the "Fish" ran on time on eighteen journeys out of 117 trips and the "Chips" ran on time on thirty-four trips out of 117 journeys.

It is obvious that someone within the Public Transport Commission is playing some kind of game. For that reason I support the announcement in the Governor's Speech that the Government proposes to restructure the Public Transport Commission. I propose now to give some facts to support that action. Without consultation with anyone in the area the Public Transport Commission eliminated Emu Plains as a stopping place for the 4.47 p.m. train to the Blue Mountains. Prior to my election to Parliament I was a member of a deputation to the Public Transport Commission at which this matter was discussed. On that occasion I told the commissioners that it was rumoured that Emu Plains would be deleted as a stopping place for the 4.47 p.m. train. Although I was given an unequivocal assurance that no such action would be taken, a few weeks later Emu Plains was deleted as a stopping place for that train.

Mr Schipp: The honourable member was told a white lie.

Mr ANDERSON: It was a lie. The Public Transport Commission said that it was in the best interests of the majority of people using the 4.47 p.m. train that Emu Plains should be eliminated as a stopping place. That train regularly carried approximately 600 passengers. Although 200 people signed a petition calling for the decision to be reversed, the Public Transport Commission said that it could not agree to the request. When it was thought that our other problems were over, the situation altered with the publication of the latest timetable. The honourable member for Blue Mountains and I spent a considerable time discussing this timetable with officers of the Public Transport Commission. I believe that officers of the timetable section of the railways division of the commission were not responsible for the decision to stop the 4.47 p.m. train at Granville. People employed at the Granville technical college and other places in the area could catch a suburban train to Parramatta. With a couple of minutes to spare, they would rush along the platform, climb the stairs and go down a second set of stairs to another platform so that they could catch the 4.47 p.m. from Parramatta.

Although a spokesman for the Public Transport Commission announced in the press that no services had been affected, the fact is that this particular service was cut. Although the stated intention was to improve the running time of the 4.47 p.m. train, it was never proposed that this service would reach the Blue Mountains area any earlier. The running time of that train has not improved. The same can be said of a number of other train services in the area. I agree with the honourable member for Blue Mountains that no freight train should use the western line during peak hours. Although I have certain information about this issue, I do not propose to mention any names. It would not be proper for me to hide behind parliamentary privilege and name any person. A certain employee of the Public Transport Commission has had two goes at me. I put that person—indeed any other person in the same position—on notice, because the third time he has a go at me, he will regret it.

One of my constituents telephoned me complaining about Granville being eliminated as a setdown station for the 4.47 p.m. train. Although it was alleged that this was my idea, the fact is that the suggestion came from the commuter council.
which complained about people getting off the train at Granville, not about people joining the train at that station. The Public Transport Commission used a sledgehammer to crack a small nut. The result is that the new arrangement has inconvenienced a great number of people. I have been informed by commuters that the commission is engaging in some new marketing scheme which will result in Emu Plains being eliminated from the inter-urban train service and becoming an ordinary suburban station. I put the Public Transport Commission on notice that the approximately 10,000 residents of Emu Plains will not tolerate that type of interference from people who have no idea of the inconvenience my electors suffer in getting to and from their place of employment. It is about time that some of the people who think they know so much listened to those who use the trains and want an efficient train service.

Mr Maddison: What does the Minister for Transport think about all this?

Mr ANDERSON: Although the Minister is aware of many of these problems, he has not yet been given all the facts. I do not propose to disclose all my information in this House—if I did, many Opposition members would be embarrassed. The present situation is not the fault of this Government; it is the fault of some people in the Public Transport Commission who are playing games to suit their own ends. I assure those people that I shall not sit back and do nothing. I propose to put evidence before the Minister so that he can take the appropriate action—and I know that he is willing to take that action. No one in the history of this State has a better record in the public transport than the Minister for Transport. The Minister deserves—the gratitude of most commuters in this State. Doubtless Opposition members are not willing to compare the Minister's record with that of his predecessors in the former Government.

I propose now to deal with the rate burden being carried by many of my constituents and a great number of other people in the Blue Mountains area. Since my election to this House I have been grateful for the assistance given to me by my colleague the honourable member for Blue Mountains. The honourable member and I have had consultations about this problem with the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads, the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports, and with the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy. Lengthy discussions have taken place with a view to easing the rate burden carried by many of our constituents. The Blue Mountains city council has nine town improvement loan funds, six sewer funds, and three local loan rates. That council also has a high general rate in the dollar. In addition it has a lot of problems with minimum rates. The residents of ward 4—like many other people in my electorate—have made a concerted move to secede to their boundary as far as Penrith. They believe that this would improve their rating situation, and there is no doubt that it would do so. The problem is that if ward 4 goes on its own, the problem will be exacerbated for the people in ward 3, which is in the Springwood area.

The situation with regard to valuations is that wards 1 and 2, which are in the city of Blue Mountains, provide 58.83 per cent of all assessments but are rated on only 47.29 per cent of the total rateable value, whereas wards 3 and 4 constitute only 41.17 per cent of the total assessments but are rated on 52.71 per cent of the rateable value of the total area. My colleague the honourable member for Blue Mountains and I have formulated what we believe is an attractive package deal, and have put it to a number of Ministers. We hope that the plan will ease the rate burden on many people in the not-too-distant future.
I propose to make another point by way of comparison. I live in the western-
most street of the city of Penrith. My total rate including sewerage is $277.16,
If that block of land were located in ward 4, my total rate would be $470.11, a
difference of $192.95. If it were located in ward 3, the total rate would be $445.23,
a difference of $168.07. Because I live inside a boundary line I save that sum of
money.

People in the Prospect County Council area pay less for their electric power
than do residents of the Blue Mountains city area. Taking a typical electricity bill, that
is, using 4000 kilowatt hours of domestic power and 400 kilowatt hours of off-peak
power, I would pay $34.86 a year less than a consumer in the Blue Mountains city
area. No wonder a clamour is made for council amalgamations when that sort of
situation goes on.

Mr Caterson: You are joking.

Mr ANDERSON: You did not mind the Prospect County Council putting in
for the overhead easement in the Balcombe Heights estate. The honourable member
for The Hills does not want the people of the Blue Mountains area to get the same
sort of service and justice given to his constituents. The service his constituents take
for granted from their electricity distributing authority is not being given to my con-
stituents or the people in the Blue Mountains electorate. I do not intend to sit back
and see that my constituents carry an unfair rate burden which is caused by the
incompetence of some people. I shall make every effort to see that they get the justice
to which they are entitled. It is ludicrous to suggest that a retired public servant, a
railway worker or a PMG employee, living in a small two bedroom weatherboard home
at Lapstone, should pay $600 a year in rates.

If the various village areas of wards 3 and 4 in the Blue Mountains were in the
city of Penrith, the amount payable in rates would be from $140.32 to $287.04 less, yet
the federal member for Macquarie has the temerity to criticize this Government for
a failure to provide water and sewerage. He, a member of the federal Government
that cut out the urban backlog sewerage programme, criticized the Premier for giving
$100,000 to the bushfire brigades on the Blue Mountains, which did a magnificent job
in the December 1977 bushfires. It is disgraceful that a federal member should criticize
the Government for making that grant. The State should receive more money from
the Commonwealth, which gave no assistance towards flood damage on the Nepean
River. The Minister for conservation and Minister for Water Resources matched the
contribution from the Penrith council.

For years the Blue Mountains city council took no action on the Winmalee
sewerage scheme, originally estimated to cost $7 million. The estimated cost is now
$12.5 million. Something must be done about the water supply on the Blue Mountains.
The Blue Mountains city council was contemplating bringing water from Duckmaloi,
some 50 miles away, when only 9 miles away is the biggest dam in the southern hemi-
sphere. This concerns myself and my colleague, the honourable member for Blue
Mountains. We hope something concrete will be done about it in the near future.

The Governor said in his Speech that significant progress had been made in the
prevention and treatment of drug and alcohol-related problems. Recently a book was
published by William Collins Pty Limited on drug abuse. I praise that company for
putting out this book at such a low cost. The book was written by Ces and Maria
Gidley. It is called Drugs: You and Your Family. Mr Gidley is on the New South
Wales Drug and Alcohol Authority. I congratulate them for taking the trouble to write
this book and for the service they have given to the community. I hope other families
will not have to go through the horror of drug addiction. This book should be made available to everybody through public libraries and school libraries. It sickens me to hear the Ned Kelly syndrome that you cannot dob anybody in. All members of the community who are aware of drug abuse should inform the police. They should be more concerned that their child should die from drug abuse than that he should appear before a court.

Mr R. J. Bartley, a stipendiary magistrate, has written a book called *The Court is Open*. It deals with courts of petty sessions in New South Wales. The Government has done much in the provision of legal aid. The community must be educated through books such as these. Courts of petty sessions deal with by far the majority of criminal matters in this State. It is in those courts that members of the public more commonly come in contact with the law. The book will be of great benefit to the community generally. Often one hears criticism of magistrates imposing light penalties. It is not the magistrates but the appellate courts who deserve condemnation as they reduce the sentences imposed by magistrates.

The Premier's approval of a capital grant of $75,000 to Penrith city council is ensuring that the contribution made to the world of art by the late Gerald and Margo Lewers is recognized and developed for posterity. This project comes as the result of the co-operation of the two Lewers daughters, Darani Larsen and Tanya Crothers, matching contributions of $75,000 each by the Penrith city council and the New South Wales Premier’s Department through the division of cultural activities. No longer will the people of the outer western areas of Sydney have to travel into the city to see the arts or enjoy culture or crafts. This Government recognizes that the people living in the outer western suburbs of Sydney have been enticed to go there and that this is a much needed facility.

There has been much discussion about airports in this debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. There has never been a need to extend Mascot or build another airport. Use of wide-bodied aircraft and the abolition of the two-airline policy would render extensions unnecessary. The suburbs west of Granville provide less than 10 per cent of Sydney’s air traffic so it is incomprehensible to suggest putting an airport in the western suburbs. The people in those areas do not want it. People who moved to the Nepean electorate did so because that electorate did not have things like airports. Residents in the vicinity of the airport elected to live there despite its existence. A proper policy would obviate the need for a second airport.

Another matter I wish to deal with is that of county council amalgamations. The Local Government Electricity Association of New South Wales represents only 35 per cent of the consumers in the 18 coastal councils because Sydney, Prospect and Illawarra at various stages in the past have withdrawn. Those three councils cover 65 per cent of the consumers in the 18 coastal councils. Council members do not mind having big buildings, riding in large cars or attending conferences, but they do not like giving concessions to pensioners, which for most councils would involve only 1 per cent of electricity sales. The community generally has to be considered. When one compares the different charges for electricity supplied to domestic consumers throughout the whole of the coastal area one can see the need for something to be done. It is not fair for the L.G.E.A. to promote its scheme of rationalization to preserve the empires built in the past. The association does not tell the public that Prospect consumers, whom they expect to finance the rationalization scheme, will have no control over its use or whether it will prop up some other organizations.

My colleague the member for the Blue Mountains and I are determined to see that the Blue Mountains city council electricity undertaking is absorbed by Prospect County Council so that the people of the city of Blue Mountains will for once
get some form of justice in their rates, whether general, water, sewerage or electricity rates. Despite having its own water and sewerage schemes, the Blue Mountains city council is charging for its services double the amount being charged in the city of Penrith. It is time something was done about this anomalous situation. The Government is moving in that direction. Government supporters will not tolerate the demand that citizens of the area bear such burdens continuously, particularly as they do not have many of the amenities that residents of Sydney take for granted. Although rail services have improved considerably in the past three years, they still cause comparative inconvenience. Though the people of Nepean will put up with many things, they will not tolerate the unreasonable, unjustifiable and unacceptable rate burden on their homes, for which many have worked long and hard.

Mr MORRIS (Maitland) [8.50]: I offer the good wishes of my constituency and myself to His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Roden Cutler, who has long since broken the record term of service given to New South Wales by Governor Lachlan Macquarie. The State is well served by the Queen's representative. I extend also to His Excellency and to Lady Cutler wishes for their continuing health and leadership to New South Wales. I congratulate the honourable member for Woronora, the mover of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, and the honourable member for Willoughby and the honourable member for Miranda who have been the only two members so far to make their maiden speeches in this debate.

It has been my privilege to serve in Parliament during the term of office of seven Premiers of New South Wales. One of the great Premiers, the Hon. J. J. Cahill, was in office when I was elected to this House. As an Opposition member, I was grateful for the advice and counselling he gave me. He was Premier at the time the Parliament celebrated its centenary of responsible government. I am sure that all honourable members regard it as a great privilege to serve in this Parliament. With that privilege come responsibilities. Sometimes one talks glibly about parliamentary privilege and what it enables one to do. Although the present session of the parliament has extended over but two weeks, I have been concerned about its being undistinguished as a result of the name calling and character assassination that has been engaged in by a handful of honourable members. That would not have happened under the man who was Premier when I became a member of this House. He would not have liked it. I do not know what can be done. I do not blame Premiers, Ministers or party leaders when that type of conduct occurs. If honourable members wish to say something, they may do so. That is what Parliament is all about. That is their privilege. But when they throw mud about, it does not do them any good and it does not do this institution any good. Some of the mud sticks on all of us and does not help the parliamentary image.

In 1965 I became a member of the former Government under another good Premier, a man of the people, the Hon. R. W. Askin, now Sir Robert. I was appalled when, one afternoon, the honourable member for South Coast traduced that man in this House. Honourable members should not do such things. They ought to weigh carefully what they say. If they are satisfied of the truth of a matter, they should be willing to say it outside the House. If parliamentary privilege is used merely for the purpose of obtaining a newspaper headline—and it is always possible to obtain a headline by traducing someone—and for waging a vendetta against someone's character, especially if that person is outside Parliament at the time and cannot speak for himself, it is a poor use of parliamentary privilege. I stand by the need for parliamentary privilege, which is most important. However, it must be used most sparingly.
and only in the public interest. I recall from my school days Iago's words in Othello. Some of the more learned members on the Government benches could recite them accurately without resort to the Parliamentary Library, but I must admit that I have had to refresh my memory of them. They are:

Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls;
Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robbs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

As this session of the Parliament progresses towards Christmas, we might do well to ponder on those words. I was interested in a recent editorial in the Sydney Morning Herald, part of which was in these terms:

It is of the highest importance that MPs should be free to speak their minds fearlessly; that is the whole point of the concept of parliamentary privilege. But it is no less important that the privilege should not be abused and that citizens' reputations should not be assailed without compelling reason.

On 5th June, 1956, when Parliament was sitting through the winter, I made my maiden speech in this House. Until recently I had not read it since 1956, but on doing so found that it was as bad as I thought it would have been. I wish that I had read it earlier. The speech was about industrial relations, and in the last part of it I referred to the problem of automation. I came into this House from the heavily industrialized Newcastle area. Honourable members will recall the film "Modern Times", made in the late 1930's and featuring Charlie Chaplin. Many people found it particularly funny. Charlie Chaplin portrayed a worker suffering the ravages of the conveyor belt operation. It was a send-up of industry and of profitmaking at human cost. People did not count for anything; they were merely workers, and had little private life. The film showed in Chaplin's inimitable way the rapacious demands of the conveyor belt, and it dealt with the unemployed and the problems created by automation. Recently a committee in the United States of America had this to say, when considering the problem of automation:

It is clearly wrong to dismiss automation as nothing more than an extension of mechanization.

If we look at it this way we are looking at it in the wrong slant because this problem of automation has grave forebodings for us. A few weeks ago I asked the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy a question about the problems facing young people in Australia, and in New South Wales particularly, in obtaining employment at the end of the year, when some 200,000 school leavers in this State will come on to the labour market. At present New South Wales has some 35,000 unemployed young people, many of them school leavers from last year. In his reply to my question, the Minister gave startling figures. I mentioned the fact that some industries and businesses in Australia are not in competition with imports, and that some institutions, such as banks and insurance companies, are heavily protected by both State and federal law. In fact, they are pampered institutions. Airlines have the advantage of the two-airline policy.

Mr Morris]
Banks and insurance companies are making record, almost indecent, profits. At the same time, those institutions are engaging in a war of attrition as far as opportunities for young people are concerned. Banks and insurance companies have embarked upon a heavy automation programme not because of threats from competition but merely as a means of eliminating jobs and increasing profitability. Recently the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy in his reply to a question posed by me said that a couple of years ago 2,500 positions were available annually for school leavers in the banks and insurance companies in New South Wales. This year the number will be reduced to 600. Next year scholarships for school leavers who wish to become school teachers will be reduced from 2,000 to 700. That trend is taking place all over Australia.

On 17th October last year the Sydney Morning Herald reported the findings of a study of the Australian Industries Development Association which predicted that by 1984–85 unemployment is likely to increase from the present 6 per cent of the work force to about 10 per cent. The report stated that the rising rate of unemployment will develop social and political pressures including fervent debate about technological change, early retirement, shorter working hours, import protection and the shape of the industrial structure. The Minister has established a section in the new technology portfolio to look into these matters. Probably it is a little belated but that is not the Minister's fault. We are looking at these things belatedly. The problems have been talked about on a worldwide basis for a couple of decades but not nearly enough has been done about the matter. The unemployment prospect for young people is dismal and soul-destroying, as it is for older people as well.

Honourable members doubtless have seen a number of advertisements by the Government offering jobs for young people and setting out the efforts that are being made to provide employment for young people. I have read those advertisements with interest but sometimes I wonder just how earnest the Government is. A few weeks ago New South Wales was hit with the hospital bombshell. I wish to talk a little parochially. I shall refer to some problems of my constituency. It is good for a local member to talk about his constituency at times because some of the great statesmen who have come into the House and have not done so have not lasted for long. The hospital bombshell that has been dropped, as it relates to the Maitland electorate, has meant that though early this year the Minister for Health came and opened an extension to Maitland hospital costing $5.5 million, at which event the town band was out and people were acclaiming what had been done, the Government has now said that thirty beds are to be thrown out in order to save $250,000 a year.

Gresford is a small rural community. The Clevedon hospital, located in a cottage at Gresford, has eight beds. Every Saturday and Sunday 600 or 700 cars pass the hospital which is situated in one of the most picturesque areas in the Hunter District. That hospital is to be closed. The reason why the hospital was brought into being in 1956 was that the community could not sustain a doctor. The hospital was opened and a doctor was provided in the town. At Clevedon four or five beds have been used for hospital purposes and a few beds have been used as a nursing home.

This year the Minister visited Dungog twice. On one occasion he opened extensions to the Dungog Hospital and people cried "hosanna". Local members like Ministers to come to their electorate. The local member and the Minister have their names printed on plaques and everybody receives showers of blessing. The Minister has been to the Dungog hospital twice to open wards and an operating theatre. Now that hospital is to be closed, save for nine beds. I do not know where this is all leading.
I lodge the strongest possible protest because it has not been possible to see the Minister for Health about these matters. I can understand his problems, with so much happening in the health field. The Minister has given a blanket refusal to those who wish to talk to him about hospitals. Members of Parliament have to discuss their hospital problems with the public servant who happens to be the regional director of health for the time being.

Coupled with the saving of money in hospital administration I am concerned with the freeze imposed on the employment of trainee nurses. A number of nurses at the hospitals I have mentioned are completing their three years of training. Immediately the training period is completed those nurses are to be thrown on the scrap heap. There is to be no question of their being offered employment for at least twelve months. The nurses have been trained at expense to the State but on completion of their training period, the day they graduate, they will be told that no more work is available for them. Those nurses will become typists or floor washers, or do whatever job they can get, or be trained in some other field in order to equip themselves for a different occupation.

I presume that what is happening in my electorate is happening throughout New South Wales. The ceiling on staff in hospitals means that nurses who graduate cannot be offered a position after graduation. How does a nurse receive post-graduate experience? The fact is that the nurses will be thrown out of their jobs as soon as they graduate. The policy seems totally crazy. I cannot understand a government condoning or supporting that policy. The policy contributes to the serious unemployment situation already existing in New South Wales.

Every now and then the Premier comes into the House and says that employment is going well in New South Wales and that his Government is looking after it. The figures show that employment is going bad, but the Premier says that employment is going well. One finds that nurses cannot get jobs once they complete their training. But, advertisements for trainee nurses are still appearing. Advertisements for apprentices appear and apprentices are still being taken on, given training and given their indentures. In the days of the depression the apprentices were given their indentures and a handshake before being sent off to the scrap heap and the dole. That is not good enough. It is certainly not good enough for nurses now being trained in hospitals. I make the strongest possible protest about that matter.

The historic Maitland gaol was probably built in accordance with a plan that was used all over the British Empire. Probably the same plan was used at Goulburn, Maitland, Parramatta and Grafton. The Maitland gaol is situated in East Maitland where there is a population of 10,000. On the other side of the street from the gaol 1,050 girls attend the historic Maitland girls high school. There are one hundred prison officers employed in that gaol. I ask the Government what it is going to do with the Department of Corrective Services? I should like to know. Prison officers and people of my constituency would also like to know. There is an urgent need to restore the confidence and authority of prison officers whose job it is to maintain order and discipline within the prisons.

Mr Petersen: Has the honourable member read the Nagle report?

Mr MORRIS: Prison officers have serious doubts about the support they receive from their Minister and his department. Prison officers in the prison in my constituency and in all gaols are at risk. I am not talking about people who are not human beings. These men live and work in the city of Maitland, with their families. Their children attend schools there. They and their wives belong to the parents and citizens' associations and other groups in that area. They are good citizens. The lives of these officers
are at risk because of the policy of the Minister for Corrective Services and the Government. I regret to say that there are perhaps twenty or thirty totally intractable prisoners within the prison system throughout New South Wales. I believe it was for these men that the Katingal prison was designed. Katingal was closed within a month of the Nagle report being presented. It all happened in a great hurry. It was one of the quick decisions of the Premier, and a wrong one. With all respect to Mr Justice Nagle, whose report is sometimes referred to with the reverence accorded the Bible but wherein I do not find any Holy Writ, I believe that when he spoke about closing Katingal he did not mean it had to be done within a month but only after suitable alternatives were provided. It was the quick decision of the Premier and the Government which has caused the problems. I say this kindly: the Government has often got into trouble through some of these quick and hasty decisions. This was one of the decisions made hastily which has caused no end of trouble in the prison system.

In the prison in Maitland there has been almost a reign of terror. At times it has been under siege. People living and working in its vicinity have been quite properly concerned about what could happen if there were a mass outbreak. Within the past couple of days we have read of tunnels being found leading from Parramatta gaol and Long Bay gaol. Security in prisons has been in relapse because prison officers believe they do not always receive backing and support from those in high places within the service. Sometimes I am rather concerned that, sincere though they are, do-gooders have got into the act.

Mr Petersen: It is a pity there were not some do-gooders around when Grafton was going.

Mr MORRIS: I am not talking about Grafton gaol; I am talking about Maitland prison, with which I am familiar.

Mr Petersen: Has the honourable member read the report about Maitland?

Mr MORRIS: I know about the lack of discipline in that gaol. It stems from the fact that prison officers do not get the support they should. I know of incidents of dumb insolence in that gaol portrayed to prison officers. Perhaps those officers might be forgiven for saying, "What is the use? We are going to be the people in the judgment dock if anything goes wrong and not the people who are here."

People sent to prison are sent there by their peers, the jury. I do not send them there. The honourable member for Illawarra does not send them there. They are sent to prison by the judgment of twelve honest men and true. They are not sent there by the judge. It is the decision of their peer group.

No one is more against floggings and brutality than I am. I do not think the honourable member for Illawarra would deny that. What I say is that decent prison officers doing a job for this State need the support and protection to which they are entitled. I have here an item concerning prison rules. If it is the best that the new Corrective Services Commission has been able to turn out, it makes me sick. The Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Technology and Minister for Energy, who is at the table, is a practical man and I do not expect him to admit that this sort of thing makes him sick; nevertheless I know what he is thinking. Recently the new prison rules of the Corrective Services Commission were published in the Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate. The newspaper referred to a big decision of the Corrective Services Commission and said that a team of highly paid people now
run the prisons. Perhaps the Minister for Corrective Services rubbed his hands together and said, "You little beauty, they will be the meat in the sandwich now instead of me". But it is no use for him to try and get out of the hot seat. He cannot do that while we have ministerial responsibility within our form of government. The Corrective Services Commission issued these rules for prisoners:

They—

shall not use, in any manner, any unseemly words. Unseemly words in this rule include any obscene, indecent, threatening, abusive or insulting words;

shall not use the toilet as a means of communication with other prisoners;

shall not engage in gambling or betting;

shall not interfere with any electrical installation or appliance, including television sets, without permission from a prison officer.

I visited Maitland gaol soon after Katingal was closed. Two or three of those intractable prisoners had been sent there. They did not like the place. Oddly enough, they wanted to go back to Katingal where the surroundings were much more congenial with wall to wall carpet and colour television. When they arrived at Maitland gaol they learned what conditions were like in an 1840 model gaol. Immediately they went on a rampage. They wanted to go back to Katingal and tried ripping everything out in an attempt to have their wishes complied with. But, the Premier said they could not go back.

I hope the Government will not be tardy in winding up the inquiry taking place at Goulburn gaol. I believe the acting superintendent of Maitland gaol, Mr Penning, of whom mention is made in the report, is a man against whom a vendetta has been waged by prisoners. I believe he has been victimized in what could be almost a conspiracy among certain prisoners within the system. I shall not comment any further on this subject as the matter is the subject of inquiry. I hope it will be cleaned up quick and lively so that this honourable man, who has taken his place as a good citizen in Maitland, might have his appointment as superintendent of Maitland gaol declared permanent.

It is about time some honourable members in this House started to support law and order. Some have already and more will follow. The lid has been placed on the gaol situation but only for a short time. It will blow off again at any time. Law and order must be maintained within the prison system.

Mr WILDE (Parramatta) [9,19]: I congratulate the mover of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, the honourable member for Woronora, and the seconder of the motion, the honourable member for Willoughby, upon the contribution that each made at the initial stages of this debate. I add my congratulations also to the honourable member for Miranda who made his maiden speech in this debate. In their own way those honourable members made significant contributions to the debate. Although we are well aware of the talents of the honourable member for Woronora and greatly appreciate the interest and research that he brings to all of the subjects that he debates, which we have come to expect, it was refreshing to see the excellent efforts made by the two new honourable members who made their maiden speeches. All honourable members will agree that they and the other new members who entered Parliament in 1978 have demonstrated a great capacity for parliamentary procedure. I am sure that all of them will remain in this Parliament for many years.
I listened carefully to the opening remarks of the honourable member for Maitland about parliamentary privilege and the conduct of honourable members in this House. Though he spoke with deep emotion and with apparent sincerity, it was regrettable that no member of his party was present when he made those remarks. Whether that was by accident or design I know not. Perhaps they were aware of the matter that he was to discuss and were so ashamed of the conduct of their colleagues that they preferred not to be in the Chamber when he made his admonitory remarks. There has been some invective in the present session of Parliament. It is all very well for the honourable member for Maitland to deplore the mudslinging that has been taking place, but honourable members know who started it. If he expects members on this side of the House to sit quietly while all of the mud is thrown over from the Opposition benches and not scrape a bit of it off and throw it back at them, he is sadly mistaken. I reiterate that the conduct that he deplored originated from the other side of the House. During my fairly brief time in this Parliament that has always been the case. It was noticeable that the two chief offenders, who hold front-bench positions in the Opposition, were absent from the Chamber when the honourable member for Maitland gave his little sermon to us.

The honourable member for Maitland spoke about hospital cutbacks. The reasons for the cutbacks in hospital accommodation in this State are apparent to everyone. I am sure the honourable member for Maitland is aware that they would have been even more severe had it not been for the action of the State Minister for Health in publicizing the results that would have followed if the proposals outlined by Mr Howard in his mini-budget had been put into effect. Mr Howard gave a clear indication that funding for hospitals would be retained at the 1978–79 level, which would have meant a cutback in real terms of at least 9 per cent. That was overcome because the Minister for Health released the figures in regard to the hospitals at which reductions would be made.

Mr J. A. Clough: That has nothing to do with the federal Government.

Mr WILDE: It has everything to do with the federal Government. A considerable number of those hospitals were in the electorate of the federal Minister for Health, Mr Hunt.

[Interruption]

Mr WILDE: Members of the Opposition do not like to hear the truth. Mr Hunt very conveniently and rapidly reversed his decision and decided that he would allow funding to be retained at the 1978–79 parity level. In other words, he would make an allowance for increased inflation. However, he insisted on a requirement that hospital beds were to be retained at the 1978–79 level, well knowing that a number of new hospitals were ready to go into service and that to enable the funding of those additional hospital beds it was a corollary that other beds would have to be closed.

Mr J. A. Clough: The decision about State hospitals was a State Government decision.

Mr WILDE: I do not know whether the honourable member for Eastwood objected to the opening of the new beds at the Westmead Centre of the Parramatta Hospital. If he thinks they should not come on stream, let him stand up and say so.

Mr J. A. Clough: I did not say that. I said that the Government should not build Mount Druitt Hospital and I repeat that.
Mr WILDE: The honourable member would not say that the Government should not open 450 beds at Parramatta.

Mr J. A. Clough: We are not discussing that.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Eastwood to order. He has already made a contribution to this debate and he is not permitted to make a second one.

Mr WILDE: We are discussing the necessary reduction in the number of hospital beds that had to take place to keep the number of beds at the present level. As I have said before, Mount Druitt is a project for the future. The main consideration was the 450 beds that were coming into service at the Westmead Centre of the Parramatta Hospital. It was obvious that, to compensate for this increase in the number of hospital beds, an equivalent number had to be closed elsewhere. Some of those beds were closed at the old Parramatta Hospital, now known as the Parramatta Centre. A sacrifice was made by the people of the district and the staff of Parramatta Hospital but not all of the beds could be closed for the whole idea of building a new hospital at Westmead was to provide increased health and hospital care for the people of the western metropolitan area where they were most needed. Therefore, beds had to be closed elsewhere where they were being underutilized. To suggest, as the honourable member for Eastwood suggested, that there should be no future planning for a hospital at Mount Druitt is callous in the extreme. There has been a tremendous population explosion in that area west from Parramatta and Blacktown and it is obvious that, just as there was a crying need for a first-class hospital at Parramatta, there was a need for planning for a new hospital at Mount Druitt. That plan will be followed through and the inevitable consequence of federal Government policy is that the number of beds elsewhere will have to be reduced.

Everyone regrets the lack of increased employment that has resulted in the hospital system, but once again the responsibility rests fairly and squarely with the federal Government. It took absolutely no action to try to solve the greatest problem that faces this nation today—unemployment. There are twenty-five registered unemployed for every job vacancy, and more than 500,000 people are registered for employment. There are hidden factors as well, in that many people do not register, such as people who are ineligible for unemployment benefits, including wives who were formerly members of the work force and lost their jobs. It would be accurate to estimate that more than 750,000 people in Australia at present are seeking employment and are not able to obtain it. Meanwhile the federal Government stands idly by and does nothing to boost the economy and provide employment. In fact, it does the reverse. It claims that the great fight should be against inflation. That is the main thrust of its economic policies. Yet the Fraser Government is giving the greatest boost to inflation in the history of the Commonwealth. I refer to its policy of equating the price of Australian petroleum products to the OPEC price. When the Fraser Government came into power in 1975 it immediately boosted the income of the oil companies by increasing the price of domestic crude, claiming that eventually it would bring it up to world parity with a view to encouraging oil exploration within Australia. It said that if the oil companies did not receive world parity for their locally produced oil there would be no incentive to explore for and produce oil in our own country.

The federal Government gave an immediate and substantial boost to the oil companies' unearned income, because the oil was coming out of the already existing wells. It was not costing any more to produce. Additional oil reserves have still not been found within this country. As time elapsed and overseas prices rose further and further, the bonus handed to the oil companies became too much for even the Fraser...
Government to allow to continue. Mr Fraser, Mr Howard and their colleagues saw that this was the way out of the financial dilemma that they had got into. They thought they would have a bit of the bonus that was coming out of the pockets of the Australian motorists and decided to divert some of these enormous funds to themselves.

In the coming year the Fraser Government will get $2 billion from the motorists of Australia as a result of the inflationary price of petroleum products. If it did not have this enormous income coming to it from this source, it would be not only morally bankrupt, as we know it is, but also financially bankrupt. It is a flagrant robbery of the States into the bargain. New South Wales is entitled to a set share of income tax. It is obvious that if the federal Government did not have this windfall from petroleum products, it would have to increase personal income tax, and consequently a substantial percentage of that would have to come back to the States under the income tax sharing agreement. Therefore, the States have been deprived of a substantial amount of income that otherwise they would have received.

I now turn to the Governor's Speech to make some comments about the achievements of the Government, the proposals as outlined by the Governor for the immediate future and the proposals that this Government intends to implement in the life of the present Parliament. I preface my remarks by referring briefly to some of the recent achievements of the Government, particularly within my electorate. They are worthy of mention on an occasion such as this. I have noted with interest that one of the Government's election pledges is to care for the environment. Our heritage has received attention in my electorate. The Government has already allocated funds for the restoration of Elizabeth Farm, which was acquired by the Heritage Council of New South Wales. The sum of $26,250 has already been allocated towards this project. The estimated total cost of restoration is $70,000, which will be progressively funded. However, I do not doubt that that estimate eventually will be substantially exceeded. In addition, over 100 historic sites within the city of Parramatta have been declared under section 130 of the Heritage Act. This proclamation was made on 22nd June, 1979. As a result, no action can be taken by the owners to demolish or substantially alter these buildings without giving the appropriate notice to the Heritage Council. It is good that machinery exists whereby these homes and properties will be preserved for the benefit of future Australians. A wide variety of properties come within this declaration, including St Patrick's church, the Presbyterian church, the Congregational church, All Saints church, the Baptist church, the court house tower, the Woolpack Hotel in Parramatta, Experiment Farm Cottage, Hambledon Cottage, and St John's cemetery. A number of these properties, particularly the churches and cemetery are already certain to be preserved by their owners, who have a high regard for the historical significance of their properties. However, many of the homes are in private ownership and would not be preserved if it were not for the commendable action of the Government.

I congratulate the Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Tourism on the way he has allocated funds to my electorate. I refer particularly to grants of $17,500 made to the Dundas Valley Rugby Union Club; $25,000 to the Parramatta city council for improvements to the Sturt Street reserve; $20,000 to the Parramatta–Granville Tennis Association; and $12,500 to St Patrick's Marist Brothers school at Dundas for sports amenities. These are only small matters but are indicative of the thought given by the Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Tourism to these community improvements that mean a great deal to the people in the district.

I thank the Minister for Youth and Community Services for the attention he has paid to my electorate. Recently he provided shopfront premises for the Parramatta office of his department. More recently his department opened a branch office at Telopea bringing his commendable service even closer to the people. In the past year he has
made grants in excess of $150,000 for special projects in the district, including $80,000 to the Home Help Service run by the Parramatta Community Service and Information Centre, and $32,500 for pre-school subsidies to five schools.

I appeal to the Minister for Lands and Minister for Services and the Minister for Planning and Environment to give urgent and favourable consideration to the application by the Parramatta Rugby League Football Club for the rebuilding of Cumberland Oval. This club has in excess of 20,000 loyal fans who have followed the team over many years. They have had to put up with poor conditions at their home ground. In spite of that, they have stuck by the club, which is not to be wondered at, for it has won the club champion for four years in succession. I have read in the news today that its chances of winning a premiership are improving by the hour. I must admit that I was somewhat disappointed last Saturday when I saw the twenty-seven people who were on the field and, in fact, my forebodings were justified. However, the news this afternoon filled me with a great deal of optimism. The team will be out on the Sydney Cricket Ground next Saturday and I am quite sure that it will be out there again on Saturday week. It will certainly be a different proposition with a different composition of people on the field. I am confident that this time the Eels will be triumphant. I appeal to the two responsible Ministers to expedite approval of the rebuilding scheme for the Cumberland stadium. It is urgently needed to provide proper accommodation for a magnificent football team and also to provide the proper facilities for sport in the district of Parramatta.

I have a number of other matters that I wish to deal with, but so that I do not run out of time I want to refer to a question that was put on notice by the honourable member for South Coast. I refer to a reference that has been made to a very worthy organization within my electorate, the Parramatta Police-Citizens Boys’ Club. That question sought information regarding which board members of that club were prominent members of the Australian Labor Party. I am not certain when the question is likely to be answered, but if the honourable member had bothered to speak to me about the matter instead of putting it on notice and trying to make all sorts of snide implications thereby, I would have been happy to supply him with the information. To the best of my knowledge I believe there are five or six members of the Australian Labor Party within that organization. There could be more.

Alderman Keith McKinnon, O.A., has been active in the police-citizens boys’ clubs since 1955 when he was an instructor at the Newcastle Police-Citizens Boys’ Club. In 1960 he joined the Parramatta Police-Citizens Boys’ Club as an instructor and in 1962 was elected as a vice-president. He is now senior vice-president, a member of the management committee and a delegate to the federation. In 1967 my worthy predecessor Mr D. J. Mahoney was elected patron of the club and in 1977 I was elected as co-patron of the club. In 1978 the Hon. J. J. Morris MLC and Alderman John Brown MP were appointed to the management committee of the club.

The reason I have advised the House of these dates is that Sergeant Jones came to the Parramatta Police-Citizens Boys’ Club in 1972. The interest of members of my political party in this club extends back long before the present officer took up his position. He accepted his position in 1972 and I was not elected as co-patron for another 5 years. I assume the inference sought to be made is that I joined this club at the request or instigation of Sergeant Jones. Obviously he was in no rush to have me associated with the club, for I was not invited to accept a position until 5 years after he had taken up his position with the club.

I congratulate Sergeant Jones on the way he has developed the club in the time that he has been associated with it. During a year children make in excess of 86,000 visits to the club. Each weekend fifteen children are taken to camps at no
cost to the children or their parents. Weekly more than 600 adults use the club facilities. Since Sergeant Jones has been in charge of the club he has expanded it by providing a heated swimming pool, barbecue facilities, a recreation area and an elaborately equipped gymnasium for the use of older boys and girls. He is doing a magnificent job by providing recreational facilities for the young people of the Parramatta district.

The inferences in the questions and the harassment suffered by Sergeant Jones are completely unjustified. He has issued a writ against Mr Azzopardi claiming $100,000 and that is to be dealt with in October 1979. That writ was issued as a result of Mr Azzopardi distributing more than 10 000 scurrilous documents throughout the city of Parramatta. What is the honourable member for South Coast seeking to demonstrate by asking leading questions about Sergeant Jones? I assume that the honourable member had some information, otherwise he would not have placed the question on the Questions and Answers paper. Is he seeking to demonstrate that he will repeat any allegation or peddle any suggestion as long as it will bring him publicity? What about his own electorate? Are honourable members to assume that there are no rackets, vice or corruption on the South Coast between Bomaderry and Bega? I have not seen any questions on the Questions and Answers paper about that area. I have not heard about allegations of wrong-doings on the South Coast. Are the eagle eyes, the eager ears, the sharp nose and the fertile imagination of the South Coast Sancho Panza dimmed by other considerations?

I have met Mr Azzopardi only briefly on one occasion some years ago and am therefore not competent to judge him. I know that it has been suggested by others that he might be paranoic. If so, the honourable member for South Coast should be more careful of his associates—it might be contagious. I felt called upon to defend Sergeant Jones, who is a worthy citizen of the Parramatta district and is performing a splendid job for the community.

I congratulate the Minister for Transport on the improved rail services that he has been providing in the metropolitan area, in particular the increased maintenance of tracks and the improved rolling stock that has come into service. Especially important is the quadruplication of the western line and the building of a new overbridge at Harris Park. Quadruplication of the line will be extended from Parramatta to Granville where a considerable traffic bottleneck occurs. I know that the Minister is constrained by lack of funds, but I urge him to make every effort to ensure that funds are allocated for this important work. I urge him also to examine carefully the timetabling as it affects people travelling from Parramatta and stations closer to the city.

I have received complaints, well-substantiated by a close analysis of the timetable, that people who join trains at Parramatta and stations closer to the city are not receiving the improved service to which they are entitled. Fewer trains are starting from Parramatta since the introduction of the new timetable some months ago. Often commuters are required to stand all the way from Parramatta to Sydney. Unfortunate comparisons have been drawn between the service provided from Parramatta and the service on the Epping line where, it has been pointed out, proportionately more trains are available for fewer commuters.

I congratulate the Minister for Transport on the work that has been done on the main roads and county roads in the Parramatta area, so vividly demonstrated with the opening of the new section of the county road from Pennant Hills Road to Briens Road. That work cost $6 million and was completed four years in advance of the programming contemplated by the former Liberal-Country party Government. That road will be extended to Old Windsor Road. The former Government did not plan to undertake that work for at least ten years. I ask the Minister to heed urgently the
representations I have made to him in the past, and repeated to him today, for the provision of traffic signals at the intersection of Briens Road and Kleins Road, Northmead. Before the extension of the roadway a distinct hazard existed at this intersection. That hazard has been exacerbated by increased traffic and the increased width of the roadway. With cross traffic and pedestrians having to negotiate this intersection it is essential that traffic signals be installed. I ask that the Minister give favourable consideration to that request before a fatality occurs.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Punch.

House adjourned, on motion by Mr Renshaw, at 9.49 p.m.

———

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

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

TAREN POINT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr WOBB asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Is the portable building at Taren Point Public School in need of repair and painting?

(2) (a) If so, when will work commence?
(b) how much will it cost?

Answer—
The Department of Public Works is currently seeking tenders for internal repairs to, and painting of a fixed timber building at this school. Arrangements will be made for this project to be undertaken on receipt of an acceptable quotation.

All buildings in the school grounds are scheduled to be painted externally during the 1980–81 financial year.

BURRAGORANGCOAL

Mr ROBB asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is coal from mines in the Burragorang Valley railed at Glenlee (Menangle)?

(2) If not, is it transported by road to Port Kembla?

Answer—
Coal from the Burragorang Valley is transported by road to two washeries, Wollondilly and Glenlee.

Coal from Glenlee is generally hauled by rail to Balmain (about 1.3 m.t.p.a.) while a small amount (about 0.2 m.t.p.a.) is moved by road to Port Kembla.

Coal from Wollondilly washery is transported by road to Port Kembla (about 2.0 m.t.p.a.).
ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DRUGS

Mr MOORE asked the Premier—

(1) What were the total fees paid to senior counsel assisting the Royal Commission into Drugs from 1 January 1979 to the end of the commission?

(2) Were any fees paid outside New South Wales?

(3) If so,
   (a) where;
   (b) to whom; and
   (c) in what currencies were they paid?

Answer—

(1) The total fees paid to Senior Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission into Drugs from 1st January, 1979, has been $68,850.

(2) and (3) No Counsels' fees have been paid outside New South Wales.

BYRON ELECTORATE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr BOYD asked the Minister for Youth and Community Services—

What has been the detailed total expenditure from his Portfolio in the Byron Electorate during the last three years?

Answer—

During the 3-year period from July, 1976 to June, 1979 my Department made the following grants in the Byron Electorate:

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<tr>
<td>Byron Bay Pre-School</td>
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<td>$3,618</td>
<td>$3,955</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kingscliff Mini-School</td>
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<td>$1,569</td>
<td>$1,779</td>
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<td>Murwillumbah Uniting Church Pre-School</td>
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<td>$1,559</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tweed District Pre-School</td>
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<td>$5,787</td>
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<td>St Joseph's Tweed Heads</td>
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<td>$5,851</td>
<td>$6,298</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>$18,323</td>
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Community Services Funding—

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<tr>
<td>Murwillumbah Community Aid Council</td>
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<td>$1,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stokers Siding Neighbourhood Centre</td>
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<td>Tweed District Kindergarten</td>
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BYRON ELECTORATE AGRICULTURE

Mr BOYD asked the Minister for Agriculture—

As growth in the Byron Electorate is currently about 8 per cent and Local Government building approvals for the six months to 30 June, 1979, were $34.3 million, are special provisions being made by him to meet this growth?

Answer—

There has been little change in the total number of farms in the Byron Electorate but there has been a significant change in the emphasis of farming. The number of dairymen has decreased and the number of farmers running beef cattle has increased. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of plantings of a range of tropical fruits and there has been a significant influx of part-time and hobby farmers.

My Department has made provision for these changes in the nature and the extent of the services provided to rural people.

Several years ago, a District Horticulturist (Vegetables) was appointed in the Electorate. He provides special assistance to tomato growers on the Tweed and is involved, with other officers of my Department, in conducting a large number of trials for both fruit and vegetable growers.

A fruit processing plant was recently opened at Murwillumbah and officers of my Department have been involved in guiding the development of crops suitable for processing. As well, my officers have assisted in the development of a passionfruit scion accreditation scheme to ensure the provision of disease free planting material for the developing passionfruit industry.

My Department has taken an active role in supporting the development and stability of new tropical fruit enterprises such as macadamias, passionfruit, custard apples and avocados.

In the Tweed and Byron Shires, extension officers of my Department carried out a total of 777 farm visits during the past twelve months. As well, they conducted, or helped conduct, 73 group extension occasions, such as field days and farm walks. Also, my officers assisted in the formation of another branch of the Agricultural Bureau in the Electorate, this branch intended specifically to meet the needs of new settlers for information and advice about agriculture.
Naturally I am concerned with the overall development of the Byron Electorate and officers of my Department have assisted the Shire Council in the development of a strategic development plan for the Shire.

Altogether then, my Department has provided for changes that are taking place in agriculture within the Byron Electorate with the objective of continuing to assist the farming population of the Electorate.

BYRON ELECTORATE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
Mr BOYD asked the Minister for Youth and Community Services—
As growth in the Byron Electorate is currently about 8 per cent and Local Government building approvals for the six months to 30 June, 1979, were $34.3 million, are special provisions being made by him to meet this growth?

Answer—
In answer to a similar question asked by the honourable member in August, 1978, I informed him that the staff of my Murwillumbah District Office had been doubled in the previous 6 months and that increased amounts had been made available to community organizations.

The staff establishment of my Department has been reviewed recently in view of the increasing demands for services but it has not been found necessary to further increase the staff of Murwillumbah Office. However, in common with all Country Offices, the Social Welfare Programme of my Department was decentralised in December last which means that people in urgent financial need can now obtain assistance from a local Office instead of waiting for a cheque from Sydney.

I have given details of expenditure in the Byron Electorate in answer to another question.

WINGS TRAVEL (NORMAN ROSS TRAVEL)
Mr BOYD asked the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice—
(1) Who are the current directors of Wings Travel (Norman Ross Travel)?
(2) Who were the directors for the last five years?
(3) Who are the shareholders?
(4) Who are the directors of Wings Travel Pty Ltd?
(5) Who were the directors during the last five years?
(6) Who are the shareholders?

Answer—
(1)–(2) Norman Ross Travel is a Business Name and the Proprietor is Wings Travel Pty Limited. Search of returns lodged with the Corporate Affairs Commission reveal that the directors of Wings Travel Pty Limited, as at the following dates, were:
25th October, 1978

Edward Brian O'Dwyer—1008 King Georges Road, Blakehurst.
Paul Damien Dole—60 Memorial Drive, St. Ives.
Richard Henry Rupert Bertil (Earl of Lindsey) Hunsdonbury, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 8PW, United Kingdom.

Norman James Pierce Kelso—1 Underwood Road, Homebush.
Gerald Harvey—1 Underwood Road, Homebush.
William Charles Sinclair—9 Parsley Road, Vaucluse.
Daniel Patrick Casey—7 Wisbeach Street, Rozelle.

16th March, 1977

Richard Henry Rupert Bertil (Earl of Lindsey), Hunsdonbury, Ware, Hertfordshire, SG12 8PW, United Kingdom.
Paul Darnien Eymord Dole—26 Byron Court, Mecklinburgh Sq.
William Charles Sinclair—9 Parsley Road, Vaucluse.
Edward Brian O'Dwyer—1008 King Georges Road, Blakehurst.

22nd April, 1976

William Charles Sinclair—9 Parsley Road, Vaucluse.
Iris Doreen Sinclair—9 Parsley Road, Vaucluse.
Edward Brian O'Dwyer—1008 King Georges Road, Blakehurst.

(3) The shareholders of Wings Travel Pty Limited as disclosed to the Corporate Affairs Commission are:

Shareholders:
William Charles Sinclair—9 Parsley Road, Vaucluse.
Iris Doreen Sinclair—9 Parsley Road, Vaucluse.
Edward Brian O'Dwyer—1008 King Georges Road, Blakehurst.

(4)—(6) See (1) above.

BRAILLE PUBLICATIONS

Mr. Moore asked the Minister for Youth and Community Services—

(1) Are any publications issued in braille by his department or instrumentalities or statutory corporations under his control?

(2) Are any publications of particular interest to the blind not published in braille?

(3) Will he remedy any shortcomings in the braille publications list of his department or instrumentalities or statutory corporations under his control?

Answer—

(1) In response to my proposals to introduce entirely new Community Welfare legislation, the New South Wales Advisory Council on the Handicapped submitted a comprehensive report to me which is now available on request to voluntary organizations and interested individuals. The Advisory Council's Report has particular relevance to a wide range of disability groups and is available in braille and talking book (cassette) form for the benefit of persons who are blind or visually impaired.
(2) Yes.

(3) On my instructions, the Handicapped Persons Bureau of my Department has for some time been examining the possibility of producing appropriate Government publications in braille.

The Executive Manager of the Bureau and the Chief Executive of the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children are nearing completion of a plan to put to the Government whereby the Institute's sophisticated braille production facilities will be made available, on a fee for service basis, to the Bureau for the production in braille of a wide range of Government publications.

As soon as I receive the proposal I shall give it my immediate and sympathetic consideration.

PURCHASE OF AUSTRALIAN MANUFACTURED GOODS

Mr MOORE asked the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice—

(1) How many contracts entered into by departments and statutory corporations under his control for the purchase of equipment contain clauses specifying an offset arrangement with the vendor for the purchase of Australian manufactured goods, components and/or technology, since 1 May, 1976?

(2) What were the contracts?

(3) What was the sum involved in each offset clause and what were the terms of its discharge?

(4) What is the extent to which the terms of these clauses have been implemented, specifying in each case the monetary value of the implementation?

(5) What sum is currently available under these clauses for the purchase of relevant Australian manufactured goods, components and/or technology?

Answer—

(1) None.

(2)—(5) Not applicable.

SEARCH WARRANTS

Mr MOORE asked the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice—

(1) Under what statutory provisions may search warrants be issued in New South Wales?

(2) Under what statutes may persons be authorized to enter and search premises or vehicles without warrant?

Answer—

(1) and (2) These questions require lengthy consideration of many New South Wales and Commonwealth statutes and this research can readily be undertaken by the Honourable Member.
USE OF HIRE CARS BY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

Mr MOORE asked the Minister for Agriculture—

(1) Has his department paid the account for drive-yourself hire cars used by him or his personal staff since 1 May, 1976?

(2) If so, what was the (a) rental and (b) points of hire and return, for each vehicle?

Answer—

(1) Yes.

(2)  | 4 and 5–8–78 | . . | (a) 30.88 | (b) Casino/Casino |
    | 20 and 21–8–78 | . . | (a) 42.04 | (b) Casino/Casino |
    | 24 and 25–8–78 | . . | (a) 77.32 | (b) Casino/Casino |
    | 6–9–78 | . . | (a) 28.26 | (b) Casino/Casino |

USE OF HIRE CARS BY MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Mr MOORE asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Has his department paid the account for drive-yourself hire cars used by him or his personal staff since 1 May, 1976?

(2) If so, what was the (a) rental and (b) points of hire and return, for each vehicle?

Answer—

The Ministry of Education has on record one instance where a car was hired. The car was hired at a cost of $45.88 and the point of hire and return for the vehicle was Port Macquarie airport.

SCIENTIFIC PHOTOGRAPHY

Mr CAVALIER asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Is he aware that an elective in Scientific Photography is not available at the Sydney Technical College in the Photography Certificate Course?

(2) Is he aware that space and equipment for the course is available in other parts of the College?

(3) Is he aware that more than the requisite number of students have applied for the introduction of such an elective?

(4) Why are the wishes of the students being denied?

(5) Is he satisfied with the quality of education available within the Department of Photography?
Answer—

(1) Yes. This elective is not available at Sydney Technical College because:

(a) There is not sufficient equipment or accommodation to run the course in the School of Graphic Arts.

(b) The size and physical limitations of Sydney Technical College and the department's desire to decentralize courses has meant that some restrictions have been placed on course development at the college.

(2) Accommodation and equipment is not available at the college in suitable form for the course within the School of Graphic Arts. The school is to be relocated in Mountain Street, Ultimo, and will have enlarged accommodation. My department is, however, inquiring into the availability of alternatives, but these are still under investigation.

(3) No. The students were not offered scientific photography as an elective for stage IV this year. The only electives offered were industrial and commercial photography. Stage IV of the photography certificate is at present under review and will be considered by the Courses Advisory Committee in September. They will investigate the possibility of broadening stage IV of the course rather than offering specialized electives.

(4) In the light of the above the wishes of the students cannot be fully met because of equipment and accommodation shortages.

(5) Yes. My department is endeavouring to meet the many and growing demands placed upon it in New South Wales during these times of fiscal restraint and resource limitations. There have been increases in the funds allocated to my Department of Technical and Further Education but the available resources are still not sufficient to meet the growth in student numbers and cope with the new demands placed on technical and further education by technological change. Unless this State receives a more adequate share of federal funds we will be unable to overcome the backlog in the provision of technical and further education facilities?

HEALTH INSPECTIONS AT FLEMINGTON MARKETS

Mr O'NEILL asked the Minister for Agriculture—

(1) What authority is responsible for health inspection at Flemington Fruit and Vegetable Markets?

(2) Are inspections made daily?

(3) During what hours are inspections made?

(4) Are these inspections, if carried out, conducted satisfactorily?

Answer—

(1) Inspections at the Sydney Markets, Flemington, are carried out by the Health Inspector of Strathfield Municipal Council and Inspectors of the Health Commission and Department of Agriculture so far as the quality of fruit and vegetables is concerned and the Market Authority. The inspections by the Strathfield Municipal Council Inspectors relate mainly to the operations of persons who sell food at the Paddy's Markets carried out on Fridays, Saturdays
and Sundays. Inspections are also carried out from time to time by Health Commission Inspectors who enforce the Pure Food Act Regulations. Market Authority inspections relate mainly to the dumping of rubbish and the conditions under which premises used for the storage, preparation and sale of food are maintained.

(2) The inspections carried out as mentioned above are made on a regular basis, but all premises are not visited each day.

(3) The inspections are carried out during the trading hours of the various markets. The wholesale trading hours are from 6.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon, Mondays to Fridays, and the Paddy's Market trading hours are from 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Fridays, 6.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Saturdays, and from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Sundays.

(4) I have discussed this matter with the Chairman of the Sydney Farm Produce Market Authority who has informed me that the facilities of the markets are used on seven days a week for market operations and this results in large volumes of refuse being left in the market complex. The cleaning of the markets is a major task undertaken by the authority and the cost of this work represents one of its highest expenditure items. The Chairman has also advised that in the opinion of the authority, the inspections carried out are satisfactory.

SYDNEY FARM PRODUCE MARKET AUTHORITY

Mr O'NEILL asked the Minister for Agriculture—

Would he detail the original and existing agreements between Strathfield Municipal Council and the New South Wales State Marketing Authority?

*Answer*—

The only agreement which the Sydney Farm Produce Market Authority has with the Strathfield Municipal Council concerns the method for the charging of rates in respect of the Sydney Markets at Flemington. This agreement became necessary because the Valuer-General was unable to provide the council with separate valuations for the rateable areas of the markets site. Because the Sydney Farm Produce Market Authority is constituted as a statutory body representing the Crown, council rates are only payable in respect of those areas which are used for a commercial purpose. The agreement between the council and the market authority sets out the formula which has been applied since 1975 in assessing the annual council rates payable by the authority to the council.

GREAT WESTERN HIGHWAY, LEURA

Mr R. J. CLOUGH asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Is he aware that the Great Western Highway outside Leura Primary School is being widened to six lanes?

(2) Is the crossing hazardous for children?

(3) If so, will the Department make it safe?

(4) Will the Department partially or fully fund an overhead bridge from the existing railway bridge to the School?
Answer—

(1) No formal notification has been given to the Department of Education by the Department of Main Roads as the widening of the Great Western Highway does not involve the acquisition of any portion of the Leura Public School site. The Department of Main Roads is widening the Great Western Highway to four (4) lanes with two (2) 10 ft layby sections.

(2) and (3) The question of safety and pedestrian access is a matter for the Traffic Safety Committee which consists of representatives from the Department of Main Roads, Police Traffic and the Blue Mountains City Council. Verbal inquiries with the Deputy Council Engineer reveal that the matter has been fully investigated by the Safety Committee (Mr Clough as an Alderman is a member of this Committee).

A total of 150 pupils attending Leura Public School use the present pedestrian crossing adjacent to the school and the crossing is within a designated 60 kilometre per hour speed zone. However, the Committee has expressed concern regarding the approach speed of vehicles travelling from the west. The Safety Committee has considered a number of alternatives for improvements to the crossing, viz.:

(a) the employment of a second Traffic Warden to supervise children crossing the existing crossing;
(b) the provision in road construction of a safe holding area in the centre medium strip; and
(c) the physical extension of the railway overhead bridge across the newly widened Great Western Highway.

The Deputy Council Engineer advised verbally that the Safety Committee had recommended to Council that Mr Clough, as local M.P., should make representations to the Minister for Transport for financial assistance to Council to extend the existing railway overhead bridge.

Verbal inquiries with the Officer-in-Charge, Staff Branch, have revealed that no formal written approach has been made to the Department of Education by the Blue Mountains City Council regarding the possibility of a financial contribution towards the cost of extension of the existing overhead railway bridge.

It is regretted that the financial resources available to the Department of Education would not permit any such contribution to such a project.

GRAIN ELEVATORS BOARD INVESTMENTS

Mr FISCHER asked the Minister for Agriculture—

(1) What investments, apart from grain handling operations, did the Grain Elevators Board of New South Wales have at 30 June, 1979?

(2) Do the investments include any loan extended towards the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation?

(3) If so (a) how much is lent and (b) on what terms?
Answer—

(1) As at 30th June, 1979, General Investments of the Grain Elevators Board of New South Wales totalled $13,124,313 comprising:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Investment</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long Term—Semi Government Securities</td>
<td>$4,062,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Term—Interest Bearing Deposits</td>
<td>$7,661,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Call—Official Short Term Money Market</td>
<td>$1,400,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$13,124,313

(2) No loan has been advanced by the Board to the Albury–Wodonga Development Corporation.

(3) Not applicable.

COMMERCIAL RABBIT FARM AT BROKEN HILL

Mr SCHIPP asked the Minister for Agriculture—

(1) Has a licence been granted to allow establishment of a commercial rabbit farm at Broken Hill?

(2) If so,
   (a) (i) when and (ii) to whom was it granted;
   (b) what conditions applied;
   (c) how many people are to be employed;
   (d) what capital outlay is involved;
   (e) when is the farm expected to be operative; and
   (f) what are the production estimates?

Answer—

In August, 1977 the New South Wales Government approved in principle of a commercial rabbit farm at Broken Hill, on application from Sharay Investments Pty Ltd, North Parramatta.

The proposal is for a primarily export operation for meat and fur, with an initial limit of 500,000 rabbits.

The eventual employment of 100–200 Broken Hill people is planned by the applicants.

Estimates submitted indicated that the first stage of the project would require a funding of about $4.6 million.

In March last, I saw a deputation from the applicant, Sharay Investments Pty Ltd, together with representatives of a substantial food processing group who were examining the investment prospects of the project. The deputation sought to clarify some aspects of the Government's approval.

The operation has not yet commenced at Broken Hill. The progress of this private venture and its commencement date obviously depend on the willingness of investors to put up the necessary capital. The relatively slow progress of the venture may well be due to the less buoyant investment climate now pertaining.
BITOU BUSH

Mr MOORE asked the Minister for Agriculture—

(1) What steps have been taken to develop satisfactory biological methods of control of the Bitou bush?

(2) What is the present state of infestation of the Bitou bush on the New South Wales coastline?

(3) What discussions are officers of his Department having with both the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Planning and Environment Commission to contain and eliminate this intrusion into the environment?

Answer—

(1) There has been no attempt made by any Australian authority to develop biological methods of control of Bitou bush. The plant is a native of South Africa which, accordingly, is the most likely place to find suitable organisms. Political considerations have limited opportunities to undertake searches for biological control agents in that country for a number of years.

(2) Bitou bush is present from the Victorian border to the Queensland border. However, the most extensive infestations are in the Wyong and Port Stephens areas.

(3) My Department, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Planning and Environment Commission are represented on a working party on urban bushlands which is particularly concerned with exotic plants, such as Bitou bush, in the area from Wollongong to Newcastle. That committee has a charter to investigate and report on the need for research and other aspects of the control of these plants. It plans to visit Wyong Shire shortly to examine the problem of Bitou bush.

Specialist officers of my Department and the Soil Conservation Services' specialist on beach and dune stabilization examined the problem of Bitou bush in October, 1976. They were particularly concerned with the area from Tuggerah to Port Macquarie. Since that inspection, my officers have observed the behaviour of Bitou bush in many other areas and assisted local Councils in control whenever possible.

NEPEAN ELECTORATE REMEDIAL AND RESOURCE TEACHERS

Mr ANDERSON asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Are remedial and resource teachers employed in schools in the Nepean Electorate which come within the Metropolitan Western Region?

(2) If so, where, and on what basis?

Answer—

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) Resource teachers have been appointed to Glenbrook Primary School, 2 days per week and Springwood Primary School, 3 days per week.

(b) Remedial Reading teachers have been appointed on a full-time basis at Nepean and Springwood High Schools.
Mr SCHIPP asked the Minister for Agriculture—

(1) Did the Australian Agricultural Council at its recent Perth meeting again consider the matter of release of *Longitarus echii* flea beetle for biological control of Paterson’s Curse?

(2) What was the Council’s decision?

(3) What was the attitude of each of the States?

*Answer—*

(1) The Australian Agricultural Council again considered the matter of the release of insects for the *biological* control of Paterson’s Curse at its recent Perth meeting.

(2) The Australian Agricultural Council agreed at the Perth meeting that CSIRO be asked to proceed with the introduction and multiplication of the insect species (*Dialectica scaeriella* and *Longitarus echii*) and to make them available to the States for field release. It is anticipated that field release will begin in 1980.

(3) The only State not agreeing with the recommendation was South Australia. The South Australian Minister for Agriculture indicated that a *cost/benefit* study for the apiculture industry, and the agricultural and grazing *industries* is being undertaken to compare the relative economic value of biological methods of control.

South Australia agreed, however, in the interim to tooling up for biological control.