AUSTRALIA

TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION: FIRST PERIOD

Governor-General

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

First Whitlam Ministry
(From 5 December to 18 December 1972)

Prime Minister
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for External Territories
Treasurer
Attorney-General
Minister for Customs and Excise
Minister for Trade and Industry
Minister for Education and Science
Minister for Shipping and Transport
Minister for Civil Aviation
Minister for Housing
Minister for Works
Minister for the Environment, Aborigines and the Arts

Minister for Defence
Minister for the Navy
Minister for the Army
Minister for Air
Minister for Supply
Postmaster-General
Minister for Labour and National Service
Minister for Immigration
Minister for Social Services
Minister for Repatriation
Minister for Health
Minister for Primary Industry
Minister for National Development
Minister for the Interior

The Honourable Edward Gough Whitlam, Q.C.

The Honourable Lance Herbert Barnard

Second Whitlam Ministry
(From 19 December 1972)

Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Defence, Minister for the Navy, Minister for the Army, Minister for Air and Minister for Supply
Minister for Overseas Trade and Minister for Secondary Industry
Minister for Social Security
Treasurer
Attorney-General, Minister for Customs and Excise and Leader of the Government in the Senate
Special Minister of State, Vice-President of the Executive Council, Minister assisting the Prime Minister and Minister assisting the Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for the Media
Minister for Northern Development

The Honourable Edward Gough Whitlam, Q.C.
The Honourable Lance Herbert Barnard

The Honourable James Ford Cairns

The Honourable William George Hayden
The Honourable Frank Crean
Senator the Honourable Lionel Keith Murphy, Q.C.
Senator the Honourable Donald Robert Wilessee
Senator the Honourable Douglas McClelland
The Honourable Rex Alan Patterson

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Australia

Minister for Repatriation and Minister assisting the Minister for Defence
Minister for Services and Property and Leader of the House
Minister for Labour
Minister for Urban and Regional Development
Minister for Transport and Minister for Civil Aviation
Minister for Education
Minister for Tourism and Recreation and Minister assisting the Treasurer
Minister for Works
Minister for Primary Industry
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Minister for Minerals and Energy
Minister for Immigration
Minister for Housing
Minister for the Capital Territory and Minister for the Northern Territory
Postmaster-General
Minister for Health
Minister for the Environment and Conservation
Minister for Science and Minister for External Territories

Australia

Senator the Honourable Reginald Bishop
The Honourable Frederick Michael Daly
The Honourable Clyde Robert Cameron
The Honourable Thomas Uren
The Honourable Charles Keith Jones
The Honourable Kim Edward Beasley
The Honourable Francis Eugene Stewart
Senator the Honourable James Luke Cavanagh
Senator the Honourable Kenneth Shaw Wriedt
The Honourable Gordon Munro Bryant, E.D.
The Honourable Reginald Francis Xavier Connor
The Honourable Albert Jaime Grassby
The Honourable Leslie Royston Johnson
The Honourable Keppel Earl Enderby
The Honourable Lionel Frost Bowen
The Honourable Douglas Nixon Everingham
The Honourable Moses Henry Cass
The Honourable William Lawrence Morrison
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THE COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD)

STANDING COMMITTEES

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS—Mr Cross (Chairman), Mr Ashley-Brown, Mr Collard, Mr FitzPatrick, Mr Hunt, Mr Jarman, Mr Peacock, Mr Thorburn, Mr Wentworth.

ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION—Dr Jenkins (Chairman), Mr Bourchier, Mr Fox, Mr Kerin, Mr Lamb, Mr Ian, Robinson, Mr Sherry.

HOUSE—Mr Speaker, Mr Berinson, Mr Bourchier, Mr Cooke, Mr Hansen, Dr Jenkins, Mr Katter.

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

PRIVILEGES—Mr Donald Cameron, Mr Collard, Mr Crean, Mr Drury, Mr Enderby, Mr Garland, Mr Lucock, Mr Scholes, Mr Whitlam.

PUBLICATIONS—Mr McKenzie (Chairman), Mr Erwin, Mr Graham, Mr King, Mr Lamb, Mr Mathews, Mr Morris.

STANDING ORDERS—Mr Speaker (Chairman), the Chairman of Committees, the Leader of the House, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Anthony, Mr Bryant, Mr Duthie, Mr Fox, Mr Garland, Mr Lucock, Mr Whitlam.

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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS—Mr Hurford (Chairman), Senator Fitzgerald, Senator Guilfoyle, Senator McAuliffe, and Mr Adermann (from 5 June), Mr Collard, Mr Jarman, Mr MacKellar, Mr Martin, Mr Reynolds, Mr Ian Robinson (to 5 June).

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PRICES—Mr Hurford (Chairman), Senator Gietzelt, Senator Guilfoyle, Senator O'Byrne, Senator Prowse, and Mr Garland, Mr Gorton, Mr Nixon, Mr Riordan, Mr Whan, Mr Willis.

SELECT COMMITTEE

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THE ACTS OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION: FIRST PERIOD)

Acts Interpretation Act 1973 (Act No. 79 of 1973)—

Agricultural Tractors Bounty Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 57 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Agricultural Tractors Bounty Act 1966–1972, and for other purposes.

Appropriation Act (No. 3) 1972–73 (Act No. 12 of 1973)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sum appropriated by the Appropriation Act (No. 1) 1972–73, for the service of the year ending on 30 June 1973.

Appropriation Act (No. 4) 1972–73 (Act No. 13 of 1973)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sums appropriated by the Appropriation Act (No. 2) 1972–73, for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 1973.

Appropriation Act (No. 5) 1972–73 (Act No. 38 of 1973)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sum appropriated by the Appropriation Act (No. 1) 1972–73 and the Appropriation Act (No. 3) 1972–73, for the service of the year ending on 30 June 1973.

Appropriation Act (No. 6) 1972–73 (Act No. 39 of 1973)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sums appropriated by the Appropriation Act (No. 2) 1972–73 and the Appropriation Act (No. 4) 1972–73, for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 1973.

Australian Capital Territory Representation Act 1973 (Act No. 8 of 1973)—


Australian Electoral Office Act 1973 (Act No. 87 of 1973)—
An Act relating to the administration of electoral laws.

Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1973 (Act No. 61 of 1973)—
An Act to repeal section 8 of the Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1972.

Book Bounty Act 1973 (Act No. 40 of 1973)—

Broadcasting and Television Act 1973 (Act No. 30 of 1973)—

Cities Commission Act 1973 (Act No. 41 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the National Urban and Regional Development Authority Act 1972.

Commonwealth Banks Act 1973 (Act No. 18 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Commonwealth Banks Act 1959–1968 to remove the limitation on the amount of housing loans to individuals.

Commonwealth Electoral Act 1973 (Act No. 7 of 1973)—
An Act to lower to eighteen years the age qualification for enrolment, voting and candidature for parliamentary elections.

Crimes Act 1973 (Act No. 33 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Crimes Act 1914–1966 in relation to the deportation of persons from Australia.

Crimes (Protection of Aircraft) Act 1973 (Act No. 34 of 1973)—
An Act to approve ratification by Australian of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, to give effect to that Convention and to provide for the punishment of unlawful acts of the kinds dealt with by that Convention in certain circumstances in which that Convention does not apply.

Customs Tariff Validation Act 1973 (Act No. 58 of 1973)—
An Act to provide for the validation of collections of duties of Customs under Customs Tariff Proposals.

Defence (Parliamentary Candidates) Act 1973 (Act No. 84 of 1973)—

An Act to provide for retirement and death benefits for certain members of the Defence Force who are indigenous inhabitants of Papua New Guinea.

An Act to make provision for and in relation to a scheme for retirement and death benefits for members of the Defence Force.

Defence Forces Retirement Benefits Act 1973 (Act No. 82 of 1973)—
The Acts of the Session

An Act to provide for increases in certain Defence Force retirement pensions.

Defence Service Homes Act 1973 (Act No. 31 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the War Service Homes Act 1918-1971.

Evidence Act 1973 (Act No. 80 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Evidence Act 1905-1964.

Excise Act 1973 (Act No. 24 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Excise Act 1901-1972 in relation to beer produced for non-commercial purposes.

Excise Tariff Act 1973 (Act No. 20 of 1973)—
An Act relating to duties of excise on wine.

Excise Tariff Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 23 of 1973)—
An Act to exempt from duties of excise beer produced for non-commercial purposes.

Export Payments Insurance Corporation Act 1973 (Act No. 15 of 1973)—

Grants Commission Act 1973 (Act No. 54 of 1973)—
An Act to establish a Grants Commission to make recommendations concerning the granting of financial assistance to the States in certain circumstances.

Housing Agreement Act 1973 (Act No. 43 of 1973)—
An Act relating to financial assistance to the States for the purpose of housing.

Housing Assistance Act 1973 (Act No. 30 of 1973)—
An Act to grant financial assistance to the States by way of loans for the purpose of commencing the erection of additional houses in the financial year ending on 30 June 1973.

Income Tax Assessment Act 1973 (Act No. 51 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the law relating to income tax.

Income Tax Assessment Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 52 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the law relating to income tax.

Income Tax Assessment Act (No. 3) 1973 (Act No. 53 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the law relating to income tax in relation to review and appeals.

Income Tax (International Agreements) Act 1973 (Act No. 11 of 1973)—

Insurance Act 1973 (Act No. 76 of 1973)—
An Act relating to insurance.

Insurance (Deposits) Act 1973 (Act No. 77 of 1973)—

Interim Forces Benefits Act 1973 (Act No. 5 of 1973)—

International Labour Organisation Act 1973 (Act No. 62 of 1973)—
An Act relating to the constitution of the International Labour Organisation.

King Island Harbour Agreement Act 1973 (Act No. 91 of 1973)—
An Act relating to an agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Tasmania in respect of financial assistance for port and harbour facilities at Little Grassy Bay, King Island.

Life Insurance Act 1973 (Act No. 78 of 1973)—

Loan Act 1973 (Act No. 19 of 1973)—
An Act to authorise the raising and expending of moneys for defence purposes.

Marriage Act 1973 (Act No. 35 of 1973)—

Maternity Leave (Australian Government Employees) Act 1973 (Act No. 72 of 1973)—
An Act to make provision for maternity leave in respect of employees of the Australian Government and certain other persons, and for other purposes.

Migration Act 1973 (Act No. 16 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Migration Act 1958-1966 for the purpose of removing restrictions on the departure of Aboriginals from Australia.

National Health Act 1973 (Act No. 49 of 1973)—
An Act to amend section 9A of the National Health Act 1953-1972.

National Service Termination Act 1973 (Act No. 88 of 1973)—
An Act to terminate the obligations of persons under the National Service Act 1951-1971, and for purposes related thereto.

New South Wales Grant (Flood Mitigation) Act 1973 (Act No. 28 of 1973)—
An Act to amend section 3 of the New South Wales Grant (Flood Mitigation) Act 1971.
The Acts of the Session

Northern Territory (Administration) Act 1973 (Act No. 9 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Northern Territory (Administration) Act 1910-1972 so as to lower to eighteen years the age qualification for a candidate for election as a member of the Legislative Council for the Northern Territory of Australia, and to make certain formal amendments of that Act.

Papua New Guinea Act 1973 (Act No. 69 of 1973)—

An Act to provide for the giving of a guarantee by the Commonwealth with respect to a loan to be raised overseas by the Administration of Papua New Guinea, and for purposes connected therewith.

An Act relating to a loan to the Administration of Papua New Guinea by the Asian Development Bank.

Papua New Guinea (Staffing Assistance) Act 1973 (Act No. 70 of 1973)—
An Act relating to the provision by Australia of staffing assistance for Papua New Guinea and preservation of rights of certain persons presently employed in Papua New Guinea.

Parliamentary and Judicial Retiring Allowances Act 1973 (Act No. 47 of 1973)—
An Act relating to parliamentary and judicial retiring allowances.

Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1973 (Act No. 36 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1967-1968, and for other purposes.

Pipeline Authority Act 1973 (Act No. 42 of 1973)—
An Act to establish a Pipeline Authority.

Prices Justification Act 1973 (Act No. 37 of 1973)—
An Act to make provision for the holding of inquiries into prices charged or proposed to be charged for the supply of goods or services in Australia.

Public Service Act 1973 (Act No. 21 of 1973)—
An Act relating to recreation leave in the Public Service of the Commonwealth.

Public Service Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 71 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Public Service Act 1922-1972 as amended by the Public Service Act 1973.

Public Service Act (No. 3) 1973 (Act No. 73 of 1973)—
An Act to repeal section 549 of the Public Service Act 1922-1972, as amended by the Public Service Act 1973 and by the Public Service Act (No. 2) 1973.

Remuneration and Allowances Act 1973 (Act No. 14 of 1973)—
An Act relating to the remuneration and allowances payable to members of the Parliament, Ministers of State, Justices of the High Court, Judges of Courts created by the Parliament, Permanent Heads of Departments of the Public Service and the holders of certain offices or appointments.

Repatriation Act 1973 (Act No. 2 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Repatriation Act 1920-1972 so as to provide for increases in the rates of certain pensions payable to certain persons, and for other repatriation purposes, and to appropriate the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of certain payments resulting from those amendments.

Repatriation Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 27 of 1973)—

Repatriation (Far East Strategic Reserve) Act 1973 (Act No. 4 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Repatriation (Far East Strategic Reserve) Act 1956-1972 to make provision with respect to benefits for certain dependants.

Repatriation (Special Overseas Service) Act 1973 (Act No. 3 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Repatriation (Special Overseas Service) Act 1962-1972 to make provision with respect to benefits for certain dependants.

Sales Tax (Exemptions and Classifications) Act 1973 (Act No. 17 of 1973)—
An Act relating to exemption from sales tax of contraceptives, and of parts and accessories for the metric conversion of equipment.

Seamen's War Pensions and Allowances Act 1973 (Act No. 6 of 1973)—

Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation Act 1973 (Act No. 74 of 1973)—

Social Services Act 1973 (Act No. 1 of 1973)—
An Act relating to social services.

Social Services Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 26 of 1973)—

Social Services Act (No. 3) 1973 (Act No. 48 of 1973)—
The Acts of the Session

South Australian Grant (Lock to Kimba Pipeline) Act 1973 (Act No. 75 of 1973)—
An Act to grant financial assistance to the State of South Australia in connection with the construction of a pipeline from Lock to Kimba and of certain associated works.


States Grants (Housing) Act 1973 (Act No. 44 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the States Grants (Housing) Act 1971.

States Grants (Housing Assistance) Act 1973 (Act No. 45 of 1973)—
An Act to make advances to the States of financial assistance in connection with housing and to authorise the borrowing of certain moneys by the Commonwealth.


States Grants (Universities) Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 60 of 1973)—
An Act to grant financial assistance to the States for the purpose of assistance to students in need at universities in the year 1973.

An Act to grant financial assistance to the States in connection with the measurement and investigation of their water resources.

Stevedoring Industry Charge Act 1973 (Act No. 55 of 1973)—


Superannuation Act 1973 (Act No. 46 of 1973)—
An Act to provide for annual increases in certain superannuation pensions.

Superannuation Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 83 of 1973)—

Supply Act (No. 1) 1973–74 (Act No. 89 of 1973)—
An Act to make interim provision for the appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending on 30 June 1974.

Supply Act (No. 2) 1973–74 (Act No. 90 of 1973)—
An Act to make interim provision for the appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 1974.

Wool Industry Act 1973 (Act No. 63 of 1973)—
An Act to amend the Wool Industry Act 1972.

Wool Tax Acts (Nos. 1 to 5) 1973 (Acts Nos. 64, 65, 66, 67 and 68 of 1973)—
Acts to amend section 5 of the Wool Tax Act (No. 1) 1964, section 5 of the Wool Tax Act (No. 2) 1964, section 5 of the Wool Tax Act (No. 3) 1964, section 5 of the Wool Tax Act (No. 4) 1964, and section 5 of the Wool Tax Act (No. 5) 1964.
THE BILLS OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD)

Agricultural Tractors Bounty Bill 1973—

Atomic Energy Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Australian Capital Territory Representation (House of Representatives) Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Amended by the Senate. Returned to the House of Representatives.

Australian Citizenship Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Amended by the Senate. Returned to the House of Representatives.

Australian National Airlines Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Amended by the Senate. Returned to the House of Representatives.

Australian National University Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Commonwealth Electoral Bill (No. 2) 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Not returned from the Senate (Second reading negatived).

Commonwealth Teaching Service Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Compensation (Commonwealth Employees) Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Not returned from the Senate.

Conciliation and Arbitration Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Not returned from the Senate (Second reading negatived).

Defence (Re-establishment) Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Export Incentive Grants Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Film and Television School Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Medical Practice Clarification Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second reading negatived. (Private Member's Bill).

Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the Senate. Second Reading.

Pay-roll Tax Assessment Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Privy Council Appeals Abolition Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Privy Council (Appeals from the High Court) Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Representation Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Not returned from the Senate (Second reading negatived).

Royal Style and Titles Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Rules Publication Bill 1973—
    Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Seas and Submerged Lands Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Not returned from the Senate.

Seas and Submerged Lands (Royalty on Minerals) Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Not returned from the Senate.

Senate (Representation of Territories) Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Not returned from the Senate (Second reading negatived).

States Grants (Advanced Education) Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Amended by the Senate. Returned to the House of Representatives.

States Grants (Universities) Bill 1973—
    Passed by the House of Representatives. Amended by the Senate. Returned to the House of Representatives.
The Bills of the Session

Wine Grapes Charges Bill 1973—
  Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Wine Overseas Marketing Bill 1973—
  Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Young Couples' Home Assistance Bill 1973—
  Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second reading negatived. (Private Member's Bill).
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Tuesday, 3 April 1973

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. J. F. Cope) took the chair at 2 p.m., and read prayers.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH
Address-in-Reply: Acknowledgment by Her Majesty the Queen

Mr SPEAKER—I desire to inform the House that I have received from His Excellency the Governor-General the following communication in connection with the Address-in-Reply:

Mr Speaker,

The Address-in-Reply which you presented to me on 15th March 1973 has been communicated to Her Majesty The Queen.

It is Her Majesty's wish that I express to you and Honourable Members her warm thanks for the Loyal Message to which your Address gave expression.

PAUL HASLUCK
Governor-General

PETITIONS

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

Education: Finance

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled.
The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully sheweth:

(a) That the Australian Education Council's Report on the Survey into Educational Needs has established serious deficiencies in the State's education services.

(b) That these can be summarised as a lack of suitable classroom accommodation, teacher shortage, oversized classes, inadequate equipment and facilities.

(c) That the additional sum of one thousand four hundred and forty three million dollars is required over the next five years by the States for these needs.

(d) That without massive additional Federal finance the State School system will face disintegration and with it the Nation.

Your petitioners most humbly pray that the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled will take immediate steps to—

Ensure that finance from the Commonwealth will be given to the States for their public education services which provide schooling for 78 per cent of Australia's children.

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

by Mr Beazley.

Petition received.

12608/73—R—[38]

National Health Scheme: Treatment by Acupuncture

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

The petition of the undersigned electors of the Commonwealth of Australia respectfully sheweth that the crippling diseases of rheumatism, arthritis and a number of other distressing complaints long resistant to treatment by medical means are now being successfully treated in Australia by acupuncture.

We humbly ask the Commonwealth Government to legislate to make treatment by acupuncture a claimable item under the National Health Scheme, and further, that the Commonwealth Government set up a free Clinic of Acupuncture under Government control, and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Mulder.

Petition received.

QUESTION TIME

Mr SPEAKER—Before calling on questions without notice, I should like to state that I was informed by Hansard that great difficulty was experienced by its writers last Thursday morning in taking down questions and answers, due to interjections and rejoinders from both sides of the House. I ask all honourable members to use the necessary restraint in future, otherwise I shall be forced to introduce a 24-hour cooling down system for those who infringe.

MR BIJEDIC'S VISIT:
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr SNEEDEN—I ask the Prime Minister: Did an inter-departmental committee meet on 2nd March last to discuss security arrangements for the Yugoslav Prime Minister's visit and other matters? Was the Department of Foreign Affairs represented? Was the honourable gentleman informed of the meeting and its conclusions and, if so, when? Are reports correct which state that the meeting decided that Senator Murphy's statement on Croatian extremism should not contain information at variance with statements on the subject by the last Government? What were the results of the investigation which involved the Department of Foreign Affairs? Did it lead to a justification for Senator Murphy's raid on the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation?

Mr WHITLAM—I learnt on 16th March that a meeting had been held on 2nd March between representatives of various departments, including my Department of Foreign
Affairs, following an answer that the Attorney-General had given in the Senate the previous day that he would be making a statement about Croatian terrorism. I saw the report of the meeting of 2nd March which the ASIO representative had made on 5th March. The relevant passage of the report concerning the Department of Foreign Affairs was as follows:

The Department of Foreign Affairs made two points on the proposed statement. The first was that the statement should not be at variance with the interim reply given to Yugoslavia in response to the aide-memoire presented to Australia following the 'Bosnian Incident' in 1972. The second was that unless there were reasons to the contrary, they prefer the statement to be deferred until after the visit to Australia of the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia from the 20th-22nd March, 1973. The Attorney-General's Department accepted the first point but argued on the second point that the Attorney-General might find it necessary to table the statement at an earlier date.

I was naturally concerned at the inference that because our predecessors had lied to the Yugoslav Government we should lie to Parliament. I have taken action in this matter which is still in train.

SECONDARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES:
EXPENDITURE BY VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

Mr OLDMEADOW—My question to the Minister for Education relates to the Commonwealth secondary school libraries program. A statement concerning the payments made in 1972 was tabled in this House on Thursday last. Can the Minister provide any explanation of why the Victorian Education Department chose to spend only $500,000 of the $2,315,862 made available to it?

Mr BEAZLEY—As the honourable member said, I tabled the report on the expenditures in the first year of the triennium under the school libraries provisions of the previous Government. It is a surprising feature that the only authority which has not appropriated all the money available to it is the Victorian Government in respect of government schools. The entire amount of money available for the private schools of Victoria has been appropriated to them. It is, of course, perfectly competent for a State government to spread its money over a triennium in the purchase of books. This normally might be an intelligent action. It is commonly assumed, however, that in getting library buildings up it is wise to get them moving as quickly as possible because of the experience of building costs. It is suspected that possibly the organisation of the State did not allow it to spend the money on the actual physical building materials during the year 1972. It has been a notable feature of some of the States that, when there are grants such as the $46m over the triennium for technical education, they ask for the right to spend the money on sites, which may indicate that they do not have building plans. We want to meet whatever is reasonable about this inability, and in legislation that will be introduced this week there will be generosity about the ending date of a triennium and, if a State finally is not able to spend the money that is being granted to it, perhaps that money can be redirected to a State which can spend it. But I would say that the situation to which the honourable member referred is related to perhaps the inability of the State to mobilise building materials and labour.

AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

Mr LYNCH—The Prime Minister will recall that the Attorney-General, in the context of that Minister's raid on the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, has said that it was necessary to seal ASIO safes and filing cabinets in order to preserve documents. I ask: Who did the Attorney-General fear might remove or destroy these documents? Was there any person or persons in ASIO whom the Attorney-General mistrusted, or did the Attorney-General mistrust the Security Service itself? Why was it not possible for the Attorney-General to obtain the information that he required by normal administrative arrangements?

Mr WHITLAM—The honourable gentleman should adopt the usual procedure of asking the Attorney-General these questions himself. I have not asked the Attorney-General those questions. Suffice it to say that the document from which I have quoted was obtained by the Attorney-General by going to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation headquarters in Canberra. The Attorney-General had not been told of this meeting of 2nd March and neither had I nor any of the Ministers from whose departments officials attended that meeting.
ESTABLISHMENT OF MAXIMUM SECURITY VETERINARY LABORATORY

Mr KERIN—Is the Minister for Health aware that the Australian Veterinary Association, the Commonwealth-States Veterinary Committee, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and university veterinary scientists have long requested the establishment of a maximum security veterinary laboratory so that research, specialisation, production of vaccines and diagnosis of exotic virus diseases of livestock may be undertaken? Is he aware that these bodies do not see as adequate the provision of only a high security import quarantine station at Norfolk Island or elsewhere? Is any investigation under way on the provision of a maximum security laboratory?

Dr EVERINGHAM—I am not aware of the specific inquiries. None has come through me. I can quite understand the need for virus laboratory investigation to be available in the veterinary field, particularly in Australia. I appreciate that this need will remain after the provision of a high security animal quarantine station. A quarantine station, of itself, will not necessarily provide laboratory facilities. However, the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories does conduct an international virus reference laboratory which provides some of the facilities which no doubt would be required for a high security veterinary virus laboratory. The Commonwealth Serum Laboratory has made some representations to me for the provision of a high security virus laboratory to be conducted as an extension of the CSL’s international virus reference laboratory. I am sure that this will provide the sort of service which will be needed. If the honourable member can supply further details I shall see that they are taken into account when decisions are being reached regarding a high security virus laboratory.

AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

Mr ANTHONY—The Prime Minister will recall telling me on Thursday last that I had failed in my duty to see what were the terms and conditions under which the Director-General of Australian Security Intelligence Organisation was appointed. So that the House may know those terms and conditions on which the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General so heavily rely to establish the legality of the Attorney-General’s action in raiding ASIO, will the Prime Minister table the terms and conditions as soon as he possibly can this afternoon?

Mr WHITLAM—I shall not be tabling them this afternoon. I am seeking advice as to any reasons why they should not be tabled.

AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

Mr SNEDDEN—Does the Prime Minister accept as accurate the report which was made by Australian Security Intelligence Organisation officers to the interdepartmental committee of 2nd March, which he saw on 16th March and from which he quoted? Has he ascertained why the Department of Foreign Affairs should have put forward the view which he stated was put forward, according to the report of the ASIO officer, and why the Attorney-General’s Department should have accepted the first point? Has he ascertained why his Department did not inform him of the report? Was it his Department or somebody else who informed him on 16th March? Is it the clear conclusion from the answer that the Prime Minister has given that the Foreign Affairs Department and the Attorney-General’s Department conspired to lead the Prime Minister and the Government to a lie, to which he has referred? Will the honourable gentleman, pursuant to standing order 321, table the document to which he has referred?

Mr WHITLAM—I will not table the document from which I quoted. As the Attorney-General has already stated in the Senate, the document contains matters which concern the national security, and the advice to him is that the document should not be made public. The document does not refer merely to this meeting between departmental officials on 2nd March. If the right honourable gentleman wishes to see the document I will show it to him. I have given an assurance that I will withhold from the right honourable gentleman nothing in the security field at all. I believe the Leader of the Opposition is entitled to know anything he wants about the security of the country. I do not wish to state whether I accept the accuracy of the version given by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation representative concerning the points put by the representative of the Department of Foreign Affairs. These are matters into which I am inquiring. I do not want to express a view which will predetermine the facts in this matter.
Mr Snedden—What about the conspiracy between Attorney-Generals and Foreign Affairs?

Mr WHITLAM—The right honourable gentleman asks a question about conspiracy. It would certainly, on the face of it, indicate that there was a conspiracy between public servants to withhold the truth from the Parliament. I would regard any such action by any public servant as unpardonable. Any conspiracy between public servants—

Mr Snedden—Will you reveal the names of the members of the inter-departmental committee?

Mr WHITLAM—Any conspiracy between public servants—

Mr Snedden—Will you reveal the names?

Mr WHITLAM—Any conspiracy between public servants just compounds the offence. The names of the officials who attended the meeting do not appear in the document. I know the names. If the right honourable gentleman wants to know the names I will give them to him.

Mr Snedden—State them publicly. Do not hide behind anonymity.

Mr WHITLAM—I shall, however, not state the names of the officials because it might cast aspersions on men who deserve to have no aspersions at all cast upon them.

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS

Mr MARTIN—My question is directed to the Minister for Labour. What is the present figure of average weekly earnings? How is the figure arrived at? Does the figure include overtime and shift work payments? In view of the fact that the bulk of workers receive a wage much less than the figure of average weekly earnings, will the Minister give consideration to publishing also figures which show the average normal wage excluding overtime and shift work payments?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I thank the honourable member for the question without notice. The average weekly earnings at the moment amount to more than $100. The figures are issued each quarter. The number of people who do not receive the average weekly earnings amounts to about 64 per cent of the total employees in the Australian work force.

Mr Fulton—Shame.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I admit that it is a shame and it indicates clearly that the award rates are far too low. The reason that average weekly earnings appear to be high—and they certainly give a distorted figure of the true position—is that the salaries of everybody who is designated as an employee are included in the total figure. Therefore the salaries of Prime Ministers, Judges, Ministers, leading executives and all other highly paid people are lumped together with the earnings of those who are receiving only $51.10 a week. Then the total sum is divided by the total number of wage and salary earners in the work force which amounts to about, but not quite, 4.5 million people. It includes, of course, overtime and also the salary that the honourable member for Boothby gets as managing director of McLeay Carpets. It all adds up.

Mr Whitlam—A carpet-bagger.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Yes. And it includes all other carpet-baggers. It is a distorted figure and should never be quoted as representing the amount that the ordinary wage and salary earners get.

PROPOSED OIL REFINERY FOR SYDNEY

Mr ARMITAGE—I address my question to the Minister for Urban and Regional Development. I preface it by referring to the strong opposition he has expressed both within this Parliament and outside to proposals by the New South Wales Government to site an oil refinery for Total-Ampol at Lucas Heights and his undertakings to use any Commonwealth powers available to oppose such a project. I draw his attention also to the fact that he mentioned in the House one day last week that the same authorities in New South Wales, prior to considering Lucas Heights, considered a proposal to site the refinery at Parklea near Blacktown. Therefore I ask the Minister: Keeping in mind that Parklea is very close to major housing development around Blacktown, that it is in a draft corridor which would be open to pollution—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Will the honourable gentleman ask his question.

Mr ARMITAGE—The question is: Will the Minister give a similar undertaking to oppose the refinery being established at Parklea?

Mr UREN—it is true that I made a statement about 10 days ago in regard to opposition to an oil refinery at Lucas Heights. I gave some details, including the fact that New South Wales authorities were investigating 2 other sites one
at Parklea and one at Kurnell. I also said that the matter was before the Cabinet. Cabinet made a decision this morning. The Prime Minister later today in his Press conference will give all details of that decision.

**Mr Nixon**—What about the Parliament?

**Mr UREN**—It is not my prerogative to make a statement on Cabinet decisions before the Prime Minister makes his statement. If the Prime Minister wants to supplement my answer he may do so. A decision has been made by the Cabinet. I want to develop the Prime Minister's statement after he has made it, and I will be only too pleased to do so.

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA: LOAN FUNDS**

**Mr WHITTORN**—I address a question to the Prime Minister. Why is the present Australian Government forcing Papua New Guinea to borrow its loan funds from overseas and limiting Australia's contribution to a miserly $10m—that is, United States dollars, the currency of one of the hill-billy group? What is causing this lack of confidence by the Government in Papua New Guinea which apparently started after the Prime Minister visited that country this year? Why are the Prime Minister and the Government flying in the face of popular opinion in Australia and Papua New Guinea by forcing that country into world markets and forcing independence on it, especially when it has previously accepted help, guidance, assistance and advice from previous Australian governments?

**Mr WHITLAM**—I ask the Minister for External Territories to answer the question.

**Mr MORRISON**—Self-government and independence are really a 2-phase operation. No country can be compelled to rule another country. We in the Australian Labor Party are not casting ourselves as rulers, and we have a perfect right to insist on that position. The United Nations has laid down and has asked Australia to lay down a timetable for both self-government and independence for Papua New Guinea. The previous Government made a decision that self-government would be introduced on 1st December 1973. When the statement announcing that decision was made by my predecessor the Labor Party fully supported the proposition of the previous Government. We are now required to lay down a timetable for independence for Papua New Guinea. We are doing this in consultation with the Government of Papua New Guinea and, following this consultation, a statement will be made available to the General Assembly of the United Nations and to this House.

**EVANS DEAKIN INDUSTRIES LTD CLOSURE OF SHIPYARD**

**Mr KEOGH**—My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. I preface my question by saying that, in answer to my question in the House last Wednesday, the Minister gave assurances in regard to the immediate and long term continuity of work for Evans Deakin Industries Ltd shipyards. Has the Minister's attention been drawn to the announcement yesterday by Mr L. Knevitt that the Evans Deakin shipyard will close in August? In the event of this grave decision being irretrievable, can the Minister assure the House that this Government has done everything possible to prevent the closure occurring? In view of Mr Knevitt's announcement, will the Government give consideration to negotiating with the Queensland Government and Evans Deakin, if the company is interested, with a view to establishing a joint venture to allow the industry to continue, preferably at the proposed new and ideally suitable location of Fisherman's Island at the mouth of the Brisbane River?

**Mr CHARLES JONES**—The honourable member for Bowman, like a number of other Brisbane members, is greatly concerned at the announcement that was made yesterday by the management of Evans Deakin Industries Ltd. I do not think we can look at this question as just one issue—the decision by the management of Evans Deakin to close the yard. We must look at the whole question of shipbuilding and at who is the guilty party in this matter. In 1969 the previous Government referred to the Tariff Board the matter of granting a subsidy on shipbuilding. The Board reported to the Government in June 1971 and the Government of the day sat on the report. It did nothing until May 1972 and then its action was only as a result of moves by the then Opposition, the Australian Labor Party when it instructed me, as its spokesman on transport, to initiate an urgency debate in this place on the matter. The then Minister for Shipping and Transport came to me at 1 o'clock that day and said: 'If you do not go on with your urgency debate, I will table the Tariff Board's Report'. He said: 'I do not have time to prepare it at this stage. I cannot give the details. I cannot prepare 2 speeches.' But the Minister did prepare 2 speeches—one on my urgency debate, deploving the failure of
the Government to do something about shipbuilding and then at a quarter past eight that night—

Mr Donald Cameron—Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order. In view of the question that was asked, is it in order for the Minister to avoid the answer and to go back into history? The jobs of 1000 men are involved.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! No point of order is involved; the honourable member knows quite well that is so.

Mr CHARLES JONES—The Minister claimed that he was unable to prepare 2 speeches, but he did prepare a speech for the urgency debate on that occasion, late in May and then, at quarter past eight, after the then Government had with undue and indecent haste adjourned the Parliament at 10 minutes past 6, the Minister released a statement to the Press on the policy of the Government on shipbuilding. The Minister did not have the courage to make that statement in this place so that the entire subject could be debated at the time. As if it were not bad enough to delay the delivery of that policy on shipbuilding for a matter of 12 months, the then Government was so indecisive and unable to make up its mind about its policy on shipbuilding that the then Minister had several cracks at amending it. When I made a statement condemning the Government's decision to allow the free importation of ships from overseas, the Government had a second thought on the matter and had another go at it to try to cover up that weakness in its policy. The policy which was decided upon would have done one thing and one thing only if the then Government had been returned to power: It would have destroyed completely the shipbuilding industry in Australia. The result was that shipbuilders were afraid to carry out the necessary development and expansion of their yards. One large company intended to spend some $10m to $12m on the expansion of its yard, but it abandoned the scheme when the Tariff Board's report was brought down.

When the Labor Party took office in December last year only 2 orders were to be allocated. One was for the Santa Fe rig to which the honourable member for Bowman has referred, and the other one was for the Seacoaster vessel for the Australian National Line. If it had been left to the previous Government there would not have been another order in the offing. When my Party became the Government Evans Deakin approached the Minister for Secondary Industry and me. We readily gave an assurance that the Government would pay the 45 per cent subsidy on the Santa Fe rig. Some time later, after Mr Kneivitt had been overseas and had returned to Australia, I was approached to find out whether in the event of the rig being completed in Australia—

Mr Snedden—I take a point of order, Mr Speaker. This apologia has been going on for some time now and wasting question time. I assure the honourable gentleman that the Opposition will give him leave to make a statement immediately after question time, which would be a far better course for him to adopt.

Mr SPEAKER—There is actually no substance in the point of order, but I ask the Minister to shorten his answer as much as possible. This has been a problem which has faced us at question time for many years.

Mr CHARLES JONES—Thank you, Mr Speaker. I agree with you that we were subjected to this procedure for many years. Being a very good pupil and being attentive to the lessons the previous Government taught me, I am proposing to give the Opposition all the facts and not to hold any back as the former Ministers used to do. I was pointing out that, in connection with the Santa Fe rig, Evans Deakin approached me to see whether the Government would recapture the subsidy in the event of there not being work available on the coast when it was completed. The Government met the company's request. I informed the company that the Government would not recover the subsidy in the event of there not being work available for a reasonable time. This decision applied only to Evans Deakin. The Government realises the serious plight of employment in that yard and gave the company the assurance that it would not recapture the subsidy.

It might be interesting to point out at this stage that on Friday the Santa Fe Oil Drilling Co. advised Evans Deakin that it was prepared to sign the necessary contract, subject to certain contractual adjustments. The position is that Evans Deakin has the order to build that rig if it wants to go on with it. The Government also made a decision and letters were sent last Thursday night to every shipyard in Australia advising them that 25 per cent subsidy would be paid on 2 roll-on roll-off ships of about 12,000 gross tons for the Union
Steam Ship Co. of New Zealand if any of them liked to tender. The Government has been chasing work and making decisions in an endeavour to provide continuity of employment in the shipbuilding industry. Furthermore, shortly the Australian National Line will be calling tenders——

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I ask the Minister to shorten his answer.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I will conclude on these 2 points, Mr Speaker: Shortly the Australian National Line will be calling tenders for a replacement for the 'Tolga' and tenders will be called in the very near future for further vessels.

FIVE POWER DEFENCE ARRANGEMENTS

Mr SINCLAIR—I ask the Minister for Defence: Has the Government yet decided its continuing policy under the Five Power Defence Arrangements with Singapore and Malaysia with respect to the defence of that region? Is it a fact that towards the end of 1973 there are to be further troop withdrawals? What is the nature of those withdrawals and which Services do they involve? Is it true that after those major withdrawals about 600 personnel will be retained in the region? What will be the responsibilities of those personnel and to which services do they belong?

Mr BARNARD——The Government announced during the course of the last election campaign that it would honour the Five Power Arrangements. I think I should begin the answer from that point. Since I became the Minister for Defence I have made 3 decisions.

Mr McLeay—What are they?

Mr BARNARD—I would be very happy to give the honourable member who interjected a list of the decisions I have made—decisions on matters in relation to which the previous Government procrastinated for the past four or five years. I am talking at this time of the 3 decisions made in relation to the matter raised by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, that is, the disposition of Australian troops in this region and those who are there under the Five Power Arrangements. In line with our policy, I determined that the battalion and battery would be withdrawn when their tours of duty expired at the end of this year. They will be returned to Australia at the end of 1973 or early in 1974. I discovered that there were another 180 personnel serving in the area who would be regarded as combat troops, and they also will be returned at the same time.

I come now to the other point that has been dealt with in the House at great length by me and other honourable members, that is, the signals unit that is located in this area. When the Prime Minister and I learned of the purpose of the signals unit in Singapore I immediately issued instructions that the unit should be returned to Australia. It will be returned to Australia as soon as facilities are available to accommodate it in this country. In relation to the disposition of the remaining forces in Malaysia and Singapore, again in line with our policy it was said that these would be logistic troops and other support troops left in this area. So, as in 1973 and 1974, it could be that the numbers mentioned by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party would be correct. However, I inform the House that this matter is currently under consideration. At no time have I indicated to the Parliament what numbers will remain in the area. This is a matter for consideration by the Cabinet and a decision will be made in due course. I can assure the Deputy Leader of the Country Party that no decision will be made until such time as the countries which are parties to the Five Power Arrangements have been informed of the policy and the intention of this Government.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr COHEN—My question is directed to the Minister for Science. In view of the fact that the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and the National Standards Commission come within the ambit of his Department, has the Minister considered what measures can be taken to use these authorities to improve consumerism in Australia? Will he give consideration to inviting to Australia the well known pot stirrer Mr Ralph Nader so that we can get the best advice available in the world today on consumerism?

Mr MORRISON—A number of the organisations that come within the portfolio of the Minister for Science are very relevant to the proposition put forward by the honourable member. One of them is the Commonwealth Analyst and another, which comes within the ambit of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, is the Division of Food Research. We
have asked these and other sections of the Department to bring forward proposals on consumer standards. In the consumer protection field there are questions of price and quality but the area that is directly relevant to the Department of Science and the organisations that are responsible to the Minister for Science is that of consumer standards. We also have in mind the Standards Association of Australia and the National Association of Testing Authorities for ideas and contributions which they could make with respect to the establishment of consumer standards. This is a complicated field. I believe that there are areas in which these organisations do not have sufficient powers or sufficient teeth. These deficiencies will have to be identified and rectified. I am sure that the Government would welcome a visit by Mr Nader. Honourable members may recall that he was in Australia last year and that the present Prime Minister chaired a meeting at which Mr Nader gave an address. I would hope that we may be able to meet the request made by the honourable member.

AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

Mr HOLTEN—I address a question to the Prime Minister. Why did the Attorney-General, Senator Murphy, make his midnight raid on the Canberra office of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation?

Mr WHITLAM—Mr Speaker, I am caught by surprise by this question and ask that it be put on notice.

AMERICAN FOOD PRICES: EFFECT ON AUSTRALIA

Mr WILLIS—When the Treasurer was in the United States of America was his attention drawn to the rapidly rising food prices in that country as evidenced by the increase of 31 per cent over the last 6 months in the farm products and processed food section of the American wholesale price index? Can he inform the House whether such rapid increases in food prices in the United States in any way account for the recent increases in food prices in Australia?

Mr CREAN—There was deep concern in the United States of America at the rapidly rising price situation particularly, as has been suggested, with respect to food prices, meat standing out as the worst example. Perhaps I should say one or two things in passing. In the United States there have been some pretty good examples of consumer resistance to the situation. I should hope that more of this would begin to be evident in Australia and also that there would be a realisation that in Australia the States have far more power in these fields than they have cared to exercise.

Mr Nixon—including Labor States.

Mr CREAN—including the non-Labor States and particularly the 2 States which between them contain two-thirds of the population of Australia—Victoria and New South Wales—and which do not have Labor governments and whose governments seem to be concerned about the fate of the electors only a month or two before an election. If Mr Hamer, in particular, instead of taking action against mock auctions took action about this very real problem that is evident the public might take him a little more seriously. As the questioner has said, in some respects the prices that have been received for meat in the United States of America have had adverse effects on the price of meat in Australia although here again the easy answer is that it is all a question of the law of supply and demand. I think that every party ought to recognise, as is being recognised by the United States, that the question of rapidly rising prices seriously concerns the public and, rightly or wrongly, the public believes that the problem is remediable by government action, and most believe that that remedial action should be at the Federal level. I think that is a rather over-simplified situation. I do not think that there can be a serious grappling with that problem in Australia unless in the process there is the fullest co-operation by the States and the Commonwealth and also by the Opposition in this Parliament. I hope that those lessons may be observed. At least consumer resentment in the United States did lead to very firm action at the Presidential level to control the prices of beef, lamb and pork.

YUGOSLAV SECRET POLICE

Mr BOURCHIER—My question is directed to the Prime Minister. What information is in the possession of the Government regarding the operations of the Yugoslav secret political police known as the UDBA? Will he place before the House material which will enable it to evaluate the generally held belief that the UDBA is an organising agent of terrorism both in Yugoslavia and in other countries?
What agents of the UDBA are known to be active in Australia? Was the Yugoslav Prime Minister, Mr Bijedic, who recently visited Australia a high ranking member of the UDBA, having been in command of its operations in Bosnia and having been intimately associated with its headquarters?

Mr WHITLAM—I am not ministerially responsible for any of the matters which the honourable member mentions in his question. I gather from his question that he regards membership of the organisation he mentions as being to a person’s discredit. The Standing Orders, of course, prevent people from making discreditable allegations about heads of other governments.

I have made it plain previously that the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia came to Australia in the course of a tour through many countries of South East Asia on the way to New Zealand. There was a standing invitation for him or the person holding his position to visit Australia. The invitation was conveyed by our predecessors. When my Government was informed that the present Prime Minister of Yugoslavia was available to make a visit to Australia it was happy to confirm the invitation. As I mentioned the other day also, it would be a matter of utmost shame to this country if the President of Yugoslavia can go with complete safety to countries on each side of the North Atlantic, and the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia can visit every country he chooses in southern Asia or in Australasia except Australia.

HOUSING FOR MIGRANTS

Mr GILES—Has the Minister for Labour noticed a statement by the head of his Department, Mr Sharpe, implying a clear criticism of the South Australian Government and South Australian Housing Trust for apparently making available homes to migrants in Whyalla 10 days after their arrival, in comparison with a 12 to 16-week waiting time for unemployed South Australians from, say, Adelaide? Is the Minister aware that the Housing Trust does not discriminate in waiting time from application onwards, and would he make this position plain to the House? Will he ask his departmental head to be more moderate in his criticism of perhaps the finest housing authority in Australia?

Finally, would he care to tell the House why the head of his Department made this statement and not he himself as the Minister?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—if the honourable gentleman had taken the bother to ask me this question a few minutes ago as we passed each other in the corridor I could have told him very simply that the Permanent Head of my Department is not given to making immoderate statements and he did not make an immoderate statement on this occasion. In view of the fact that the matter has now been raised, as soon as the question time has been completed I will table the full statement made by the Permanent Head of my Department from which the honourable member who asked the question will feel that he has badly misinterpreted what the Permanent Head said. I hope that in due course the honourable member will tender a suitable apology to him.

Mr Whitlam—So that my colleague can table the statement straight away, I ask that further questions be put on the notice paper.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Mr TURNER (Bradfield)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Mr TURNER—Yes. On Friday, 30th March, the 'Sydney Morning Herald', on page 10, misreported in one particular a speech that I had made. The report said:

Mr Turner said he believed television would revive Parliament, which he described as 'a lying institution'. I did not say 'a lying institution'; I said 'a dying institution'. There is, I think, a certain difference which should be made clear. The context of my speech makes it perfectly clear. I said:

I believe that is—

That is, television—

would revive what is now a dying institution. Why is it a dying institution?

I went on to say that statements which ought to be made in the House are now being made outside the House; that statements are being made to Press conferences which are not the subject of questioning in this House; and that during the period of what I termed 'the duumvirate' fundamental changes of policy were made without debate in this place. In short, I said it in the context that Parliament was being ignored.
Mr McMAHON (Lowe)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Mr McMAHON—I claim to have been misrepresented by the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam). You, Sir, will remember that he said that there was, in effect, a specific invitation for Mr Bijedic to visit Australia last month, that is the month of March, immediately before the statement made by Senator Murphy in another place. The fact is that a general invitation was issued to the Yugoslav Government for its Prime Minister to visit Australia. It was issued by Sir John McEwen who was then Minister for Trade. It was a general invitation. There was also a very general invitation for me to visit Yugoslavia and I had not specifically accepted it. What the Prime Minister is doing is trying to create the impression that a specific invitation was given to Mr Bijedic. That is not true. He is not accurate in his facts, and I think he should go back again and check with his Department.

Mr WHITLAM (Werriwa—Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Mr WHITLAM—The right honourable member for Lowe (Mr McMahon) has misrepresented me. I believe that what I said was that there was a standing invitation by our predecessors—in the plural. I was referring to the fact that the last Deputy Prime Minister but one, Sir John McEwen. When he was a guest of the Yugoslav Government had, as is usual in these cases, extended an invitation for his counterpart, whoever he might be at the time, to visit this country.

Mr McMahon—But not Bijedic.

Mr WHITLAM—I think the record will show that I said 'the person holding that position'. Of course Mr Bijedic was not the Prime Minister at the time that Sir John McEwen was there. But the position is quite plain: When the head or deputy of a government visits another country as the guest of the government of that country the normal thing is for him to invite a reciprocal visit. That visit is made by whoever holds the position at the time of the visit. The invitation is not confined to the person holding the position at the time the invitation is extended.

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

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

Mr NIXON—I have been misrepresented by the Minister for Transport (Mr Charles Jones). It is true that last year I had a Tariff Board report to present and a statement to make to the Parliament on the same day that the honourable member for Newcastle, who was then shadow Minister for Transport, was to move for a discussion of a matter of public importance. At the time I informed the honourable member for Newcastle that I wanted to present the report and make a statement on that day. He indicated to me that he thought there would be little difficulty about it but that he would contact Gough, 'Gough' being the then Leader of the Opposition. He rang me back an hour or two later and said that he was sorry that leave would not be granted to me to present the report and to make the statement on that day.

Mr COHEN (Robertson)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Mr COHEN—Yes. In the debate on the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence last week the honourable member for Griffith (Mr Donald Cameron), in a dastardly attack, grossly misrepresented me. He said 'the honourable member for Robertson was busting his neck to ensure that we got along to the Committee the Israeli Ambassador or one of his representatives'. This is not true. It was the Egyptian editor of El-Ahram whom I was busting my neck to get along to the Committee.

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

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

Mr CHARLES JONES—Yes. The statement which was just made by the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) is a deliberate untruth.

(Honourable members interjecting.)

Mr SPEAKER—Order!

Mr CHARLES JONES—I do not intend to withdraw that remark. The facts are very
simple. At 10 minutes to one on the last day of the autumn session of last year, in May, the then Minister for Shipping and Transport telephoned me in my room and said: 'Charlie, you are moving for the discussion of a matter of public importance today on shipbuilding, shipping, dredging and docks'. There were 4 points. He said: 'I have the Tariff Board report ready to present. I cannot prepare 2 speeches for the one day.' I said: 'Okay. I can see your problem and how you want to make a statement on the Tariff Board report, but from my point of view I do not see any sense in withdrawing my urgency motion. I will check it out with Gough.' I rang him back within minutes to inform him that leave would be granted to present his Tariff Board report and make a statement, on the condition that I could follow him immediately. These are the facts. Mr Speaker.

Mr Whitlam—That is what Gough said.

Mr JONES—That is what Gough said. The only difference in the honourable member's statement is that the couple of hours that he mentioned was a couple of minutes.

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

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

Mr NIXON—Yes. Before the Prime Minister leaves the chamber I should like him to give us a ruling on what I believe to be a matter of some importance. During the answer by the Minister for Transport (Mr Charles Jones) to the question asked by the honourable member for Bowman (Mr Keogh), when I interjected the Prime Minister nodded his head in agreement with me. The point that I am making is that I believe quite firmly that the Minister for Transport, as shadow Minister for Transport as he then was, said: 'No, we want to proceed with this matter. Leave will not be granted for you to table the Tariff Board report.' Certainly it is true that the honourable member telephoned me. The conversation up to that point as narrated by the Minister for Transport was quite correct, but the difference I have shown is important because my veracity is being questioned. I said that during the debate that day on a matter of public importance I was forced to go outside the House to make a statement on the Tariff Board report. That should be recorded in the Hansard of that day.

BROKEN HILL PTY CO LTD EMPLOYER NOMINATION AT WHYALLA

Mr CLYDE CAMERON (Hindmarsh—Minister for Labour)—I lay on the table a document prepared by the Permanent Head of my Department concerning Broken Hill Pty Co. Ltd employer nomination at Whyalla—unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

MEETINGS OF COMMONWEALTH AND STATE LABOUR MINISTERS

Mr CLYDE CAMERON (Hindmarsh—Minister for Labour)—In accordance with my party's policy of tabling the records of meetings held between Commonwealth and State Ministers I table the notes of the Sixth Meeting of Commonwealth and State Labour Ministers held on Friday, 23rd February 1973, in the conference room of the Department of Labour, Century Building, 125 Swanston Street, Melbourne. I would like to add that this is the first of such reports ever to be made available to the Parliament.

RIVER MURRAY WATERS ACT

Dr CASS (Maribyrnong—Minister for the Environment and Conservation)—Pursuant to section 21 of the River Murray Waters Act 1915-1970 I present the report of the River Murray Commission for the year ended 30th June 1972, together with the Commission's financial statements and the report of the Auditor-General on those statements, statements of gaugings and diversions during the year, furnished on behalf of the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

BILLS RETURNED FROM THE SENATE

The following Bills were returned from the Senate:

Without amendment—


Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 1972-73.

Without requests—

Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 1972-73.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported:


Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 1972-73.

Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 1972-73.

COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

Motion (by Mr Daly)—by leave—agreed to:

That in accordance with the provisions of the National Library Act 1960-1967 this House elects Mr Cross to be a member of the Council of the National Library of Australia and to continue as a member for a period of 3 years from and including 7th April 1973.

AUSTRALIAN MINING INDUSTRY

Discussion of Matter of Public Importance

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

The damage done to the Australian mining industry by recent decisions and statements of the Commonwealth Government.

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

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

Mr FAIRBAIRN (Farrer) (3.4)—The last decade has seen a tremendous development in the Australian mining industry, especially in the field of discoveries of ore bodies and their development. Over the period 1960-71 exports of minerals increased sixfold to a total of $1,290m in 1971. This spectacular increase led some people to believe that development would automatically proceed irrespective of whether the mining industry was encouraged or discouraged. In fact the present Government seems to take the view that all it has to do is to milk the mining industry so as to achieve everything it wants without any thought of what our customers require.

The Government has shown itself completely ignorant of the major problems which have always been faced by miners, and appears to be well on the way towards killing the goose that laid the golden egg. In some cases decisions of the present Government—made without even the relevant Minister being present—have turned profitable projects into unprofitable projects overnight, and have made uneconomic, ore bodies which were previously economic. In other cases off-the-cuff statements by Ministers have led to chaos in the industry, as no clear set of guidelines has been produced. One miner I know told me that he has funds in hand for further exploration, but he has no intention of using them until such time as he knows what government policy is.

In fact chaos and confusion caused by recent government decisions and statements is so widespread that Australia is being openly referred to internationally as another banana republic. Ministers are shooting from the hip. They talk first and think afterwards. But they should realise that we are not operating in a sellers' market, nor do we have a monopoly of any minerals.

Let us look at some of the recent decisions and statements which have undermined the morale of the Australian mining industry. Firstly, undoubtedly the greatest shock to the industry was that caused by the 2 recent revaluations of the Australian dollar. As my colleague, the honourable member for Stirling (Mr Viner) pointed out to the House earlier this month, the iron ore companies in the Pilbara alone will lose approximately $112m in income this year as a result of the decisions of December and February—decisions which were taken without the Ministers responsible for fuel and power, industry and primary industries even being present. The loss in the value of long term contracts for all iron ore exporting companies approaches $1,000m.

There seems to be a view held in some quarters that revaluation has only affected those companies which have export contracts written in United States dollars, and they are then told it was their fault for writing them in United States dollars, instead of some other currency, presumably Australian dollars. This is nonsense. While the companies with United States dollar contracts will suffer most, every exporting company has been hit by revaluation despite the general buoyancy of metal prices internationally.

Look at recent reports of companies in this field. The recent report of Comalco stated:

The December 1972 revaluation of the Australian dollar will have a significant adverse effect on the consolidated profit in 1973. At the date of this report, it has not been possible to assess the likely effect of currency changes resulting from the devaluation of the United States dollar 13th February 1973.

And Bougainville Mining's Chairman stated:

The decision of the Australian Government on 23rd December 1972 to devalue the Australian dollar against the United States dollar will further reduce the Australian dollar proceeds of sales by Bougainville Copper although some short term protection was obtained by taking out forward cover prior to the revaluation.

One can look at the Western Mining Corporation Ltd where we find again that the results of the joint venture on Geraldton iron ore
have been seriously affected by the currency changes and the success of negotiations for an extension of the initial contract has also been jeopardised. So one finds this depressing similarity in virtually every report by every mining company that is coming out now.

What has the Minister done about this situation? He has done 3 things. First he has abused the miners. He has sneeringly called some of the finest brains in Australia hill-billies and mugs. The Government said that they should not have written their contracts in United States dollars, even though this was the only possible currency in which these long term contracts could have been written in 1964. They were told that they allowed themselves to be picked off one by one by a powerful buying cartel. This ignores the fact that all export contracts for iron ore were approved by me and the Cabinet as being in line with current export prices. And they cannot have been too bad if these companies can still operate at a profit after a loss of 21 per cent in the value of the contracts in the last 14 months.

Thirdly, they were told that they should have taken out forward exchange cover, even though this is available for only 6 months or in exceptional cases for 12 months. Any exchange clause in the contracts, of course, would have had no legal binding.

The Minister has said that he expects the Japanese to renegotiate contracts written in United States dollars. But why should they? None of our major competitors revalued in December or February. This includes India, Canada, Brazil, Liberia, Chile and Peru. What we have is a self inflicted wound. Why should the Japanese re-open our contracts when they do not do it for any other suppliers, or when they cannot re-open their steel sales contracts? The Minister has had some discussions with the Government of Brazil, the idea being, apparently, that we should form a sellers cartel so as not to underbid one another in sales. But this will never work. There are many potential suppliers, and the contracts will go to those who can supply the best quality ores at the lowest prices, all else being equal. So we can say that the Minister has done absolutely nothing to soften the blow of revaluation.

One could say a lot more on revaluation, but time is short. So let me come to the second body blow that has been struck at the Australian mining industry. Permits and licences required by miners either have not been supplied or their issuance is extremely tardy. All exploration licences in the Northern Territory will have lapsed by September 1973. None has been renewed. Companies have to work out their programs a long way ahead, and uncertainties can kill exploration. A recent export permit for a shipment of zinc from Townsville was issued only hours before the ship berthed. Perhaps one of the reasons for this and other delays is the proliferation of ministries which have a finger in the pie. Mining is meant to be under the control of a committee comprising the Ministers for the Northern Territory, Northern Development, Minerals and Energy, Aboriginal Affairs and the Environment and Conservation. To the best of my knowledge, this committee has not even met yet. Even if it does meet, it will be a case of too many cooks spoiling the broth. Meanwhile, farm-out and farm-in applications await the pleasure of the Minister, who is trying to get his sticky fingers on these areas for his socialist mining venture which he hopes to operate with the help of the Bureau of Mineral Resources and the Australian Industry Development Corporation.

Statements have been made on processing demands, some of which are totally unreal and may cause deferral of some projects. We all want to see the maximum amount of processing undertaken in Australia. But our customers also want to undertake processing, so some give and take must occur. A rigid policy on processing can lead our customers to get their ores and minerals elsewhere. All of us want to see the greatest possible share of Australian equity in mining ventures in this country. I myself said in an address to the American Chamber of Commerce in Australia in Melbourne in 1968:

The Government believes in a partnership between overseas and Australian investors where overseas capital is necessary for development. It considers that fears and misunderstandings are least where there is an Australian participation in shareholding and management and greatest where there is no Australian participation.

Unfortunately, Australians were loath to put their money into many of these highly speculative ventures. Everyone wants to be on the winner of the Melbourne Cup when he sees it go past the post, but people tend to forget that to win you have to put your money on it before the start of the race. Now Australians are being prevented from doing what we and, I believe, the present
Government would want them to do, namely, getting a greater share of our mineral resources. One of the ways of doing this is by Australians borrowing fixed interest money overseas and putting it into equity in Australian mines. But the Government's guidelines of 25 per cent of overseas borrowings being frozen makes borrowing virtually impossible. Money borrowed by an Australian overseas at 9 per cent will, of course, cost him 12 per cent.

As though the Australian miner and investor had not been sufficiently scared already, a few other Ministers have weighed in with statements calculated to scare the daylights out of anyone still enterprising enough to want to help develop a mine in Australia. Firstly, the Minister for Transport (Mr Charles Jones) tells us that up to 40 per cent of our bulk minerals must be carried in Australian bottoms in future. How and where are these bottoms to be obtained, and how much more are they going to cost to operate? Such a policy, even if desirable, must make mining more uneconomic. Then the Treasurer (Mr Crean) is out for his extra slice of the minerals cake. So-called tax anomalies are to be abolished, and we are to have a capital gains tax. No-one yet knows what rules will apply and whether tax will have to be paid on profits or paper profits from trading in mining shares. The only thing that is clear, as a member of the Melbourne Stock Exchange recently said, is that widespread apprehension about the policies of the Labor Government and their effect on business profits seems to be evident.

Let me conclude by saying that 'it's time' that the Government showed some consideration for the mining industry—an industry which has helped Australia to greatness and which supplies much employment and needed overseas funds. It is time that the Government set down the rules of the game so that miners will know where they are going. It is time that the sloppy administration of the present Government came to an end.

Mr Connor (Cunningham—Minister for Minerals and Energy) (3.17)—There is one thing of which the honourable member for Farrer (Mr Fairbairn) can be certain. It is that there is in office today a government which will take a truly national viewpoint, which will not grovel, which will not play a subordinate role, which knows just where it is going, and which above all has a policy and will put it into operation. The honourable member for Farrer, of all people in this House, should be very reluctant to criticise. I have here a manual prepared by my Department giving the terms on which off-shore drilling for oil and natural gas is carried out in 50 countries. We rank 49th among them, thanks to the honourable member for Farrer, the former Minister with responsibility in this area. The legislation which was put through during his term of office was administered in the most slovenly possibly fashion by an incompetent, irresponsible government—a so-called government of businessmen. We have heard today a jeremiad from the honourable member, who ought to be ashamed of himself.

Let me refer to the facts when I came into office, and I came in with a mandate to evaluate and secure the balanced development of Australian mineral resources for posterity. I found that even the slack, slovenly legislation, the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act of 1968, had not been properly administered by either the former Minister or the designated authorities. In certain cases I even had to threaten to cancel leases to get information to which we were entitled, information that was 3 years in arrears. Wells had been drilled and proven but no information had been given—a nice cozy arrangement in certain cases between some of the States and particular exploration companies. The honourable member for Farrer is the man who is responsible for it, and let him deny it if he can.

As to the true situation, there is no question of panes of praise coming from the honourable gentleman. Table 18 in the Treasury White Paper on Overseas Investment in Australia shows that in 1968 no less than 58 per cent of Australia's minerals were under foreign ownership or control. A reasonable and conservative extrapolation from those figures is that today the proportion is of the order of 62 per cent. We will do something about it. We will see, to begin with, that it does not get any worse. We will see also that there is a policy which is in the interests of Australia.

I found also that, so far from being a businessman's government, the former Government had not done its sums. In Japan we are dealing with one of the most numerate, sophisticated, literate and competent countries in the world, and we need to be just as well geared and just as well prepared for trade as Japan is. Instead of that, what did I find? I found
no records at all. There was no idea of business
competence on the part of the previous Gov-
ernment. No statistics were kept, beyond those
of 1968 that I have just quoted. No records
were kept of the export prices obtained. There
was no idea whether we were getting world
parity prices or somewhere at least close to
it in respect of export contracts. No research
had been done and no records kept as to what
was the denomination of currency payable
under export contracts and particularly
how many of those contracts were denomi-
nated in United States dollars. There was no
idea of the period of the contracts and no
idea as to whether there were any protection
clauses in respect of currency revaluations.
This was from a so-called businessman's gov-
ernment. Australia is the twelfth trading nation
of the world and I am ashamed that our dol-
lar, which is a good and a strong currency,
is not accepted in the bourses of the world.
Again, that is due to the then subservient gov-
ernment which was tipped ignominiously and
unceremoniously out of office.

The honourable member for Farrer also
referred to the Japanese. I think we have every
reason to ask Japan to renegotiate current con-
tracts. As a matter of fact, the advantage to the
Japanese is as much as 26 per cent, according
to the Smithsonian Institute, because of the
December and February revaluations. We
have every reason to look them in the eye.
When the contracts for iron ore exports had
to be renegotiated and Australia was asked by
Japan to curtail some of its exports, we agreed
to do so and now it is our turn to ask them.
Shame on the honourable member for Farrer
for suggesting that we should not go along to
the Japanese and ask them for a fair deal. One
cannot get better iron ore or minerals and
better certainty of supply and sanctity of con-
tracts than from Australia, irrespective of
which government is in power.

This Government found it necessary to
impose export controls. Because of our archaic
Constitution, there was no other way of
obtaining data that we needed to enable us to
become as sophisticated and well-informed as
the Japanese. They know a lot more about
our business and mineral industry than we
know about them and it is time we improved
our performance. We will do it and do it in
every field. Let us take the case of the Queens-
land coal export industry. There we have the
rape of resources. The former Government is
responsible for it. It gave export permits under
leases for open cut coal mines and said: 'You
can have them at any price you like'. Far
from this Government being criticised for its
actions, I have a letter from the President of
the Queensland Trades and Labour Council in
which he informs me that Utah Mining Aus-
tralia in particular is very glad of the new policy
which has been introduced.

I turn now to offshore oil exploration and
refer to the case of the Woodside-Burmah
company. It was necessary, under pressure
from the former Department of National
Development, for my predecessor in office to
write to Woodside-Burmah and inform the
company that it was time it made some pub-
lic statement about its recoverable reserves of
natural gas and, reluctantly it did so—very
reluctantly indeed. My predecessor also
stressed that he was afraid of the diminution
of their Australian share holdings. The manipu-
lation is still going on. I notice that, in the last
couple of days, there has been a further down-
grading of the recoverable reserves of Wood-
side-Burmah. This Government has a very
shrewd idea of the reserves of this company
and it has an equally shrewd idea of the
reserves of oil and natural gas in Bass Strait.
Even in the case of Bass Strait, the Government
has not been getting the information to which
it is entitled, such as information on drilling
cores, sections of cores and electric logs. In
many cases, weekly, monthly and quarterly
reports have not been received. We have had
to ask the companies concerned for this
information. We have had to threaten drastic
action to get them, but get them I will.

Another matter that the honourable member
for Farrer evidently forgot is that today there
is a world energy crisis. There was not one
word from the honourable member about this
matter. Australia in particular will be the
subject of the resources diplomacy of both
Japan and the United States. Those countries
have exhausted their resources of energy and
now, through the Organisation for Economic
Co-operation and Development, they are in the
process of trying to put Australia through the
wringers. But we will have a policy which we
will put into operation. It will run along these
lines: Just as every well-managed country has
an annual financial budget, so we will have an
energy budget. But we will have a proper mix
as to the various sources of energy and as to
what will be made available and what, if any,
we can export overseas. The philosophy of the
former Government was simple: If it moves,
shoot it; if it grows, cut it down; and, if it is in the ground dig it out and flog it, particularly if it is minerals, for whatever price can be obtained for it. It is time Australia grew up and took its proper place and it will, under a truly national government.

The future of the world—there is a world hydro-carbons crisis—will be determined by the possession of coal reserves. No less a person than Mr Wagner, the President of the Royal Dutch-Shell company, said 6 months ago that, within 40 to 50 years, the whole of the world's hydro-carbon resources would be exhausted. He spoke in terms of crude oil and natural gas. Then, for the future, he said the world would be dependent upon coal resources, uranium and solar energy. The previous Government did nothing in any of those fields. Its policy was rip it out and rape it and sell it for the best price that could be obtained for it. But as for achieving anything constructive, the former Government was the most incompetent government that has ever held office in Australia.

Our policy on exports is clear; it is a policy of benevolent surveillance. The policy is working well. All applications as and when received are processed and dealt with immediately. There is no reason for complaint. The honourable member for Farrer rushed to the defence of quite a number of his friends who are leaders in the mining world. Some of them are very estimable gentlemen but, in many cases, they are completely unsophisticated. I do not want to betray confidences, but I shudder to think what is the position of some of these major firms at present because they did not have the nous—and nous is the word—to heed warnings which were there for all to read and to hear. I can only repeat my answer to the honourable gentleman's question of last week. It is a simple answer. Since 1958 it has been well-known that the United States dollar was on the downgrade and it has been progressively on the downgrade ever since. Today—I will say this for the Japanese—neither the Japanese nor anyone else in the world knows just where the United States dollar will finish. For that reason, it is difficult to do better than to negotiate short term contracts or to ask for contracts to be renegotiated and relief obtained on that basis. For the future, there will be firm government. There will be firm dealing and we will be respected for it. If one were to ask some of the governments of the world today what they thought of our predecessor, it would be found that they held them in contempt. The previous Government was weak, slovenly and incompetent. There could not have been a more unbusinesslike administration in world history than the previous Government.

In conclusion, I should like to make another point. In the future there will be no giveaways of kingdoms, empires or principalities in regard to off-shore mining. We have a mess to clean up and again, it is a mess of the honourable member's making because it was he who made that celebrated deal when the previous Government, which originally favoured the particular system under which Australia would have received some 40 per cent of the take from proven petroleum and natural gas areas, and sold Australia's birthright for a mess of pottage. The honourable member for Farrer actually increased the royalty payments from 10 per cent to $1 1/2 per cent in return for abandonment of the gravitcular system. That was a fair example of a businessman's administration. We reject this discussion of a matter of public importance with contempt—a contempt it deserves. There will be other speakers who will deal with other aspects of what the honourable member for Farrer had to say, particularly with regard to exchange revaluation.

Mr GARLAND (Curtin) (3.30)—The Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor), as is his wont, indulged in a good deal of abuse in order to cover up the policies—or lack of them—of his Government. I read in the 'Nation Review' the other day a description of the Minister. It said that he was a rigid, doctrinaire, class warfare man. That is a left wing journal; so I suppose one must accept the truth of its assertions. I woud say, from what the Minister has just told us, that that somewhat rude statement has been borne out. In his remarks he was all over the place but, as I said, typically abusive. He chided my colleague, the honourable member for Farrer (Mr Fairbairn), for not mentioning the energy crisis. That is something we naturally accept. It is a world-wide fact. The question is how this Minister and this Government deal with it.

The subject of this discussion of a matter of public importance is the damage done to the Australian mining industry by recent decisions and statements of the Commonwealth...
Government'. The Opposition says that that damage is evident. If the Government continues on its present course, its dealing, on behalf of Australia, with the energy crisis and the resources we have will not be in Australia's interest or in the interests of anybody else. The Minister has shown himself to be doctrinaire, rigid and I would add narrow. For instance, he has been fond of chiding Opposition speakers and mining representatives for stating that it was necessary to draw up certain contracts in United States dollars, particularly in the middle of the last decade. He chided the former Government for not having a currency that was big enough to stand on its own in the world scene. This is an international financial matter. It is not one with which any particular government can deal. But in the same breath he told us that we ought to have such a currency because Australia is the twelfth largest trading nation in the world. Insofar as any government is able to take the credit, surely the two go hand in hand.

Let me answer the assertion quickly because I do not have much time. It was essential and fundamental for these companies to draw their contracts in United States dollars because they were, in the main, financed by the United States banks which have a natural nationalistic tendency to express contracts in their own currency. They were drawn up at a time when there was a buyers' market in iron ore—there still is—and the Japanese demanded it. There was no shortage of iron ore. The fact remains that if the contracts had not been negotiated in United States dollars there would have been no contracts and there would not have been a single project. The important thing to do in this matter is to point out that the Government is not merely relying on the advantage of hindsight in making such assertions; it is making a deliberate political ploy. It must rest on the basis of this assertion because otherwise the Government would be to blame. In spite of all the facts, honourable members opposite will go on making this assertion. In the result this an admission of how weak their case is.

The mining industry in Australia has been the most successful industry in the Australian economy in recent times and has given Australians the opportunity to obtain one of the highest standards of living in the world. The mining of years ago and the more recent ventures have provided a national wealth which, together with that provided by the other important sectors—rural and manufacturing production—has ensured a standard of living that in economic terms is among the highest in the world. In the last few months this Government has inflicted severe structural damage on the mining industry. While the Government is in a position to lessen that structural damage, it has failed to do so. To reasonable observers there must be a strong suspicion that Labor antagonism towards the mining companies has played a large part in the damage that has been done. A number of Ministers and Government supporters have expressed over a period of years a phobia on foreign ownership in the industry, a phobia on the scale of production, a phobia on the profits made, irrespective of the high capital investment, and a phobia on the level of royalties paid. It amounts to a phobia on the very existence of the mining companies.

The Labor Party seems to be blind to the benefits to Australia of these industries, particularly the new ones. The Government desires to ignore the great risk which was taken by the companies at the time of their establishment and the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars—mostly borrowed money—on new ports, new towns, new railway lines and all the superstructure necessary in remote regions. If these projects had failed the Commonwealth would have lost nothing, but when they made profits the Commonwealth received about half of them in taxation and the States received royalties. They provided then and provide today a decentralised industry, employment opportunities and significant export income which changed our balance of payments from an unfavourable to a favourable balance.

These were tremendously important industries to our national wealth. They were successful. They operated without protection and with great economies of scale. The industries are capital intensive. Such huge capital could not have been obtained within Australia. They have high productivity and growth. It is by no means clear that Australia is better served by not allowing these industries to run ahead unfettered. So many doubts have been expressed by Ministers and others as to the efficiency of Australian manufacturing and rural industries that it seems incredible that this Government can accept and encourage such structural damage to our mining industry. It is important to realise that the newer mining ventures were contracted and financed on a long term development with consequent
stability for the communities created and employment. It was believed that the days were gone when future mining ghost towns were acceptable. Former governments encouraged the structure of these industries, which borrowed long term on the basis of obtaining initial contracts of such magnitude that the loans raised for the building of the structural assets would be repaid and an adequate return on the capital investment achieved to attract investors who would not otherwise have made their funds and expertise available.

This Government has changed all that by a deliberate revaluation and by its decision not to change the relationship of the Australian dollar to the American dollar when it was devalued. It has thus allowed a loss of revenue of 20 per cent to occur within 6 weeks. The magnitude of that amount is such that it has to be reckoned in hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue to those companies, with offsetting costs of a little over 10 per cent. It was only after the second of these currency jolts that the Government made any move to approach the Japanese Government to endeavour to soften the blow. When considering the loss sustained as a result of our currency change we must look to the relative change not of our trading partners, as referred to in the statement issued by the Treasurer (Mr Crean) on 14th February, but of our competitors—in this case Canada and Brazil which both devalued with the United States dollar. At the time the Americans devalued there was a last minute chance for the Government to ask the Japanese Government, through its steel industry, to soften the blow on Australia’s iron ore companies since it would not have been in the interests of Japan for Australia to have devalued. There is no sign that the Government did so. Likewise, in other areas and types of mining the Government has neglected giving assistance and provided no leadership.

Surely the Government has a responsibility to make changes slowly where an industry has been encouraged by governments, must abide by the rules laid down and has been forced to take long term positions. This industry offers a great future and support for Australia. Yet it is one which the Government is prepared to damage structurally. One does not have to read very far to note many Labor expressions of anger towards the mining companies and the implication that it does not matter if they are hurt because they are big business, even though it means a loss to Australia and all Australians now and in the future.

Mr KEATING (Blaxland) (3.40)—The matter of public importance raised by the Opposition does not warrant debate, much less any serious consideration, particularly as it was raised by the honourable member for Farrer (Mr Fairbairn) who, as the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor) said, would be the man in this Parliament least able to talk on this question. Wherever one looks at the record of the honourable member for Farrer it is clear that he has held the national Government and the national Parliament to scorn and to shame. I witnessed here the demise of Prime Minister Gorton, the only Liberal Prime Minister ever to try to curb the inflow of foreign funds and foreign domination of our industries. He was wrecked by people like the honourable member for Farrer who stood up as a States’ righter and did everything in his power—and was successful—to delay the passage of the Territorial Sea and Continental Shelf Bill which gave the Government sovereignty over the offshore wealth of Australia. He did all this under the guise of States’ rights. We were not able, when discussing the limits of the territorial sea and continental shelf with the Government of Indonesia, to say where those limits were because of this man, the former Minister for National Development.

The Minister for Minerals and Energy referred also to the deal concocted by the honourable member for Farrer when he was a Minister in relation to the royalties for oil and natural gas, and to his departure from the gratricular system by which the Commonwealth gave up four-ninths of the area to be explored in return for an increase of 1½ per cent in royalties—a fiddling amount in return for 40 per cent of what was found. The New Zealand Labor Government only 2 weeks ago introduced legislation which will allow it to take 50 per cent of what is found in oil and gas exploration off the New Zealand coast. Indonesia takes 60 per cent. Yet this hill-billy was prepared to let the Commonwealth of Australia get a 1½ per cent increase in royalty in exchange for the loss of four-ninths of the area to be explored. There was no auction of leases. The auction of oil and gas leases was...
never heard of here. The Canadian Government had practised it for 15 years and yet the previous Government had never heard of it. It was a case of come and get it and the more that came the happier the previous Government was.

Wherever one looks in the mining or extractive industries in which the previous Government was involved, and particularly in which the honourable member for Farrer was involved, one finds in relation to currency changes that the Government bungled the issue all the way through. In 1965 when sterling was devalued we lost a fortune in our reserves which were held in sterling, although we had years of notice that sterling was in trouble. The contracts on which the honourable member for Farrer said losses were sustained as a result of revaluation were written when he was the Minister and the last Government was in office. This talk about it being a buyers' market is so much bunkum. It is a myth. When the former Minister for Industrial Development in Western Australia, Sir Charles Court, tried to put up the ruse that it was a buyers' market and we had to comply with the letter of the law in contracts and the wishes of the purchasers, Mr Lang Hancock, the iron ore entrepreneur from Western Australia, said at the time that Hamersley Holdings Pty Ltd, Mount Goldsworthy Pty Ltd and Mount Newman, the 3 major mines in Western Australia, were negotiating that it was certainly a sellers market and we could have insisted on contract terms which were more favourable to Australia.

In the 6 years from 1965 to 1971 $1,200m worth of minerals was exported to Japan. Some of the contracts will run until 1992 and yet it was not seen fit to write into the contracts any variation clause in respect of currency rates. There was no attempt to set up an Australian dollar facility in Japan so we could be paid under these contracts in Australian dollars. What better currency could be paid to a company operating in Australia with Australian products than Australian dollars? But not one attempt was made in all those years in which this trade was growing to set up a dollar facility in Japan. We would have preferred, perhaps, to be paid for some of these contracts in yen. We purchase a lot of manufactured goods from Japan and we could have repaid them in yen or in Deutschemarks or in any currency other than the United States dollar which was in trouble as far back as 1961 when President John Kennedy was worried about the trading problems of the United States and the state of the dollar.

I would like to quote from a chapter of a book entitled 'Death of the Dollar' written by William F. Rickenbacker in 1968, because it sums up the problem with the United States dollar with which this Government is faced and which the previous Government never recognised. The book reads:

The problem, as seen from Washington, is that foreign bankers are holding such a large total of claims against the U.S. that if they presented them all at once we would be unable to pay them off, as we have promised to pay them off, in gold.

We are talking about the United States. It continues:

This would involve the U.S. in a repudiation of a series of promises that have formed the basis of the monetary systems of half the nations of the world.

As foreigners see it, the problem is that they hold 'assets' that are perhaps only half-assets: a promise is, after all, no better than the actual probability of its being made good. If it is perfectly clear that the U.S. cannot honor all of the promises it has outstanding, then how good is A's claim or B's claim against the U.S.? Yet A and B and many others have deposited those claims in their own official banking systems, treated them as assets, counted them as financial reserves, and then in turn issued their own promises to their own citizens—'backed' by the questionable promise of the U.S.1 America's international insolvency places the internal solvency of many foreign countries in question.

I seek leave to incorporate in Hansard a table from this book showing the gold stock from 1941 to 1967 in the United States to back the United States dollar. 

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

(The document read as follows)—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Gold stock ($ billions)</th>
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<td>1941 (Dec.)</td>
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<td>1967 (Feb.)</td>
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Mr KEATING—The table shows that in 1941 the gold reserves in the United States totalled $22.8 billion and that they declined to $13.1 billion in 1967. Rickenbacker said:

No statistician could ask for a cleaner trend line. Simply laying a pencil along the plotted numbers, you can foresee that the United States will be devoid of gold within twenty years.

But the end came sooner than they believed it would. He went on to say:

The accelerated accumulation of dollar claims in their hands—

That is, bankers—

will lead much sooner to the show down over the ability of the United States to meet its obligations.

That was written in 1968 but it was well known long before that. Yet the previous Government never worried about the other losses to this country.

Mr Connor—Protecting their powerful friends.

Mr KEATING—that is right. It never worried about the other losses. Our national shipping freight bill is greater than the income generated by the export of wheat, our second largest export. The miserable royalties we received in Western Australia last year are shown in the Treasury White Paper on foreign investment which was prepared by the last Government in 1972. It showed that in Western Australia our royalties from the export of $480m worth of produce was a miserable $22m. We can look at the contract commodity prices and see where we are flogging our iron ore at well below world parity prices and the formation of cost companies and all sorts of tax minimisation schemes.

The Commissioner of Taxation said in his report to the Committee on Overseas Investment in Australia that it is almost impossible now to assess multi-national corporations for tax because the profit shifting devices are so sophisticated that they cannot levy tax upon them. The previous Government never did anything to try to generate income from the sources yet now as the Opposition it talks about the money lost through a revaluation of the Australian dollar.

Whom is it protecting? It is protecting companies that are basically foreign dominated and I will give the House some details of them. For instance, in Hamersley Holdings Pty Limited 54 per cent of the shares are held by Conzinc Riotinto of Australia Ltd and 34 per cent are held by the Kaiser Steel Corporation of the United States. In the Mount Golds-worthy mines Consolidated Goldfields Australia Ltd holds 33 per cent, the Cyprus Mines Corporation holds 33 per cent and Utah Development Co. holds 33 per cent. At Mount Newman the Dampier Mining Co. Ltd holds 30 per cent of the shareholding and Pilbara Iron Ltd holds 30 per cent. All of them are foreign companies. This situation could have been avoided had the previous Government insisted on investment priorities whereby Australian funds would be diverted into extractive industries in Australia. We could have had Australian management insisting on payment in Australian dollars and none of the problems which we have faced with currency realignments would have taken place.

The previous Government had no record in relation to changes in currency. The Leader of the Country Party and the then Leader of the Liberal Party wrangled for days over the previous revaluation of 10 per cent, and the decisions of the then Treasurer and the Treasury were overlooked. The only consideration was that the Country Party was getting funds for its election campaign from its mates in the mining industry who had to be protected. The fact that Australian industries were being purchased at rock bottom prices on the stock exchange by a massive capital inflow never came into it. The fact that we had a rate of inflation of about 8 per cent which had to be considered as a result of this foreign investment never came into it either. But when this Government made a decision to revalue the Australian dollar and stop the purchase of our industries at basement prices we get all the whingeing in the world.

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

Mr HALLETT (Canning) (3.50)—When such an important question as this is being debated in the House one cannot but be amazed at the lack of information coming from the Government. The Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor) said, during the course of his remarks, that the Government has a policy and will put it into operation. If what we have heard this afternoon is an example of the operation all I can say is 'Pity Australia'. If the Government has a policy let it announce it. Since the Government came to power great uncertainty has existed with respect to tremendous projects in Australia. People are uncertain about the prospects of
future projects. I am expressing not only my own uncertainty but also the doubts of Australian businessmen and persons abroad. Where are we going with this Government? I am concerned particularly with the mining industry and especially with statements that have been made and decisions that have been taken because these put all future operations in jeopardy.

It is history that over the years Australia's primary and secondary industries have been developed by Australians, by private enterprise and by risk capital. Men of energy and enterprise have established primary industries and mining industries. They have created the situation in which Australia today has a credit balance of payments, as I mentioned in this House recently. The work of these people has not been undertaken lightly. Much has been done. The honourable member for Blaxland (Mr Keating) claimed that Lang Hancock is reported to have said that at present it is a seller's market.

Mr Keating—He did.

Mr HALLETT—I suggest that the honourable member talk or write to Lang Hancock informing him of what he is alleged to have said. The honourable member will soon find out what Lang Hancock thinks of his Government and the present situation. Lang Hancock knows the current situation in Australia and knows the position with respect to Brazil and what other nations have done following the revaluation of Australian currency and the devaluation of the American dollar. What has Japan done in relation to Brazil? Japan is spending hundreds of millions of dollars in Brazil because the situation there is far more attractive than is the current Australian position. Much has been said by people in the mining industry—people who do the work, who know the situation and who make the contracts. They know far more than do the back benchers of this Parliament. On 20th February 1973 the Australian Mining Industry Council issued a Press statement in which it made the following comment:

No further iron ore projects in the Pilbara would be developed at current $A prices.

The people associated with this Council know what is involved in all these matters, but what is the Government's policy? We want to know whether the Government has a policy related to what the mining people are saying because big projects are available and waiting to get off the ground in Australia. The people associated with these projects are in the wilderness at the moment because they do not know what they can do.

It has been suggested that when the contracts relating to Western Australian minerals were written they should have been written in Australian dollars. It is unbelievable that members of this place should make such a suggestion. The magnitude of these contracts was such that they had to be written not in a relevant currency but in a neutral currency. I ask honourable members to consider these contracts that were written between Australia and Japan. The only currencies in which they could have been written at the time were United States dollars or sterling. It was most unlikely that they would be written in sterling. Had they been, the situation would be worse than it is. However they were written in United States dollars for a number of reasons. The magnitude of these contracts obviously is not known to the honourable member for Blaxland. Apparently he has not studied the whole situation. Much of the money used in the development of these particular resources was American money and obviously the people supplying the finance wanted the payments in United States dollars.

The States have a lot to say about the development of resources within the States. I have not heard much, if anything, from the Government about the States' responsibilities. Is this to be another instance where the Commonwealth Government will, through its export powers, seek complete control of contracts for minerals within a State without reference to the State government? I do not know, but it is an interesting aspect. The 2 decisions taken by the Government to revalue in respect of United States currency have put Australian mining industries in jeopardy. I do not know, nor does anybody, exactly what will happen with future projects. For the information of the Government I refer again to the very big contracts between Australia and Japan. Naturally the method of financing—the sort of currency—would be discussed. One of the major matters would relate to the use of a neutral currency. Could it be expected that Australia, with only 13 million people, would have an acceptable currency in this situation? Australia and Japan were making the contracts and they would
need to be divorced completely from buyer-seller influences if we were to secure satisfactory contracts. I want to hear what is the Government’s policy, if it has one, because it has not spelt it out this afternoon.

Mr Keating—The soft touch is over.

Mr HALLETT—Let us hear what is the soft touch. Let us have the Government’s policy in blueprint form. I am sure that the people involved are waiting for this information. I know, as do most honourable members, that the mining interests have advised the Minister for Minerals and Energy of their position. I am not aware whether the Minister has advised the mining companies of the Government’s position. If he has, I should like him to tell the House. Has he informed the industries concerned in detail of the Government’s policy? I suggest that if he can manage it, it would be appropriate for him to make a ministerial statement so that Australia and the world will know precisely where we are going with these particular projects. Nickel is an important mineral for Australia. I understand that Canada supplies about two-thirds of the nickel requirements of the free world. In these circumstances, who would control the price of nickel? I leave it to the House to make the decision. The Canadian dollar has floated down with the United States dollar so this is a situation that confronts the Australian nickel industry. The Minister knows the situation and he knows the possibilities of developing Australia’s nickel resources in future. These matters are important because so much is involved—men, money, homes and towns. These aspects are all involved in the future of the mining industries of Australia.

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

Mr CREAN (Melbourne Ports—Treasurer) (4.0)—I should like to read out again the wording of the matter of public importance that has been raised today because I think that anyone listening would wonder what the debate was about. It reads:

The damage done to the Australian mining industry by recent decisions and statements of the Commonwealth Government.

I agree with the honourable member for Canning (Mr Hallett) that perhaps it is unbelievable that when these mining contracts were written 10 or more years ago they should have been written in terms other than American dollars. However, what I find unbelievable is that they should have been written for such large quantities and forward for such lengths of time without any reference whatever to variations in the exchange rate from the time at which they were written.

What are we talking about? We are talking about the transfer of Australian assets and resources, basically to Japan. The difficulty is not that there is anything wrong with the quantities that are being sold; what is wrong is the price at which they are being exchanged. Almost half of the speech of the former Minister who led this debate was taken up with references to changes in the currency. There were some changes in the currency in his time, but they did not go far enough. Early in December last year we had to complete the job that the previous Government should have been courageous enough to assume. What happened subsequently in February was a decision not of the Australian Government but of the United States Government.

The effects of the revaluation by Australia, the devaluation by the United States and also the devaluation, if you like, of our currency in relation to what has happened to the yen, have accumulated into the problem that is causing some concern now to the mining industry in Western Australia. My colleague the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor) already has received numerous representations from the interests affected. Some of those affected have gone to Japan to try to renegotiate the terms. The Minister himself is prepared to use his good offices when the time arrives to do something about it. But simply to bleat, as did the former Minister and the 2 other honourable members opposite who have taken part in this very feeble debate from their side up to now, and to accept no responsibility for what was slowly happening in the past seems to me to indicate just how much the previous Government had vacated its responsibilities as a government.

As my colleague the Minister for Minerals and Energy has indicated, we are not going to allow Australian resources to be sold off cheaply. If anything confirms the wisdom of what this Government did on 23rd December last it is the subsequent events that took place in Europe in the first month or two in 1973. If honourable members opposite want to compare our currency and circumstances with those of Brazil, they are welcome to do so.
The former Minister who led this debate for the Opposition said that Australia abroad had the reputation of a banana republic. Normally he is not much given to making extravagant statements like that, but I suggest that it is an absurd statement. I have just returned from the United States and I found there ready acceptance of what the new Australian Government has done in recent months and a readiness also to accept that we are entitled to protect our natural heritage against the ravages of exchange fluctuations and so on.

If anything is confirmed by the fall in the value of the dollar in recent times—and if one likes to look at comparisons with the sort of countries with which one ought to be making comparisons one sees that Australia, alongside most other countries, has now revalued roughly 21 per cent against the American dollar—it is that we have been selling off our heritage cheaply. We have allowed foreign capital, particularly American capital, to acquire our assets cheaply. That is the situation which we have endeavoured to bring to a head. To talk now about the losses that have accumulated out of the stupidity of quoting, and continuing to quote, transactions between Australia and Japan in terms of American dollars, to beat at the losses of some hundreds of millions of dollars and to ignore what must have been the losses of thousands of millions of dollars over the years because the prices were never right in the first place simply shows the unreality of the attack and, I think, confirms the reason why honourable members opposite are now in opposition and we are in government.

What is at stake here is the development of Australia's natural resources and to use the term 'banana republic', as the former Minister did, is simply to show that in the 1970s, in what is supposed to be the decade of development, honourable members opposite are still living in the age of colonial exploitation, as far as their attitudes are concerned. Fortunately, there are no banana republics left and this is one of the realities which the United States, in particular, has to realise in the years ahead. The United States will not be able to exploit the natural resources of other countries with the same ease in the future as it did in the past. It faces very critical problems internationally with its own economic stability. The United States has serious problems and they affect honourable members who represent the Australian Country Party.

No longer will the United States be able to obtain its food cheaply from countries like Australia because other parts of the world are demanding the same kinds of standards in the future as the United States has been able to command in the past.

Above all, the very critical problem facing the United States is a shortage of energy, and Australia is one of the countries fortunately placed at the moment with respect to natural gas. The Minister for Minerals and Energy, who is sitting at the table, is one who is not prepared to sell off these resources cheaply. He acknowledges the need for international trade but he acknowledges the need for international trade on fair terms. The Opposition's complaint today is that over a considerable number of years now Australia has been undertaking international trade on unfavourable terms. It took the currency revaluation to bring that matter to an economic reality. We acknowledge it. It is something that we inherited, and it is something that we intend to change.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Drury)—The discussion is concluded.

CITIES COMMISSION BILL 1973

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

Second Reading

Mr UREN (Reid — Minister for Urban and Regional Development) (4.10) — I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to change the name and composition of the National Urban and Regional Development Authority. We propose to change the name of the Authority to the 'Cities Commission'. Since coming to office the Government has established the Department of Urban and Regional Development. It is important that the Authority's name be clearly identified as separate from the name of the Department. It is also important that we have an authority whose name is symbolic of one of the great themes of this Government's program—cities, both old and new. I should mention at the outset that the Bill will require amendment as a result of the passage of the Remuneration and Allowances Bill 1973 and this will be done in the Committee stage.

We propose in this Bill to change the composition of the Authority so that instead of one Commissioner there will be in the Cities
Commission a full-time Chairman of Commissioners, and 4 part-time commissioners made up as follows: Firstly, the Secretary of the Department of Urban and Regional Development; and secondly, 3 other members. In selecting the part-time members we would pay special attention to the representation of State interests and involvement.

There are several reasons for changing the composition of the Authority. Firstly, where there is a shared responsibility under the Act, the Commissioner is given greater protection and greater independence from external pressures. Secondly, the Cities Commission will be a bridge between the Commonwealth and the States. Co-operation will be encouraged with participation of the States on the Commission. It is the objective of the Cities Commission and my Department to make federalism work. Federalism is a partnership in a spirit of mutual co-operation at all levels of government. Thirdly, the new structure of the Cities Commission will provide an opportunity for a greater contribution from a wider range of interests.

The reason for having the Secretary of the Department of Urban and Regional Development on the Commission is to ensure a degree of consistency in policy implementation between the Department and the Commission. In the evolution of our urban and regional development policies, it is vital to provide a link between these 2 bodies in my portfolio. The Authority that was set up by the previous Government did not have the capacity, of itself, to solve the problems of our cities. These problems involve moving across a whole range of inter-connected issues. They are not just physical planning problems. Rather, they concern the allocation of resources in urban and regional areas, the co-ordination of investment in urban and regional facilities and a complex web of social relationships. The previous Authority was unable alone to deal with these problems. Accordingly, honourable members will recall that in October of last year I moved the following amendment on the National Urban and Regional Development Authority Bill:

the Bill be withdrawn and re-drafted because in its present form, it creates a mere investigating and advisory body which will have no authority:

(a) to cope with the problems of urban and regional development;

(b) to deal with the continuing growth of capital cities and regional centres and to integrate plans for transportation and land use;

(c) to co-ordinate the allocation of resources which affect urban and regional development; and,

(d) to implement positive policies to create new forms of urban living to overcome the chaos of our cities, particularly Sydney and Melbourne.

We all know that the chaos in Sydney and Melbourne determined the result of the last election, and that is why we are now bringing forward this legislation to amend the National Urban and Regional Development Authority Act and why we set up the new Department of Urban and Regional Development.

The previous Authority merely advised the Minister. Under this Government, the Cities Commission's role will be greatly strengthened through its working partnership with the Department of Urban and Regional Development. Under this Government's comprehensive urban and regional policies, there will be several roles for the Cities Commission. Firstly, the Cities Commission will conduct studies of regional areas. These studies will be undertaken for a variety of reasons. Some studies will be assessing regions as potential growth centres capable of rapid population growth. Some will be considering strategies for development which may be already taking place. Others will be assessments of proposals for financial support put to the Australian Government. And some may merely be collecting information about particular regions. At present, the Authority is conducting studies in all States. Some of these studies are of possible growth areas and I am pleased to say that some States have announced their intention to introduce land price stabilisation legislation to apply to the particular areas.

For example, we are studying an area 17 miles to 42 miles north of Perth where the Western Australian Government has imposed price stabilisation. The South Australian Government has already introduced price stabilisation legislation for its new city area at Monarto. The New South Wales Government is introducing legislation to stabilise prices in the areas of Bathurst-Orange, Gosford-Wyong and Menai-Holsworthy-Campbelltown-Camden.

We believe that soon the Victorian Government will introduce price stabilisation legislation, and we are having discussions with the Queensland Government to see whether that State also will co-operate in price stabilisation legislation. I cannot over-emphasise the importance of land price stabilisation in areas being studied as possible growth centres. Although
the carrying out of a study does not—I stress the word 'not'—imply a commitment by the Australian Government to support the area as a growth centre, it can lead to speculation. The activities of speculators could result in defeating policies for the support of the particular growth centre.

Secondly, the Cities Commission will also play a leading role in the establishment of new cities and assisting in their early stages of development. For example, the National Urban and Regional Development Authority is already playing a vital part in the establishment of the new city at Albury-Wodonga. Thirdly, the new Commission will act as a professional consultant to the Department of Urban and Regional Development in physical planning exercises. In this capacity it will advise the Department on: (a) the development of national urban programs; and (b) measures necessary to meet the problems of existing cities. Fourthly, the Commission will also be available to consult with and provide advice and information to State governments, semi-local and local government bodies and regional organisations.

In the speech I referred to earlier, I claimed that under this Government the National Urban and Regional Development Authority would wither on the vine. It should be clear now that, as the Cities Commission, the Authority will be playing a more active and useful role than that envisaged for it by the previous Government. With the establishment of the new Department of Urban and Regional Development, I have found that the National Urban and Regional Development Authority can play a role in the physical planning fields complementary to the work of my Department. As the Cities Commission, it will be a physical partner of my Department. The National Urban and Regional Development Authority by itself could not possibly have coped with the problems of the cities. However, in conjunction with the new Department, it has a more enterprising and constructive role. In this role, it will be assisted by the many and varied skills of planning, engineering and other consultants. The Authority has already briefed a number of consultants to assist it in carrying out the studies I have already mentioned. In my earlier speech on the National Urban and Regional Development Authority Bill, honourable members may recall that I said:

The Government must approach decentralisation and regional development in an integrated way. A department which can be involved in national planning and the allocation of national resources is essential. The National Urban and Regional Development Authority proposed by the Prime Minister will not have this kind of support in Cabinet to ensure that the country's resources are really joined to achieve the stated goals. However, authorities with comprehensive power would be highly appropriate for the planning and integrated development of each individual site chosen for selective decentralisation. They will be able to ensure the widest use of the natural resources present and would be accountable for the presentation of environmental impact statements on the departments. However, behind them they will require national planning to ensure that employment, houses, recreational and cultural facilities, transport and other key factors are provided. Only government departments can do this. All that the authorities will be able to do is to design the locations on the ground and ensure that by design, these cities are livable ones of the highest environmental quality.

This Government has now set up a department which not only has a voice in Cabinet but which also is a major policy determining part of this Government. The department being set up is designed to cope with the problems of urban and regional development. It is designed to develop positive policies to create new forms of urban living in order to overcome the chaos in our cities. It is designed to co-ordinate the allocation of resources which affect urban and regional development. It is designed to assist and cooperate with the States and local government bodies. It will not duplicate the Cities Commission's skills in physical planning fields. But it will work closely with the Cities Commission.

It is important to realise that at the Australian Government level, a policy on urban and regional development is not just a question of physical planning. This Government, unlike the previous Government, recognises that the problems of the cities will not be solved until the expenditures which affect urban and regional development can be co-ordinated. We can no longer afford to finance an extensive freeway system through inner city areas without regard to the social and economic consequences of building that system. We can no longer afford to tolerate without serious questioning the long and costly journeys to work from outer suburbs to central cities. We can no longer afford to permit large Government offices to be built in the central cities without studying the consequences of further over-centralisation of those cities. We can no longer afford to encourage commercial buildings to be sited in central business areas of cities without examining the
consequences of transport loads and the lessening of opportunity for decentralised employment. We can no longer afford to spend large sums on public transport without making an attempt to encourage a more balanced load in the system. We can no longer afford to finance large housing estates without due regard to obtaining a proper social mix and providing access to work and recreation opportunities.

These are just a few examples of how expenditures which affect urban and regional development must be co-ordinated. I said earlier that one of the great themes of this Government will be its policies on the cities. The Australian Government is committed to bringing about changes in our cities; changes that will make our cities more efficient; changes that will equalise the opportunities for urban living. The Cities Commission is a vital part of the vigorous programs we will be adopting to achieve these great aims. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Dr Forbes) adjourned.

COMMONWEALTH ELECTORAL BILL (No. 2) 1973

Second Reading

Debate resumed on 29 March (vide page 941), on motion by Mr Daly:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Dr FORBES (Barker) (4.24)—This Bill was introduced by the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) in the most partisan, biased and nakedly party political second reading speech that I have heard in my 17 years in this Parliament. As the Leader of the Country Party (Mr Anthony) remarked when he spoke earlier in this debate, that speech was an extraordinary departure from the proprieties and conventions which have controlled the content of second reading speeches since this Parliament was formed at federation. The Minister for Services and Property should take a lesson from his colleague who has just sat down after introducing a Bill on the Cities Commission, I refer to the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren), who did stick to the conventions on this matter.

I think we need to ask ourselves why the Minister for Services and Property departed from the conventions and produced this nakedly political speech. The answer surely is that what he was engaged in, what the Government is engaged in and what his colleagues who have spoken in this debate have been engaged in, was a propaganda exercise to persuade people that there is something inequitable about the Australian electoral system. I believe they are doing this in the belief that if they mutter slogans like ‘one vote one value’ at the same time as they talk about the 20 per cent margin and draw attention to the fact that the Electoral Commissioners are required to have some regard to problems of area and distance, a sense of injustice will be created in the minds of the public. They believe that by referring in emotive terms to constituent parts, such as the 20 per cent margin allowed and other criteria which the Electoral Commissioners are required to take into account in a redistribution, attention will be diverted from the final results which the present system produces, which I say without fear of contradiction is electoral justice.

The purpose of honourable gentlemen opposite is to divert attention from the fact that the Australian electoral system, which is embodied at present in the Commonwealth Electoral Act and which has remained substantially unchanged since federation, produces one of the most electorally just systems in the world. This is an undisputed fact. It has not been controverted, so far as I am aware, by any honourable gentleman opposite. It is an undisputed fact, by whatever factual criteria are used to measure it. In this debate we have pointed to a number of criteria, such as the overall result of the present electoral system, which is a majority of seats for the party which receives the majority of votes. Time and time again honourable members from this side of the House have said in this debate that since 1949 there has been only one election, that of 1954, in which the party which has achieved an overall majority of votes has not received an overall majority of seats. The 1954 election was undertaken under an Act and under a redistribution conceived by the last Labor Government.

We can point to the substantial equality between metropolitan and extra metropolitan divisions in each State. In New South Wales, for instance, if a metropolitan vote is worth one then an extra metropolitan vote is worth 1.04 if we exclude the electorate of Darling, and 1.06 if we include Darling. We can point to the practice of using the 20 per cent margin where appropriate to achieve substantial
equality in voters between divisions at mid term. We can point to the margin from the quota employed in actual fact and compare that with the situation in most other countries. As far as I am aware there is not a single country which gets nearer to the basic concept of equality between divisions, with the single exception of New Zealand. Look at New Zealand—a pocket handkerchief country which is smaller in size than Victoria. What an extraordinary proposition it is to compare New Zealand with the vast area which is Australia.

The point I am making is that when the Australian Labor Party got the votes under the existing system in 1972 it got the numbers. What it now wants to do is to so arrange things that it gets the numbers when it does not get the votes. This objective is the very travesty of electoral justice. It is the reason for the Labor Party's hymn of hate against the rural voter. Every single member on the other side of the House who has spoken in this debate, from the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) down, has engaged in this hymn of hate against the rural voter of Australia. They are doing this in an attempt to arouse a sense of injustice amongst metropolitan voters. They are trying to brainwash us into believing that there is electoral injustice and that this is caused by some sort of preferential treatment which is being given to country voters that in some way reduces the value of the vote of the metropolitan elector and the weight that he has in determining the government of the country.

I think that I and my colleagues on this side of the House have proved conclusively that this sort of propaganda and these statements are arrant, mischievous, self-interested nonsense and can be based only on a desire to replace a system which produces broad electoral justice with a blatant gerrymander. Within that context let me say something about the provisions in section 19 of the Act which require the Distribution Commissioners to have some regard to area, distance and sparseness of population and which this Bill proposes to remove. It seems absolutely incredible to me that in a country the size of Australia with vast distances, with three-quarters of the population crowded into a handful of cities and with only 124 seats in the Parliament it should ever be contested that some regard should be given to these factors of distance, area and sparseness of population. People in any other country would consider that we had taken leave of our senses, lost our sense of perspective and lost all sense of reality if in our circumstances we asserted that to pay some limited regard to these factors was in some way perpetrating an intolerable outrage on the democratic rights of the vast majority of the population who live cheek by jowl in a handful of metropolitan cities.

Let me put the situation into perspective. Members representing metropolitan seats are in an overwhelming majority of this Parliament. Let us get that fact clearly into our head because when we listen to the Minister for Services and Property and others we could be forgiven for believing that the city majority of voters was heavily outnumbered in the Parliament. It is this overwhelming majority representation of the city—growing larger and larger all the time as the rural population contracts—that bulks large in the consciousness of country people. This situation has created fears—justified or unjustified, but nevertheless very real indeed—that the identity, problems and interests of country people will be totally swamped and submerged by the sheer weight of numbers in this Parliament and that their disabilities, disadvantages and requirements generally will not be weighed on their merits by a national Parliament properly exercising national responsibilities but obliterated by the preponderance of numbers. Let me give the House an example of what I mean.

Last week the Parliament had before it a salaries Bill. For many years the arrangement of salaries has led to a recognition that it costs considerably more for a member who represents a country electorate to do the work of looking after his constituents than it costs a person who represents a city electorate. That has in practice and tradition been reflected in the electorate allowance paid to members of Parliament. But, without explanation, without a single word of justification, the Labor Party Caucus and the Labor Party majority—the city dominated majority—just changed the arrangement to equality, to bring the electorate allowance paid to a city member up to that paid to a country member. This is the sort of thing I am talking about. This is the exercise of power by the sheer weight of numbers; it is not an exercise of responsibility. The Government has not given a rational explanation of what is happening. It has just used the sheer weight of numbers.
This is the sort of attitude of which country people are afraid. That is an example of what I mean.

This attitude has been developing as the inexorable march of population movement has run its course. The stage has not yet perhaps been reached where it has produced a sense of alienation that is associated with some other overridden minorities around the world, and I pray God that it will never reach that stage. But it would be a powerful step towards such a position if this Bill were to become law. Who can blame country people for feeling that they are aliens in their own land, a suppressed minority, when they listened to the loud mouth assertions of the Minister for Services and Property, the high priest of the city majority, that they, the country people, do not matter, that their problems are no greater than the problems of those living in cities, that country members of Parliament have no greater difficulties in providing adequate representation of their electorates than those in the city, and that the difficulties of distance, isolation and lack of services and amenities are irrelevant? All this is in circumstances in which, as I have said already, the city majority has the numbers to enforce the interests of city people.

We in this House know the motive of the Australian Labor Party in introducing this Bill. It is to introduce a blatant gerrymander which will keep it in office indefinitely. We know not only its motives but its tactics—to use country people as whipping boys to arouse emotions which will synthetically create a sense of injustice. We know what the Government is up to, but do the country people, who are the pawns in this Labor game? It is a dangerous game with very real risks of irreconcilable alienation of a significant minority of the Australian people. The Liberal Party will have none of this divisive process and opposes the Bill root and branch. I profoundly believe that in a nation like Australia country people, with all their problems of isolation, loneliness, lack of amenities and so on, with the contribution that they make out of all proportion to their numbers, deserve some consideration. This legislation would wipe out any vestige whatsoever of such consideration.

Mr DOYLE (Lilley) (4.42)—I support the amendment to the Commonwealth Electoral Act which the Bill now before the House seeks to achieve. Therefore I lend my support to the proposal that will reduce from one-fifth to one-tenth the permissible variation provided for in the Act from the predetermined quotas for electoral enrolment and I also support the other measures which adoption of the Bill will achieve. Dealing with the proposal to reduce the present allowable variation in the quota, I must say that I am not sure that every elector in Australia is fully aware of the method adopted in arriving at a quota for a division or a Federal electorate. Much has been said about this subject, but I do not know that everybody is aware of how this is achieved. Perhaps it is fairly generally well-known that the Constitution makes provision for determining the number of representatives from each of the States. It is through the adoption of this formula that 45 members currently represent New South Wales, 34 represent Victoria, 18 represent Queensland, and various other numbers represent the other States of Australia.

However, this debate concerns the Commonwealth Electoral Act, and it is important that relevant provisions of this Act be examined. Section 18 in Part III of this Act lays down that for the purpose of the Act the whole number of electors in each State, as nearly as can be ascertained, shall be divided by the number of members of the House of Representatives to be chosen for the State in order that a quota may be ascertained. Section 19 (1.) permits the distribution commissioners to form divisions or electorates the enrolments of which may exceed or fall short of the quota by one-fifth of the quota. Therefore it is quite evident that in a State where the quota for a division is 60,000 it is permissible to have 48,000 electors on the role of one electorate and 72,000 on the role of another in the same State. The amendment being sought by the Bill would permit a variation of only one-tenth above or below the quota. Therefore with a quota of 60,000 for a division the lowest number of electors permitted would be 54,000 and the highest number 66,000. In the main that is what this debate is all about, and it is important that the people of Australia should be aware of that fact. It is important that they be given an opportunity to form an opinion on whether, with an electoral quota of 60,000, the number of electors enrolled in one electorate should be fewer by 24,000 than those enrolled in another electorate in the same State or whether this tolerance should be reduced. My guess is that the
average Australian does not accept the present situation and therefore the action of the Government in seeking to amend the Act will be generally supported.

My support for the change in the Commonwealth Electoral Act which this Bill seeks to achieve is being strengthened as each of the Opposition members contributes to the debate. I have listened intently as they have put forward their reasons for opposing the measure, and I have endeavoured to unearth some degree of logic in the submissions they have made in support of their actions. So far, in my opinion, they have failed to advance one logical argument to substantiate the opposition they so inflexibly maintain. The Opposition suggests that the Government has ulterior motives in seeking amendments to the Commonwealth Electoral Act. Let members of the Opposition be assured that the real reason behind the Government's action is to ensure electoral justice for the whole of the electorate of this nation. The Government is seeking to ensure that certain citizens do not have greater influence in government than do others. If the people who elect representatives and through this means thereby collectively elect Government are to be given their democratic rights, it is of immense importance that the electoral system is a fair one. Whether or not honourable members opposite recognise and accept the fact I submit that an electoral system can encourage or discourage electors' participation. If the system is not regarded as being a fair one, Parliament and what it stands for will lose the respect of the majority. After all elections are for the benefit of the electors, and finally they will see that they have introduced a system which to them provides an adequate means of expressing their views.

Before it is suggested that my interest may be a personal one, let me point out that currently the electorate represented by me is one which has approximately the correct quota for the State. Therefore I am not seeking to have a greater or smaller number of electors enrolled. Further, because I believe I represent an electorate that has about the quota for Queensland, I am in a position to voice some opinion in regard to the Commonwealth Electoral Act and the variation we are seeking to it. With my contribution to the debate I shall endeavour to be objective in my approach to the Bill and what it seeks. My attitude as an elected representative is that the electoral rights of people of Australia are paramount and these must receive proper consideration if we are to suggest that the electoral system of this nation is a democratic one.

A broad and thorough coverage of all relevant aspects of the changes being sought has been provided by the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) in his second reading speech. For my part, it is my intention to deal mainly with the State in which my electorate is situated. I am deeply concerned with the system which has permitted the development of an unfair electoral advantage in certain areas of Queensland, and I shall refer to this as I progress. The present system lends itself to providing an advantage to some, thereby disadvantaging others. Naturally previous governments, to suit their own ends, have made good use of the system's looseness. The statement by the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes) that only once since 1949 has the Party gaining the greatest number of votes been unsuccessful in winning the most electorates, I believe, was an incorrect one because in 1961 and again in 1969 the votes gained by the Australian Labor Party totalled more than the votes gained by the parties now in Opposition. But of course, at both of those elections, the Opposition parties were then in government.

I suggest that only those who support the gerrymander—the unfair loading of electorates—will seek to defeat this Bill. Surely it is not valid argument—I have heard this said on several occasions during this debate—that because a provision has been in the Electoral Act for more than 70 years it should remain there. If this is the attitude to change of those in Opposition, there can be no doubt that they will remain in the political wilderness for a long time. The Opposition must realise that the people of Australia are demanding change. In December 1972 the people gave a clear and definite indication of that demand. Members of the Australian Country Party are opposing the change because they have a vested interest in maintaining low electoral enrolments. It appears that they oppose the democratic belief that enrolments for divisions should be as nearly as possible equal. Apparently they believe that the number of electors necessary to form a country electorate should not be the number required by the quota, certainly not the number allowed in excess of the quota, but very definitely a
number approximating that permitted below the quota. A perusal of enrolment figures shows that many electorates represented by Country Party members contain the lowest enrolment figures that can be arranged in accordance with provisions of the Electoral Act. Consequently, it appears that Country Party members wish to represent the least number of people. In turn, because of low enrolments in Country Party electorates, the people in country areas have a greater voting power than people in the cities.

Let me make it clear that, contrary to what previous speakers have stated, there definitely is no animosity on the part of honourable members on this side of the chamber towards people living in the country. On the contrary—I believe figures prove this and I hope to show this in the limited time I have available to me—there is a definite animosity on the part of Country Party representatives and those in command of the Country Party machine towards people who live in the cities. If honourable members listen to me, I will explain to them what happened in Brisbane last Saturday as a result of the animosity and the apparent hatred of certain people in Queensland towards people who live in the cities. I hope that members of the Liberal Party will take heed of this because it is extremely important to them.

Mr Cooke—We are all ears.

Mr Doyle—I have noticed that but I did not like to say anything. I suggest that this type of electorate loading suits the Country Party. It has been their political lifeblood for many years. It is not a good thing for the nation or the people of the country. I do not subscribe—I make no apology for saying this—to a policy which gives country people up to 50 per cent advantage over city people in respect of the value of votes cast. This has been permitted to occur for far too long and, as a representative of a city electorate, I believe that this unfair practice must cease.

I realise that many city dwellers resident in my electorate do not vote for the Australian Labor Party. This can be said of all electorates throughout the nation. However, I assure these Australian people who are city dwellers, particularly those living in the Lilley electorate, that I shall not be a party to selling them short and downgrading the value of their vote. They have a democratic right to electoral equality. I am somewhat shocked to see the Liberal Party falling for the anti-city attitude of the Country Party and succumbing to minority pressure. I am absolutely amazed at the attitude of Liberal members, not because they oppose a move made by a Labor government, but because they apparently are unable to understand that, by bowing to the Country Party, they are destroying their own electoral chances for the future. I believe that members of the Liberal Party who think and look to the future would agree with that statement.

To provide startling evidence of this, I have only to refer to what occurred in Queensland last Saturday when, in Brisbane, the opponents of Labor were trounced at the municipal polls. The Australian Labor Party won 20 out of 21 wards in the metropolitan area of Brisbane and had overwhelming victories in other parts of the State at local government polls. The City of Brisbane Act was amended by the Country Party Premier of Queensland—a party that does not have one representative in the metropolitan area of Brisbane—to defeat the Jones administration, an Australian Labor Party administration. The reaction from the people of Brisbane to this dictatorial act by the Country Party Premier was, as I have said, to return the Jones administration and leave the opponents of Labor with one ward out of 21 wards in the city. The ‘Sunday Sun’, one of the Sunday newspapers in Brisbane had as a headline: ‘City thumbs its nose at Joh!’ Of course, Joh is the Country Party Premier of Queensland. The report went on to say:

The Government’s move to get rid of Clem Jones by ending the separate Lord Mayor vote in yesterday’s City Council election proved a dismal flop. The people of Brisbane answered by giving Clem’s team the biggest vote triumph in Australian election history.

The ‘Sunday Mail’ report on the municipal elections contained the following opening statements:

Brisbane’s massive support for the Clem Jones Australian Labor Party Council team was reflected yesterday in most South-East Queensland and Northern provincial cities.

I emphasise the word ‘cities’. It is clear that in the cities of Queensland there has been a violent reaction by the people against the Country Party Premier and the Country-Liberal Party Government he leads. It must be acknowledged that city people will not sit idly by and allow their rights to be eroded. As one who believes in the 2-party system, I am genuinely concerned that the Liberal Party apparently cannot or will not come to realise
that it is withering on the vine because its members will not stand up to minority parties. I say that with every conviction.

The thinking of Liberal leaders appears to be different from that expressed by the Queensland President of the Young Liberal Movement of Australia, Mr K. Martin who, on 28th January at a Young Liberal convention held at Surfers Paradise called for a new electoral distribution in Queensland because, in his opinion, the State redistribution of 1972 was completely undemocratic. According to newspaper reports, Mr Martin also called on the State Parliamentary Liberal Party to press for a new redistribution, taking more into account the principle of one vote, one value. Mr Martin also is reported to have stated that when there is a situation where there is a difference of more than 250 per cent between the number of voters in one electorate and the number in another, there is justification for people to say that Queensland is a cinderella State. He also is reported to have said that State and Federal governments have been bound continually by the wishes of the sectional Country Party.

Apparently at this convention Mr Martin warned against fielding separate Senate teams. Mr Martin said that if the 2 parties fielded separate teams the Liberals could be the losers. This is not a member of the Australian Labor Party talking; it is a Young Liberal in Queensland. He expressed the view that the Country Party might oustvote the Liberal Party. I do not know Mr Martin personally but I readily acknowledge his fear for the future of the Liberal Party. This is why thinking people within the Liberal Party are joining the call for one vote, one value. They can see the necessity to stop the undemocratic march in this nation's politics of the Country Party, whose members comprise 9 per cent of the Parliament. Adoption of policies which permit the gerrymander—the electorate loading and voting manipulation—will not be tolerated by people today. In Queensland, the State Government is a coalition which is controlled by a party which received the minority vote, namely, the Country Party. The people of Queensland have witnessed at State level over the past few years the development of a system of voting at State elections which is heavily loaded in favour of Country Party candidates and, to some extent, of Liberal candidates. Certainly, it is to the disadvantage of Australian Labor Party candidates.

Let me give just a few examples. At the 1972 State election the Country Party received 20 per cent of the total vote cast in Queensland and won 26 seats; the Liberal Party received just over 22 per cent, which was about 2 per cent more than the Country Party received, and won 21 seats, which was 5 seats fewer; and the Australian Labor Party gained 48 per cent of the total vote and won 33 seats. As a result of the worst gerrymander ever, the Government of Queensland was elected on 42½ per cent of the State vote, with 47 seats. Many city people were penalised as a result of this. The Australian Labor Party candidates received approximately 5½ per cent more of the total vote than the combined Country Party and Liberal Party received, but it won 14 seats fewer than the Government parties. A startling lesson is learnt when one looks at the figures. In Queensland it took an average of 13,045 votes to elect an ALP candidate and 6,972 to elect a Country Party candidate.

I believe that, because of the gerrymander that has taken place in Queensland, because electorate loading has been permitted under sections of the Electoral Act and because there has been an attack on the rights of city people, there has been a reaction. It has been very evident. As I mentioned, it was very evident last Saturday at the municipal election held in Brisbane. I can foresee, as Mr Martin, the President of the Young Liberals in Queensland, apparently had the foresight to realise, that if the Liberal Party wishes to sit idly by and allow the Country Party voting power to develop to such a degree that one vote in the country is worth 1½ or 2 votes in the city there certainly will be a reaction from people living in the cities. I repeat what I said earlier: Although all the people in the cities did not vote for me, I will be standing up as I am today, demanding the rights of the people who live in the cities and demanding that the value of their vote be the same as that of people living in country areas. I certainly support the Bill.

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

Mr KILLEN (Moreton) (5.3)—There are 2 views which may be taken of this Bill. Firstly, there is the view which the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) invites us to take and, secondly, there is the view which the Bill commands us to take. Any resemblance
between the 2 views is, in the language of Hollywood, entirely coincidental. I will be saying something about both of the views later on, for better or for worse. But first let me say this to the Minister and to the Government: I know that they have no particularly elevated opinion of our intelligence, but they do not do themselves much credit if they take the view that we do not apprehend what is in fact behind this Bill.

When he introduced the Bill, the Minister said that it was a little measure—stirring up comfort all over the place. Let me digress for a moment to say this to the honourable gentleman: Here is a Bill to amend the Electoral Act, introduced a few weeks after a Bill again to amend the Electoral Act to provide for 18-year-old voting. Why did the Minister not join the 2 of them together? It is perfectly plain—I hope that the country understands this—that the Labor Government is pitching for a double dissolution. The Government may take the view that it is riding high at the moment. I do not want to upset it too much so early in the session; but, by the time the bills for the Government's extravagance start arriving in and the level of inflation is understood by the people of this country, its prospects of surviving as the Government after a double dissolution will disappear completely. He may ooze confidence today, but if the honourable gentleman would take any advice from me I would sweep him to the writer of Ecclesiastes who wrote that it is far better to be a live dog than a dead lion. If the honourable gentleman has any sense he will not seek to use this Bill as the means whereby to dissolve both Houses of the Parliament.

Having said that, I turn to the Bill itself. The honourable gentleman was in a most genial mood when he introduced the Bill. He reminded me of a judge wearing a black cap, about to pronounce the death sentence and invoking the Deity's mercy on the soul of one about to be swept to eternity. The Minister said that the changes would be minimal. That was the adjective he used. It took him 40 minutes to tell us about the minimal changes. He incorporated 5 tables in Hansard. We all were indulgent; we allowed him to put them in. If he could have put a photograph of himself in Hansard it also would have gone in. He was courteous. He thanked us all. Figures galore were produced. He then indulged himself in a touch of history, took himself back to 1902 and also reminded us about the Joint Committee on Constitutional Review. In all my days I never suspected that I would see the honourable gentleman posing as one with an affection for history.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to put my cards on the table with the honourable gentleman. I take the view that he has succumbed to political notions which are startlingly irrational. But, despite that, we have contrived to form a friendship which on occasions is quite rollicking. That adds point to what I say to the honourable gentleman. On the basis of what he disclosed historically the other day, if he thinks when an historical society seeks him out that it is after his patronage he should be cautious. It will not want his patronage; it will be seeking him as a curio. What is the origin of this 20 per cent tolerance? As has been pointed out by my distinguished and gallant friend, the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes), this provision has been in the Electoral Act since 1902.

Mr Cohen—But rarely used.

Mr KILLEN—I will come to that. I am indebted to the honourable gentleman because, of all the peripetent minds on the Government side, the honourable member for Robertson at least has some claims, albeit tenuous ones. Let me come back to 1902. When the Bill of that day was being debated the honourable member for Bland, a Mr Watson, proposed that there be a 16½ per cent tolerance. Mr Watson was to become the first Labor Prime Minister. He proposed 16½ per cent. Does the Minister for Services and Property seriously suggest that Mr Watson in 1902, looking at his argument, was seeking to impose something distorted upon the Australian people? In the Committee stage another honourable member said that at first sight it would seem as though the honourable member for Bland was right. That is the effect of what he said. Then it was suggested that, instead of 16½ per cent or one-sixth, the tolerance should be one-fifth. What is striking about the history of this provision is that in 1902 it was agreed to without division.

In my submission, what was put to the House this afternoon by the honourable member for Barker is striking in its validity. If any honourable gentleman opposite, in the course of this parliamentary session, talks about decentralisation I hope that every syllable disposes to choke in his throat. The simple truth of our existence is that the great
majority—the overwhelming majority—of the Australian people live in a few cities and common sense, quite apart from any other consideration, commands us to look anxiously and realistically at the position of country interests. It is all very fine with one broad sweep of the brush, as it were, to say: 'The people are in the cities and this is where all interest lies'. The simple truth of the matter is that this nation extends far beyond the cities. That is not a very profound observation to make but one which I fear must be made having regard to the attitude taken by some honourable gentlemen opposite.

Probably the best argument against this legislation comes from the Minister's own lips. It came out with that touch of fragrance of argument that we have been accustomed to. 'One vote one value' was the honourable gentleman's indulgence the other evening. Splendid heroes! Let us read what the honourable gentleman had to say when it came to the crunch. He seemed to me to be a little confused. I do not want to upset him because my nature itself would be distressed by doing so. The Minister said:

The vote of one person, whatever his occupation or location, should be as good as the vote of another.

At first blush all of us would agree with that. We would not find ourselves in argument with that at all. But what is the argument of the Minister for Services and Property. He also said that exact equality in the number of electors per division cannot be achieved, nor is it desirable. Which argument does the Minister embrace? He cannot have both arguments but with a name like Frederick Michael Daly what else could we expect of the honourable gentleman? He reminds me of the curious Irish character standing in the dock called upon by the judge's associate to plead either guilty or not guilty. He said: 'I don't know, I haven't heard the evidence yet'. But why is there the provision for a 10 per cent quota variation in the Bill? Why put on the bracelets, the virtue, of 10 per cent? If the honourable gentleman wants to keep the principle of one vote one value, about the only place in which he could display that principle would be in a political clinic. The Minister concedes that when we look at his argument.

But let us go back to the halcyon days of 1949 when the Minister for Services and Property did not have resting upon his shoulders so delicately all the shrouds of authority and he was the mere private member, the honourable member for Grayndler. A redistribution was carried out in those days by a Labor Government. The Minister for Services and Property and the Minister for Education (Mr Beazley), who thundered about this so vigorously on a recent evening, were both in that Parliament. What happened in 1949? Again I do not want to upset the honourable gentleman, for this really hurts me. The number of electors in the seat of Grayndler was 40,716 and, according to the honourable member for Grayndler, not all of them were Christians either. In the same election there were 31,616 electors in the electorate of Kalgoorlie. In round figures there were 40,000 on the one hand and 31,000 on the other. One vote one value! Let us take the seat of Kennedy at the same election. It had 30,364 electors. The simple truth of the matter is that this is a case of convenience as far as the Minister is concerned. He thunders, as did the Minister for Education the other evening, that this is in effect Labor policy I would hate to have him on my side in an argument if he says that this is Labor policy.

Let us take 2 seats in Western Australia—firstly, the seat of Balcatta which has 14,129 people on the roll. Secondly, the seat of Murchison-Eyre has 1,879 electors. With about 3 months hard work the member would know them all by their Christian names. But I have heard no complaint from the Minister nor have I heard any suggestion from the Minister for Education that they are determined to bring the principle of one vote one value into Western Australia. The Minister for Education interjects. I point out that Mr Tonkin has been in office for some months now. The honourable gentleman cannot reprove one stand and then say that that is not convenient. The simple truth of the matter is——

Mr Beazley—The Tonkin Government cannot get this Bill through the Legislative Council.

Mr KILLEN—If the Tonkin Government wants to show that it has a conviction about one vote one value let it persist in the matter but there has been precious little evidence of any persistence. Let us take South Australia, another Labor State. Honourable members opposite do not like this. It upsets them. But they should not get upset. We will get them some lithium and that will quieten them down
later on. In South Australia the seat of Norwood, held by the Premier, has 16,316 electors while the seat of Whyalla has 9,280. I have not heard the Minister announce: 'I propose to lead an expedition to South Australia to relieve the people from their state of torment about the fact that they have not one vote one value'. Let us take another chamber in this place. Does any person seriously suggest that the Senate today is a reflection of the intention of the founders of the Constitution? It was to be a House of review, a House in which the position of the States and the Commonwealth was to be considered, and considered meticulously. No person would seriously contend that. But there are 10 senators from South Australia representing 350,000 people with votes of the same value as 10 senators from New South Wales who represent 3½ million people.

Mr Hunt—It is 4.6 million.

Mr Killen—I am indebted to the honourable member for Gwydir (Mr Hunt) for reminding me of that. That is to indicate the position of peril which the Labor Government is in, at least from the viewpoint of vindicating in terms of logic and sharp political honesty its present position. But there are 2 other reasons why I believe the Minister for Services and Property can be persuaded to withdraw this Bill. He holds himself out as a man of reason, a man of logic and a man always willing to listen to argument. I want to put to him 2 arguments which I hope will convince him that the Bill cannot work. If I convince him that the Bill cannot work I am sure that he would be agreeable to withdrawing it. Let me take the first argument. Clause 4 of the Bill seeks to amend section 25 of the Act by deleting 'one-fifth' wherever it occurs and inserting the words 'one-tenth'. What is the effect of this? Taking the redistribution as from 1968 to 1972, there were some 47 electors in this country over the quota of one-tenth. The provision in the Act is mandatory. It does not say 'may' but 'shall'. If we find that in Queensland one or two electorates are out of balance and over the quota we are required to have a distribution. In South Australia, of 12 seats in the period from 1968 to 1972 there were 3 seats with a variation of over 10 per cent. In other words, we would have to have a redistribution. It would be mandatory under the proposal of the Labor Government.

The outcome would be chaos and a frequency of redistribution which would be confusing to the Australian electorate and intolerable to those who go to Parliament. Beyond that, imagine the position of the electors themselves. Let us put ourselves in the position of living in an electorate adjoining that of Hindmarsh, held by the Minister for Labour (Mr Clyde Cameron), that zealot for parliamentary democracy. Let us contemplate being caught up in the redistribution and going into his electorate. It would be enough to form the foundation for a nervous breakdown.

The second argument I put to the honourable gentleman—I know he has been tremendously impressed with the first—is that the Bill cannot work because the proposed alterations to section 19 of the Act would mean that there would be a situation where the provisions already in the Act would have to be infringed in order to have an electorate. Let me illustrate that proposition. Prior to 1965 what appeared in section 19 was a provision to the effect that the redistribution commissioners should take into account community of interest or diversity of interest. The commissioners were at liberty to consider all of the factors that went with a community of interest or with a diversity of interest. In 1965, as we all know, that was altered to include many other things—the trend of population, which stays of course; the density or sparsity of population in a division; and the area of a division. What is proposed by the Minister is community of interest within the division, including economic, social and regional interests. But precisely nothing is proposed for section 19 of the Act which would enable a group of redistribution commissioners to ensure that existing boundaries of a division, the physical features of a division and the means of communication and travel could be observed. Take, for example, the seat of Kennedy. Kennedy would have to extend from Mount Isa through Cloncurry down to Kingaroy in order to get the numbers. Does the Minister seriously suggest that Kingaroy has community of interests with Mount Isa? Nothing could point up in a sharper way the absurdity of the proposal.

I finish where I began: The Labor Party seeks to meet the Liberal and Country Parties in electoral combat as a result of this Bill. To the Minister and those who sit with him I say that we are ready and by the time the bills of the Government's extravagance come home the people of Australia will be ready
and the Minister for Services and Property, if he is lucky, may come back here and take the seat I am now sitting in.

Mr BEAZLEY (Fremantle—Minister for Education)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Jarman)—Order! Does the Minister claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr BEAZLEY—Yes. I am astonished at the degree of misrepresentation of my speech by the honourable member for Moreton (Mr Killen). In his speech he represented me as defending the electoral distributions of Western Australia.

Mr Killen—I said you did nothing about them.

Mr BEAZLEY—I am not talking about that. The honourable member misrepresented me as defending them. What I do about the electoral distributions of Western Australia the honourable member might explain to me later. I pointed out that the divisions in Western Australia were totally contrary to the interests of a Labor government and that though the present Opposition received 34.3 per cent of the vote it was defeated by only one seat. I pointed out that a Labor member of the Upper House, Lyla Elliott, had about as many people on the roll for her division as did 8 Country Party seats. It was quite ridiculous to suggest that I was defending the distributions in Western Australia when the major part of my speech was devoted to using them as an illustration of electoral injustice—an injustice, of course, which operates in that particular case against the Labor Party and not, as the honourable member for Moreton quite falsely suggested, for it.

Mr KILLEN (Moreton)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Jarman)—Order! Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr KILLEN—Yes. The argument I presented was not that the Minister for Education (Mr Beazley) defended the status quo in Western Australia but simply that he had done nothing to attack it.

Mr OLDMEADOW (Holt) (5.24)—I rise to support the Bill. We have just been treated to a most enjoyable piece of oratory by the honourable member for Moreton (Mr Killen). It was pleasing however, that in his last 3 or 4 minutes he came back to the point of what the Bill is all about. The crux of the Bill is concerned with a matter which is at the heart of the democratic parliamentary process, namely, that as far as possible the value of a man's vote should be the same wherever he lives. This is far from the situation today.

Mr Garland—Tell us about the 10 per cent.

Mr OLDMEADOW—if the honourable member waits with patience he will get his answer. From the debate on this Bill one can only be amazed at the stand being taken by Liberal Party speakers. In an attempt to maintain the Liberal-Country Party alliance they have abandoned the basic democratic principle which is incorporated in this Bill. They have talked about everything else but this; and the Bill is concerned with one vote, one value. The speeches made by Liberal Party members have been tongue in cheek affairs.

Mr Garland—Tell us where the 10 per cent comes in.

Mr OLDMEADOW—if the honourable member has patience, I will tell him. The demands of political convenience should not be placed above issues of principle and the principle with which we are concerned is equitable electoral boundaries. It is no surprise that speakers from the Country Party have opposed this Bill vehemently. After all, they are fighting for their political survival and undoubtedly this Bill will remove from the Country Party the favoured electoral conditions that it enjoys at present. We on the Government side accept that this Bill does not go all the way—this was made clear in the second reading speech of the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly)—in achieving equality of representation. What we are saying is that this is a necessary first step. We know that it is impossible to have electorates of exactly the same size at this point of time. We believe that it would be far more democratic if representation were on the basis of number of people in an electorate rather than numbers of voters. Again, we concede that this is not possible. We further concede that the Constitution Act itself restricts the principle at which we are aiming. Section 7 of the Constitution provides that all original States, irrespective of population, shall have equal representation in the Senate. Section 24 requires that original States, irrespective of population, shall have a minimum of 5
representatives in the House of Representatives. These provisions have meant that in the 73 years of the Federal Parliament there has been an inflated value for the voters of Tasmania.

Members from this side do not accept the provisions of the Electoral Act which allow and, in fact, direct the redistribution commissioners to set boundaries enclosing populations in particular electorates up to 20 per cent above or below a State’s quota figure. We contend that a much fairer figure would be 10 per cent. We contend also that matters such as disabilities arising out of remoteness or distance, density or sparsity of population and the area of a division are totally out of place in any parliamentary system which purports to reflect democratic principles.

The principle which is embodied in this Bill is one vote one value. This is not some new idea we are striving to impose on the people of Australia. It is one that has been espoused for more than 100 years. In fact as early as 1838 the Chartists, a group well ahead of its time in Britain, enshrined this principle in its 6 point charter. It went further than we propose to go. It stated that constituencies should be made up of an equal number of voters. One section of the preamble to its charter relating to just government, on which members of this House should reflect, stated:

...this responsibility is best enforced through the instrumentality of a body which emanates directly from, and is immediately responsible to, the whole people, and which completely reflects their feelings and interests.

I would remind honourable members that it was the Chartists who in their 6 points came out strongly in favour of payment to members of Parliament—a new concept in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Similarly, the politics of bending electoral boundaries is nothing new. It was introduced in 1812 by the Massachusetts Governor of the time, Eldridge Gerry, when he re-drew the electoral boundaries within his State to give his party an unfair advantage. In Australia it has been the Country Party which has shown itself to be the master of the gerrymander.

Let us look in more detail at the disparities that exist today as a result of the present provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Act. Let us compare my electorate, Holt—a metropolitan electorate but one which most definitely has a rural component—with Wimmera, a country electorate. Taking the figures as at 26th January 1973, we find that Holt has 69,898 voters enrolled whereas Wimmera has only 45,574, a difference of 24,324 voters. Expressing this in percentage terms, it means that Holt has 51.18 per cent more voters than Wimmera. Examining the 2 electorates in terms of population and taking the 1971 census figures, Holt had 128,211 people and Wimmera had 77,526 people, a difference of 50,685 or, in percentage terms, there were 65.38 per cent more people in Holt than in Wimmera. I am not suggesting that I am doing 65 per cent more work than the honourable member for Wimmera, but what I am stating is that the people of Holt are not receiving equal and fair representation, and that is what this Bill is all about. I am stating that this is just one example of the rural gerrymander that has been perpetuated by the Liberal and Country parties when in government.

The standard reply of the Country Party over the years has been that over representation of rural areas is justified, firstly, because of the area that a local member has to represent and, secondly, because rural economic interests, particularly the rural export industries, are so important to the national economy that they must have adequate representation. The second argument is, of course, sectional special pleading for which no objective or determinate measurement of justification can be found. The first is of greatly diminished significance since 1900 with the transport and communications revolution of the 20th century, together with the social revolution. Surely these changes have so transformed the work of a member of Parliament as to make the number of his constituents rather than the dimension of his electorate the key to the burden of his works.

Furthermore, in the words of L. F. Crisp:

The rural interests have long since established such heavy representation on the boards, commissions and other agencies which supply them with services or regulate the marketing and (within limits) the prices of their products, that they have substantially undercut any claim they may have had in years gone by for a special ‘gerrymander’ of the Australian national electorate.

As has already been stated in this House by the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly), the answer for the member in the far-flung electorate is not to pervert the electoral system whereby the vote of a person living in the Wimmera electorate has much more value
than the vote of a person living in my electorate. The answer is to provide representatives of large country electorates with better travelling facilities, increased staff and things such as this to enable them to carry out their work effectively, and steps have already been taken in this connection.

The Joint Committee on Constitutional Review of 1958, with representatives from both sides of the Parliament, clearly supported the proposition which is embodied in this Bill, and this may well be the answer to the question that has been posed consistently by honourable members opposite while I have been speaking. Among its recommendations the Committee said:

... upon the division of a State into electoral divisions, the number of electors in a division in a State should not exceed by more than one-tenth, or fall short by more than one-tenth, a quota ascertained by dividing the total number of electors in the State by the number of members to be chosen in that State.

The Constitutional Review Committee in its recommendations was upholding a principle which is beyond dispute in any democratic system—the principle of equality of representation. In this connection it is not without interest to note that the United States Supreme Court ruled in the case of Baker versus Carr in 1962 that if congressional electorates were unequally drawn the voters in over-sized electorates were being deprived of their constitutionally guaranteed 'equal protection of the laws'.

Let us now have a look at the reaction of the various parties to the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Committee on which, as I have said, all parties were represented. First, let us take the Country Party. Notwithstanding that the members of the Country Party on this Committee had subscribed to its recommendation of a tolerance of not more than 10 per cent, the then Leader of the Country Party and Deputy Prime Minister, Mr McEwen, prevailed on his colleagues in the coalition Ministry not only to retain the 20 per cent tolerance but also to amend the Act in ways calculated to permit further gerrymandering in favour of rural electorates. In 1965 the present Leader of the Country Party (Mr Anthony), who was then Minister for the Interior, moved and had carried further amendments to the Electoral Act to open the way for increased 'territorial representation'. As a result of these amendments, Commissioners were required to give legality and respectability to a degree of rural gerrymandering, formerly unknown at the Federal level. Considerations to be taken into account by the Commissioners included the matters that I have mentioned—disabilities arising out of remoteness or distance, the density or sparsity of population and the area of the division. So the provisions to be considered by the Commissioners were worded and re-worded in such a way as to sharpen the requirement that rural electors be favoured.

Let us have a look at the Liberal Party which, as the senior partner in the coalition, must accept equal blame for the inequities that exist at present. Its role has been one of acquiescence. The Liberal Party has given way to the pressures exerted on it by its coalition partner, the Country Party. To me it is incredible that any party that bears the name 'Liberal' could go along with the Country Party in measures which obviously were directed towards a sectional interest in the country. Similarly, it is equally inconceivable that the Liberal Party can find any grounds on which to oppose the principle enshrined in this Bill—that is, equality of representation.

Now let us look at the actions of the Labor Party in this period, and I would say to the House that they are in sharp contrast. While the Liberal-Country Party governments have failed to act on the Constitutional Review Committee's recommendations, the Labor Party consistently has supported this principle of equality of representation in this Parliament. Whenever the matter of electoral redistribution has been under consideration, the Labor Party, as the Opposition, has moved appropriate amendments which attempted to give effect to the democratic findings of the Constitutional Review Committee. There has been consistent adherence to a principle which we on the Government side hold to be inviolate in the total democratic process—that is, one vote one value. It is well for us again to take note of a portion of a speech, which has been mentioned previously in this House, which was made by Senator Dirkson, a member of the United States Senate in 1965. On this occasion he said:

The controversy here is not between rural virtues and urban Iniquity—but between those who believe that men are entitled to equal representation regardless of their position, and those who feel that certain citizens should be given a greater influence in government than others.
We on the Government side of the House wholeheartedly support this proposition. We contend that where a person lives or what his occupation happens to be is totally irrelevant. We believe that members of Parliament represent not cows, acres, trees or sheep but people. We believe that all men should be equal not only before the law but also in making the law.

Equality of political rights is inherent in any truly democratic system and these rights must be safeguarded by the legislature. The paramount objective of this Bill is to allow, as far as is possible at this time, equality of representation. The decision that members of this House have to make is quite a simple one. It is whether to support the democratic principle that is embodied in the Bill—one vote one value—or whether to continue to support the manipulations that exist in the present Electoral Act whereby one group in the community continues to be over-represented. Those of us who sit on the Government side of the House — included in our ranks are more representatives of country electorates than any other political party has—say categorically that the value of all men’s votes should be equal, irrespective of where they live or what they do. I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr HUNT (Gwydir) (5.42)—Mr Speaker, my Leader the honourable member for Richmond (Mr Anthony), the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden), the honourable member for Wimmera (Mr King) and other speakers on the Opposition side, including the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes) and the honourable member for Moreton (Mr Killen) who have spoken today, have already presented well documented arguments that weigh heavily against the passage of this Bill. It is not my intention to go over old ground or to join issue with the honourable member for Holt (Mr Oldmeadow) or, for that matter, the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) who is at the table and who characteristically makes colourful but fantastic propositions—for instance, the claim that the present Commonwealth Electoral Act, in providing a 20 per cent tolerance above or below the quota for each electorate, ensures that the rural members of this Parliament, regardless of their political affiliations, represent trees, haystacks and cows rather than people.

I intend to devote my time to focusing the debate on 4 central questions: Firstly, does this legislation achieve the principle of one vote one value? Secondly, is it possible to achieve one vote one value as a principle in a practical sense? Thirdly, is the 10 per cent tolerance prescribed in the Bill a sufficient margin to enable the commissioners to adjust boundaries in future redistributions? Fourthly, is it fair to people living in remote areas to ignore such considerations as area and remoteness when drawing electoral boundaries? But before answering those specific questions I want to refer briefly to the policy statement of the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) on electoral redistributions which was made on behalf of the Australian Labor Party. During the Prime Minister’s spectacular political assault on the western suburbs of Sydney when he came by barge last year, he released the following statement:

A federal Labor government will distribute electorates as the Constitution intended and as the United States Supreme Court has insisted that the corresponding provisions of the United States Constitution be carried out. The principle is that there should be equal representation for equal numbers of people.

Thus Labor will ensure that there are 2 more Federal electorates in this area at the next elections for the House of Representatives (i.e. the Western Region of Sydney).

Section 24 of the Constitution provides in part:

The number of members chosen in the several States shall be in proportion to the respective numbers of their people, and shall, until the Parliament otherwise provides, be determined, whenever necessary, in the following manner:

Which is prescribed.

The Prime Minister said, in effect, 3 things on that occasion: Firstly, that the present system was ultra vires the Constitution; secondly, that he was going to engineer a new formula to give western Sydney 2 new electorates, therefore removing from the rest of New South Wales 2 rural electorates; and, thirdly, that he was pre-empting any decision that future electoral distribution commissioners might make in accordance with section 24 of the Constitution. Section 10 of the Electoral Act determines the number of members to be chosen in the several States. It specifies, in effect, that the representations shall be in relation to the numbers of people; that is, the total population of the States including children, migrants and—since 1967—Aborigines. So, in answer to the statement that the principle is that there should be equal representation for equal numbers of people, the facts are that taking a State as a whole in accordance with the Constitution there is equal representation for equal numbers of people.
The Labor Party has also said that the representation shall be equal, electorate by electorate. This, of course, is part of the one vote one value philosophy and calls into question the Commonwealth Electoral Act of 1902 which at that time prescribed the tolerance of 20 per cent above or below the quota for each electorate. The ALP policy also stated that redistributions would be based on population rather than electors enrolled. The whole approach of the Labor Party to electoral redistribution has been ill-considered and is summed up in the words of the Minister for Services and Property in his second reading speech, when he said:

Although the principle should be to base representation on numbers of people and not on numbers of electors there are practical problems in the way.

What an admission! We all remember this new and curious policy being expressed by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Services and Property last year. The Prime Minister really got carried away with this novel notion and it became enshrined in the ALP policy, yet it is not feasible. Thus, on assuming office the practical facts of life have thrown a new light on a cunning concept that had on it all the earmarks of a gerrymander. I know that the honourable gentleman will be going to Peking later this year. He will probably study the reform of the electoral system in Peking. I do not think he will learn anything from Peking. He might be able to teach Mao Tse-tung a thing or two, when one looks at the extent of the reforms that he is envisaging.

The Minister has had to concede that, because of population movements and the delay between the taking of a census and the publication of the results, it is just not practical to implement this portion of Labor’s ill-conceived policy. Yet I suppose Labor claims that it has a mandate for it. The Minister has had to eat humble pie by admitting that the only available figures would be those of the last census—now 2 years out of date. I am also sure that the best and soundest advice to the Government would have been not to alter the 20 per cent tolerance provision, also because of the practical problems it would create for the distribution commissioners.

Let me deal with the first question I posed—that is, does this Bill achieve one vote one value. The Government knows, even if the honourable member for Holt does not, that it is just not possible in the terms of this Bill and that it is just a prank. Whatever tolerance is measured in the terms of this Bill, there are powerful constitutional reasons why the one vote one value concept just does not apply. I illustrate this point simply by drawing attention to Tasmania, with a population of 390,000 as at 30th June 1971, electing 10 senators, whereas New South Wales, with a population of 4.6 million people, elects 10 senators. Tasmania with 390,000 people elected 5 members to this House. New South Wales has 45 members in this House. Let us examine the number of people in each electorate. Tasmania has a quota of 43,902 electors per division. New South Wales an average of 57,386 electors per division. Therefore, a Tasmanian member represents 43,902 electors and a New South Wales member represents, on average, 57,386 electors. So where is this one vote one value concept? It does not exist in this Bill and it does not exist in practice in any country in the world. If the Government really wants one vote one value why does not it have a referendum to ask the people to reduce the number of electorates in Tasmania so that the number of electors in each electorate in Tasmania will equal those of the mainland States? Why does the Government tolerate a system that allows Tasmania to have the same number of senators as New South Wales?

This legislation alters the degree of tolerance from 20 per cent to 10 per cent, but it does not achieve one vote one value. People are asked to believe that to perpetuate a system whereby there is a 20 per cent tolerance from the average is to gerrymander the electorates in favour of the rural people. Indeed, the Government goes so far as to say that this is in favour of the Australian Country Party. What utter rot. There are 45 rural seats. The Country Party holds 20, the Labor Party holds 15 and the Liberal Party holds 10. So the existing situation is not to the benefit of the Country Party but to all rural people represented by all major parties.

We hear the same old allegations and assertions against the Country Party. We hear the same old interpretations that the Commonwealth Electoral Act favours the Country Party and violates the sacred principle of one vote one value. If the 20 per cent tolerance provided under the present Act—indeed since federation—violates a principle, then surely no-one will say that a 10 per cent tolerance does not violate the same principle of one vote one value.
In his second reading speech—a manifesto stuffed with political accusations and innuendoes—the Minister in characteristic style gave the Country Party and the rural people a cow kick to divert attention from his real objective of horning the Liberal Party out of marginal city seats. Of course, this is the sinister motive of this Bill. The political flavour of the Minister’s speech leaves no doubt of this in my mind. All this was in the guise of one vote one value. This scheme is not designed simply to eliminate rural seats; it is also to provide a new formula acceptable to the Australian Labor Party to enable the boundaries of marginal electorates to be moved here and there to the advantage of the ALP. This is a cunning plot and a frightening prospect to those of us who do not want a socialist government in power ad infinitum.

The Bill is a smokescreen fired by the catchcry—the emotional catchcry—of the elusive principle of ‘one vote one value’. The Bill does not achieve that objective, and the Government does not care 2 hoots. While ever Tasmania is in its privileged position vis-a-vis New South Wales, while ever the population does not remain static, there is no point in debating the issue of one vote one value.

Mr King—There are no Tasmanians in the House.

Mr HUNT—Not a one. The only way to achieve one vote one value would be to have a national redistribution of electoral boundaries a day after the census is taken and have an election held the next day. This, of course, is impossible. So let us dispose once and for all of this nonsense and humbug that this Bill sets out to achieve one vote one value.

I turn now to the second question which I posed, namely: Is it possible to achieve the principle of one vote one value? I believe it is not possible in a practical sense. We live in a highly mobile society. There is great movement amongst people. There is dynamic growth of population in new fringe city areas. Because of the rapid shifts of population year by year and even month by month the Opposition contends that it is impracticable to limit the tolerance in the number of electors in an electorate to 10 per cent. I seek leave to incorporate the following tables which show the rapid changes of population levels between 1968 and 2nd December 1972.

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

(The documents read as follows)—

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<th>ELECTORS IN EACH ELECTORATE AT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTION OF 2 DECEMBER 1972 COMPARED WITH THE ‘QUOTA’ FOR THE STATE</th>
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<td>Variations from the ‘Quota’</td>
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<td>Electoral Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEW SOUTH WALES</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Quota’ for the State</td>
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(a) As at 16 November 1972. Final enrolments as at the date of the Election are not yet available.
Variations from the 'Quota'

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<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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VICTORIA

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geelong</td>
<td>54,376</td>
<td>-2,356</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geelongton</td>
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<td>-5,189</td>
<td>-9.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henty</td>
<td>56,997</td>
<td>+2,655</td>
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<td>67,828</td>
<td>+11,096</td>
<td>+19.6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>52,537</td>
<td>-4,193</td>
<td>-7.4</td>
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<td>43,359</td>
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<td>57,183</td>
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<td>+0.8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>55,296</td>
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<td>-5.0</td>
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<td>Wimmera</td>
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<td>-11,375</td>
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QUEENSLAND

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<tr>
<th>Electoral Division</th>
<th>Number of electors(a)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>-20 and over</td>
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<td>50,067</td>
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<td>Griffith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herbert</td>
<td>54,621</td>
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<td>-2.3</td>
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<td>51,119</td>
<td>-5,712</td>
<td>-10.1</td>
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<td>57,666</td>
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<td>+15.9</td>
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<td>McPherson</td>
<td>72,087</td>
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<td>Ryan</td>
<td>63,177</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wide Bay</td>
<td>53,302</td>
<td>-3,329</td>
<td>-5.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(a) As at 16 November 1972. Final enrolments as at the date of the Election are not yet available.
### Variations from the ‘Quota’

#### Electoral Division
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of electors(a)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-20 and over</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Western Australia
- **'Quota' for the State**: 59,724

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Number of electors</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canning</td>
<td>64,826</td>
<td>+5,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtin</td>
<td>54,369</td>
<td>-5,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forrest</td>
<td>50,925</td>
<td>-8,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>62,792</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kalgoorlie</td>
<td>51,935</td>
<td>-7,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore</td>
<td>58,578</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>61,569</td>
<td>+1,845</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>69,528</td>
<td>+9,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan</td>
<td>62,972</td>
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#### South Australia
- **'Quota' for the State**: 56,669

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Number of electors</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>56,703</td>
<td>+34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angas</td>
<td>50,618</td>
<td>-6,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barcaldine</td>
<td>54,987</td>
<td>-1,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaumont</td>
<td>57,137</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brethorst</td>
<td>58,497</td>
<td>+1,828</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>52,214</td>
<td>-4,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>57,022</td>
<td>+3,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindmarsh</td>
<td>58,393</td>
<td>+1,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston</td>
<td>62,111</td>
<td>+5,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Adelaide</td>
<td>56,151</td>
<td>-518</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sturt</td>
<td>59,628</td>
<td>+2,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wakefield</td>
<td>45,919</td>
<td>-10,750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Tasmania
- **'Quota' for the State**: 43,902

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Number of electors</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>41,779</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braddon</td>
<td>46,439</td>
<td>+2,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denison</td>
<td>45,111</td>
<td>+1,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin</td>
<td>42,758</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilmot</td>
<td>43,427</td>
<td>-475</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) As at 16 November 1972. Final enrolments as at the date of the Election are not yet available.

### Electors in Each Electorate at the 1968 Redistribution Compared with the 'Quota' for the State

#### Variations from the ‘Quota’

#### Electoral Division
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of electors(a)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-20 and over</td>
</tr>
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#### New South Wales
- **'Quota' for the State**: 52,805

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Number of electors</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banks</td>
<td>51,703</td>
<td>-1,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barton</td>
<td>57,650</td>
<td>+4,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaconsfield</td>
<td>57,560</td>
<td>+5,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyers (was to Hornsby)</td>
<td>50,719</td>
<td>-2,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackford</td>
<td>53,059</td>
<td>+2,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braddon</td>
<td>54,468</td>
<td>+1,683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calare</td>
<td>46,086</td>
<td>-6,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chifley (was to Blacktown)</td>
<td>48,842</td>
<td>-3,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook (was to Kurnell)</td>
<td>50,337</td>
<td>-2,448</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cowper</td>
<td>44,649</td>
<td>-6,649</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cunningham</td>
<td>56,244</td>
<td>+3,439</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darling</td>
<td>43,224</td>
<td>-18,212</td>
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<td>Eden-Monaro</td>
<td>48,102</td>
<td>-4,713</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evans</td>
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<td>Hughes</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Mitchell</td>
<td>52,622</td>
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(a) As at 31 May 1968.
### Variations from the 'Quota'

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<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-20 and over</td>
<td>-10 to</td>
<td>Up to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEW SOUTH WALES—continued</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Newcastle          | 55,946                | +3,141 | -5.63      | +5.95 |
| New England        | 49,832                | -2,973 |
| North Sydney       | 57,958                | +5,153 | +9.76      |       |
| Parramatta         | 59,365                | +6,560 | +12.42     |
| Patterson          | 46,783                | -6,022 | -11.40     |       |
| Phillip            | 51,870                | +5,065 | +9.59      |       |
| Prospect           | 50,862                | -1,943 | -3.68      |       |
| Reid               | 57,688                | +4,883 | +9.25      |
| Richmond           | 49,460                | -3,345 | -6.33      |       |
| Riverina           | 45,368                | -7,437 | -14.08     |
| Robertson          | 49,052                | -3,753 | -7.11      |       |
| St George          | 58,467                | +5,662 | +10.72     |
| Shortland          | 30,096                | -2,709 | -5.13      |       |
| Sydney (was to be West Sydney) | 59,967 | +7,162 | +11.36      |
| Warringah          | 55,427                | +2,622 | +4.97      |       |
| Wentworth          | 38,634                | +5,829 | +11.04     |
| Werriwa            | 55,433                | +2,628 | +4.98      |

### VICTORIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Number of electors(a)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>-10 to</td>
<td>Up to</td>
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<td>19.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
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<td>48,379</td>
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<td>Collingwood</td>
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<td>+9.90</td>
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<td>-8.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gippsland</td>
<td>47,589</td>
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<td>-7.91</td>
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<tr>
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<td>52,433</td>
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<td>+12.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latrobe</td>
<td>48,411</td>
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<td>*La Trobe</td>
<td>50,201</td>
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<td>50,881</td>
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<td>45,218</td>
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<tr>
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<td>+9.86</td>
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<td>+12.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wimmera</td>
<td>46,588</td>
<td>-5,087</td>
<td>-9.88</td>
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</table>

Note: The following Divisions had their 'proposed' names changed and became the 'current' Divisions—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed name</th>
<th>Current name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waverley</td>
<td>Bruce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Trobe</td>
<td>Casey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce</td>
<td>Holt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaumaris</td>
<td>Issacs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maroondah</td>
<td>La Trobe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darebin</td>
<td>Scullin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### QUEENSLAND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral Division</th>
<th>Number of electors(a)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-20 and over</td>
<td>-10 to</td>
<td>Up to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowman</td>
<td>53,983</td>
<td>+3,269</td>
<td>+6.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>58,546</td>
<td>+7,832</td>
<td>+15.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capricornia</td>
<td>44,947</td>
<td>-5,757</td>
<td>-11.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darling Downs</td>
<td>52,999</td>
<td>+2,273</td>
<td>+4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawson</td>
<td>48,206</td>
<td>-2,508</td>
<td>-4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher</td>
<td>33,694</td>
<td>+2,369</td>
<td>+6.154</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glenelg</td>
<td>38,886</td>
<td>-4,599</td>
<td>-11.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbert</td>
<td>46,115</td>
<td>-4,599</td>
<td>-9.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>41,639</td>
<td>+6,103</td>
<td>+16.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laidlaw</td>
<td>46,598</td>
<td>+3,833</td>
<td>-8.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lilley</td>
<td>56,230</td>
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<td>+10.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McPherson</td>
<td>47,371</td>
<td>-3,343</td>
<td>-6.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) As at 31 May 1968.
Variations from the 'Quota'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral Division</th>
<th>Number of electors(a)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-20 and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEENSLAND—continued</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maranoa.........</td>
<td>44,788</td>
<td>-5,926</td>
<td>-11.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton........</td>
<td>51,027</td>
<td>+313</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxley.............</td>
<td>52,779</td>
<td>+2,065</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perie.............</td>
<td>52,751</td>
<td>+2,037</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan...............</td>
<td>52,395</td>
<td>+1,681</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide Bay..........</td>
<td>50,819</td>
<td>+105</td>
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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'Quota' for the State</th>
<th>51,047</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canning........</td>
<td>47,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtin................</td>
<td>54,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forrest...............</td>
<td>47,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremantle.............</td>
<td>54,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalgoorlie............</td>
<td>41,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore...............</td>
<td>45,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth................</td>
<td>56,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stirling...............</td>
<td>53,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan..................</td>
<td>59,091</td>
</tr>
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</table>

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'Quota' for the State</th>
<th>30,735</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide...............</td>
<td>55,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angas................</td>
<td>49,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barker...............</td>
<td>49,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyntyon..............</td>
<td>46,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boothby...............</td>
<td>53,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey..................</td>
<td>43,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawker (was to be Holder)</td>
<td>53,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindmarsh.............</td>
<td>53,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston..............</td>
<td>50,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Adelaide........</td>
<td>55,141</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sturt................</td>
<td>48,419</td>
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<td>Wakefield............</td>
<td>47,934</td>
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TASMANIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'Quota' for the State</th>
<th>40,685</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bass..................</td>
<td>40,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braddon...............</td>
<td>41,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denison...............</td>
<td>42,917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin...............</td>
<td>37,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilmot................</td>
<td>41,362</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) As at 31 May 1968

Mr HUNT—I thank the House. To take the case of only 3 electorates, namely, Gravendler, Macquarie and Chifley, the rapid changes will be seen. I mention first the electorate of our beloved Minister for Services and Property.

Mr Daly—I think that might be abolished.

Mr HUNT—It could well be. If one examines the figures incorporated it will be seen that in 1968 Gravendler had a number of electors 14.01 per cent above the quota. In December 1972 the number was 7.8 per cent below the quota. In Macquarie the number of electors in 1968 was 6.5 per cent above the quota and in December 1972 it was 14.4 per cent above the quota. In 1968 Chifley had 7.5 per cent fewer voters than the quota and in December 1972 had 20.2 per cent more than the quota. Several divisions have increased population by as much as 40 per cent between 1968 and 1972. Forty-nine electorates had population changes up or down in excess of 10 per cent. Twenty-four divisions increased their populations by more than 20 per cent. Thus, if the Commissioners were bound by a 10 per cent tolerance in 1968 it would have been necessary to have another redistribution prior to the 1972 elections. In considering the 10 per cent tolerance as against the 20 per cent tolerance provided in the existing Act I think we should refresh our memories, as indeed they have been refreshed by previous speakers, by looking at
the report of the Joint Committee on Constitutional Review. This report recommended a 10 per cent tolerance, but the honourable member for Holt conveniently did not quote this passage of that report. It states:

The Committee was assisted in its task by the then Chief Electoral Officer for the Commonwealth, Mr L. Ainsworth, who also obtained the views of the Commonwealth Electoral Officer and the Surveyor-General for each of the States. The preponderance of that opinion was clearly in favour of retaining the marginal allowance at the existing one-fifth fraction.

The report continues:

Undoubtedly, it would be easier to apply a one-fifth margin than to work within the limits of a one-tenth marginal allowance from quota. Nevertheless, the Committee is satisfied that the problems of applying a one-tenth margin are quite manageable.

The Committee members did say that but, of course, they were not the experts in the field and therefore their opinion would not be as sound as that of Mr Ainsworth and those of the Commonwealth Electoral Officers in the States. In considering the desirability of a 10 per cent tolerance instead of a 20 per cent tolerance surely the Minister must have taken section 25 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act into account. It provides that whenever one-quarter of the divisions of the States are out of balance—that is one-fifth above or one-fifth below the quota—a redistribution may be held. So it is clear why those people who had the closest working knowledge of the problem—the Electoral Commissioners—favour the 20 per cent margin instead of the 10 per cent margin which is provided in this Bill.

In regard to the third point I raised initially, that is the proposed guidelines for the Commissioners, in 1965 the Government amended the Commonwealth Electoral Act to set clearer guidelines to assist the Distribution Commissioners in their task. This was done to achieve uniformity in the redistribution process between the States. These amendments have had a far and widespread effect on the outcome of redistributions, not simply favouring the rural areas, but taking into account the great spread of population and the growth of population in the marginal city areas. To remove from consideration such factors as area, remoteness and sparsity of population is flying in the fact of common-sense and, to use the Minister's own words is 'making a mockery of democracy'. Only a man who represents an electorate of 3 or 4 square miles could fail to understand the difficulty of representing people in large electorates where distance, remoteness and sparsity of population make the task frustrating and difficult. Only those who have experienced the privations of remoteness, the tyranny of distance and the loneliness of the outback really understand the need for these factors to be taken into account when drawing boundaries.

The guidelines contained in the Bill completely wipe aside these considerations leading to a situation whereby those already large electorates like Kennedy, Kalgoorlie, Grey, Maranoa and Darling could well be fixed well over the quota. In other words the Commissioners may be forced to make them even larger by adding people from other communities to an electorate where in fact they may not have a community of interest. If ever there was a half baked, half cocked Bill that shows complete contempt for the great outback pioneers of this nation, this is the masterpiece. It is an incredible hotchpotch of impractical notions, unfair contentions that would lead us to a crazy situation of having one redistribution on top of another. Neither does it achieve one vote one value as a principle, nor does it offer a practical workable proposal to Distribution Commissioners in a time when population mobility can cause enormous fluctuations from place to place in 12 months. Nor does it treat with understanding and sympathy the problems of people living in the remote areas of Australia.

Other honourable members have spoken about New Zealand. It is futile to compare Australia with New Zealand or with any other country which has so vastly dissimilar characteristics. The Electoral Act as it stands acknowledges these facts.

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

Dr KLUGMAN (Prospect) (6.3)—Mr Deputy Speaker, I suppose it is fitting that you should be in the chair at the present time since your seat, according to the latest census figures, contains the smallest population in New South Wales. It is a pity that the hon-
Dr KLUGMAN—I congratulate the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly), who is at the table, for introducing this Bill so early in the session. I think it is an important Bill. It is a Bill that quite clearly distinguishes us from the Australian Country Party. I think the significant advantage of introducing this legislation so early is that if the Senate should decide to reject the Bill and then to reject it again in August, or whenever the 3 months period is up, we should be able to have a double dissolution at a time when the Senate elections normally would be due to take place. I congratulate the Minister for not delaying the introduction of this proposition.

One of the interesting things about the discussion of this Bill, of course, has been the complete difference in attitude, though probably not in voting on the measure, between the Liberal Party and the Australian Country Party. The Country Party pooh-poohs the proposition of one man one vote and believes that this is certainly not the sort of thing that one should support. The Country Party has decided, quite correctly from its point of view, that this principle would act to its disadvantage. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) speaking on this Bill last Thursday evening, in regard to one vote one value said:

I do not reject that concept but I say quite specifically and unequivocally that there is no time at which that can be achieved in all its pristine purity.

He went on to say:

It is therefore necessary to realise while it may be a fundamental objective to be sought it must be understood to be incapable of actual achievement at any time. Nevertheless the law should do what it can to as near as practicably achieve it.

I think the important point made by the Leader of the Opposition is that he does aim to achieve it and it is not surprising that he should aim for this because the Liberal Party in many ways is in fact the Party that is most discriminated against under the present setup.

The figures showing the total area of electoral divisions held by each political party in each State, Territory and throughout Australia as a whole are interesting. I seek leave of the House to incorporate in Hansard a table setting out these figures.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.
## Commonwealth Electoral Bill (No. 2) 1001

### TOTAL AREA OF ELECTORAL DIVISIONS HELD BY EACH POLITICAL PARTY IN EACH STATE, TERRITORY AND TOTAL AUSTRALIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State or Territory</th>
<th>Australian Labor Party</th>
<th>Liberal Party</th>
<th>Country Party</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SQUARE MILES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>211,712.1</td>
<td>10,710.9</td>
<td>87,011.0</td>
<td>309,434.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>2,900.4</td>
<td>22,229.4</td>
<td>62,920.2</td>
<td>88,150.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>202,613.0</td>
<td>10,617.0</td>
<td>453,770.0</td>
<td>667,000.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>195,389.0</td>
<td>184,681.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>380,070.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>897,953.1</td>
<td>15,741.9</td>
<td>62,225.0</td>
<td>975,920.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>26,382.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26,382.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,536,949.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>244,080.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>665,926.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,446,956.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six States</td>
<td><strong>939.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,537,888.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>244,080.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,186,206.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,968,175.0</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### PROPORTION OF THE TOTAL—PER CENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State or Territory</th>
<th>Australian Labor Party</th>
<th>Liberal Party</th>
<th>Country Party</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROPORTION OF THE TOTAL—PER CENT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>68.42</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>28.12</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>25.33</td>
<td>71.38</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>30.38</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>68.03</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>51.41</td>
<td>48.39</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>92.01</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>6.38</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>62.81</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.98</strong></td>
<td><strong>27.21</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six States</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>51.81</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.22</strong></td>
<td><strong>39.97</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compiled at request by the Legislative Research Service from information obtained from the Commonwealth Electoral Office.

**Dr KLUGMAN**—We find that the Australian Labor Party holds in 6 States, excluding the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, 62.81 per cent of the area. If we include the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory we come down to about 52 per cent of Australia as a whole. This is approximately the proportion of votes that the Labor Party received at the last election, and it is approximately the proportion of representatives we have in this House. So that is fair enough. I am not complaining. The Liberal Party, on the other hand, holds only 9.98 per cent of the total area in the 6 States and only 8.22 per cent of the total area of Australia. The Country Party holds 27.21 per cent in the 6 States and 40 per cent of Australia as a whole, if one includes the Northern Territory.

I feel that the Leader of the Opposition, when speaking undoubtedly for the Liberal Party alone and not for the Country Party, put up a reasonable argument that he is in favour of one vote one value and that this Parliament should legislate to achieve this end as nearly as practicable. In his speech on the Bill last Thursday night he said:

The Liberal Party believes that our purpose in shaking this legislation should be commenced by 4 basic principles. Firstly, that parliamentary democracy must be preserved and be seen to be preserved; secondly, electorates should as near as practicable, be equal in numbers through the expected lifetime of the distribution; thirdly, to prevent excessive sectional representation in the Parliament; and, fourthly, to prevent the gerrymandering of electoral boundaries.

I certainly would not disagree with him on the propositions which he put forward. He went on to say:

Our purpose is to maintain, as far as is practicable and fair, the principle of one vote one value.

The Liberal Party believes that the electoral commissioners when drawing up a distribution should have sufficient tolerance above or below the average to enable them to judge population movements to achieve equality about mid-term.
I think the important point to remember—and I hope that the Distribution Commissioners will remember this—is that the Liberal Party and the Labor Party, the parties in this House which represent the vast majority of the people of Australia, agree that the main approach in redistribution should be on the basis of population and the main variation within the 10 per cent or 20 per cent, whatever it may be at the time of the redistribution, should be on the basis of expected population changes during the next few years. I think it is important to recognise this.

The Labor Party obviously is disadvantaged at the present time. The tables attached to the Minister's second reading speech show that in New South Wales—I am dealing only with New South Wales today—9 of the 10 electorates with the highest population are held by the Australian Labor Party. In order of highest population they are Werriwa, Chifley, Cunningham, Mitchell, Grayndler, Prospect, Parramatta—the only seat that is held by the Liberal Party—Macarthur, Sydney and Macquarie. Nine out of the 10 are each represented by one single Labor Party member in this House and only one by the Liberal Party. The Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), representing Werriwa as he does, on 30th June 1971 represented a population of 142,568, nearly twice as many people as you, Mr Deputy Speaker, represented in this House—a total number of 80,475. Since then the position would have worsened from our point of view because Werriwa's population is increasing and the people of Lyne are leaving that electorate. Even though the electoral commissioners will distribute electorates on the basis of actual electors I hope they will also look at the matter from the point of view of the total population, realising that we represent not only people who will have a vote at the next election but also people who do not have a vote either because they are too young or because they are not yet naturalised.

Last week we had the spectacle of the Country Party and the Liberal Party fighting in this House and voting against one another over the relative salaries of the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party and the Leader of the Australian Country Party. We were assured that this argument was a purely symbolic argument. We were told that the Leader of the Australian Country Party, of course, did not need more money but that he was only symbolically trying to show how important the Country Party was. I do not think that anybody in this House listening to the debate on electoral redistribution would believe for one moment that this matter is a symbolic argument so far as the Country Party is concerned. It would not care a hoot about symbols on this issue. All it is concerned about is preserving its small electorates.

Mr Corbett—Small electorates? Where did you get that from?

Dr KLUGMAN—I mean small in terms of population. I think it is important that we do not finish up with extreme gerrymanders. This applies whether we are talking about State Houses or the Commonwealth Parliament. I suppose the most extreme gerrymanders from opposite sides have occurred in Queensland. We can see the sorts of people they have produced as Premiers. Firstly we had Vince Gair as Premier as the result of the Labor gerrymander. Currently Mr Bjelke-Petersen is the Premier, again because of an extreme gerrymander. I think few people in this country will dispute my proposition that this sort of gerrymander does not bring to the top the best people as Premiers in that State.

Sitting suspended from 6.14 to 8 p.m.

Dr KLUGMAN—Before the suspension of the sitting we were discussing the Commonwealth Electoral Bill, which, basically, has 2 aims. One aim is to change the present 20 per cent population margin between electorates which can be allowed by the Distribution Commissioners. The second aim is to remove the provision that distance and size of an electorate should be the main factors considered in giving effect to the 20 per cent margin. I was pointing out that there was a significant difference—in fact, there is a complete opposition—between the points of view expressed by the Leader of the Liberal Party and the Leader of the Australian Country Party, both of whom have spoken in this debate. The Leader of the Country Party strongly opposed the proposition of one vote, one value. The Leader of the Liberal Party, as Leader of the Opposition, when speaking last Thursday strongly supported the proposition of one vote, one value and said that the main factor to be taken into account by the Commissioners at the next redistribution should be the likely changes in the population of the electorates during the next 3 to 6 years. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition on this point; I think all members on this
side of the House would agree with him. I wonder whether some compromise cannot be reached between us. I am sure that much compromise would be required because most of us on this side of the House would agree that if the 10 per cent margin exists purely for the purpose of allowing for changes in population, that margin should be applied.

The honourable member for Gwydir (Mr Hunt), who spoke before I did this afternoon, did not pretend that the difference between the Liberal Party and the Country Party today was a symbolic difference. That may have been so last week on the question of the difference in salary as between the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr Lynch) and the Leader of the Country Party. Last week, honourable members may recall that we were told that a symbolic difference existed between them. It was maintained that, in fact, the Leader of the Country Party could buy us all and that the question of money was only a question of symbolism. The honourable member for Gwydir and, I think, the other members of the Country Party who have spoken in this debate, have shown quite clearly that no symbolic question is involved in this issue, but that they are worried about losing their seats. The honourable member for Gwydir referred to the 2 new electoral divisions which are to be formed in the western suburbs of Sydney and he made the categorical statement that they would replace 2 rural seats. I hope that that is so, but if we looked at the figures for the Sydney metropolitan area I think we would probably find that only one of the seats that would be abolished would be a rural seat and that the other would be from the inner area of Sydney. I think we must again pay tribute to the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly), who introduced this Bill, and point out how unselfish he has been on this issue because his seat is one of the seats that has a relatively small population. It is almost approaching the population of the major Country Party seats and certainly is on the way down in regard to population. The honourable member for Gwydir also made the point that the principle of one vote, one value does not exist anymore. If the honourable member was referring to individual electorates, I agree with him. The principle of 100 per cent one vote, one value could not operate. But if there were proportional representation for an entire State or for the Commonwealth, we would have one vote, one value.

The honourable member for Moreton (Mr Killen) attacked the Government on the rather shallow proposition that in South Australia and Western Australia there existed a gerrymander much worse than the one which exists in the Commonwealth today. I do not fully understand the honourable member's proposition but I think the implication was that there were Labor governments in South Australia and Western Australia and yet this sort of gerrymander existed in those States. Surely, it is quite obvious that the gerrymander in those States was introduced by Liberal-Country Party governments. Those Parties control the upper Houses in both South Australia and Western Australia and it is impossible for those Labor governments to change the position. It certainly is not in the interests of the present governments in either South Australia or Western Australia to continue the gerrymander and with the extreme loading that exists in country electorates in these 2 States.

Another point of interest to me was that when the honourable member for Moreton was talking about the electorate of Kennedy he made the point that there was no community of interest between Mount Isa and Kingaroy. I assume that Kingaroy is outside the electorate of Kennedy at present; Mount Isa is in the electorate. This seems to be a far fetched sort of argument. What is the proposition? In the case of huge electorates or even an electorate of medium size, such as the one represented in this Parliament by the honourable member for Gwydir, there obviously would be no community of interest between areas that are some distance apart. Probably no community of interest exists in the Sydney metropolitan area between residents of Vaucluse and Paddington. There may be community of interest on the matter of transport to the eastern suburbs, but even there I doubt whether people in Vaucluse would adopt the same attitude as would those in Paddington. Certainly, the sort of people who live in Vaucluse and the sort of people who live in many areas of Paddington do not have a common interest. The proposition that apparently was put up by the honourable member for Moreton is that there must be a complete community of interest to have one electorate. I completely disagree with the honourable member. In fact, in a pluralist society like Australia it is difficult to argue what community of interest exists between any 2 people or number of
groups of people and whether, at any point, the people are completely opposed in regard to community of interest.

I have about one minute remaining to me to speak on this Bill. Earlier I mentioned the case of the honourable member for McMillan and somebody came to me and asked me to repeat what I had said and, for the benefit of those present, I will repeat it. The honourable member for McMillan is a newly elected member of this House. He has made speeches in which he has strongly supported the present system of election to this House and the present form of democracy which exists in this House. The honourable member for McMillan now is nodding his head. I am not surprised that he supports this principle because he was elected to this House from a country seat with 16.6 per cent of the primary vote. With just over 8,000 primary votes, he represents the people of McMillan—nearly 50,000 electors—in this House. That is a ridiculous state of affairs. Considering the views of the honourable member I am not surprised that he received only 8,000 odd votes. The views that he expressed in his maiden speech were the views of the League of Rights and it is surprising and deplorable to me that people with views such as those should receive even 8,000 votes in any electorate in Australia. But I was pleased that even in an electorate such as McMillan he was able to receive only 16 per cent of the vote. I am quite sure that the honourable member for McMillan will not be here after the next election. I will be interested to hear his reply to my claim.

Mr HEWSON (McMillan)—Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Mr HEWSON—Yes. The honourable member for Prospect (Dr Klugman) has deliberately made an untrue accusation. His final statement to the House relating to his earlier accusation was well watered down. His first remark was that I was a member of the League of Rights. I deny it. I never have been. It is a deliberate lie.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The words ‘deliberate lie’ are unparliamentary. I ask the honourable member to withdraw them.

Mr HEWSON—I will say that it is deliberately untrue. I stand by that. I say on oath—

which is something that the honourable member would not take—that it is offensive to me, and I ask him to withdraw it because it is a reflection on the electors of McMillan to say that I was elected on 16.6 per cent of the vote. That was a primary vote. Four non-socialist candidates stood. I finished up polling 51 per cent of the total vote. It is most unfair that the honourable member has disparaged me in this way.

Mr Armitage—Mr Speaker, I rise to order. I did not quite hear. Did the honourable member say that he was elected on 16 per cent of the vote?

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

Mr HEWSON—These sorts of tactics are not savoury. They are most unfair to a new member of this House who has won an election by a very fair method. I had the support of 51 per cent of the total voting population of McMillan. I will challenge the honourable member to contest the seat against me at the next election on a two candidates first past the post basis.

Debate (on motion by Mr Malcolm Fraser) adjourned.

GUARANTEED MINIMUM WAGE LEVY FOR NON-PERMANENT PORTS

Ministerial Statement

Mr Clyde Cameron—I ask for leave to make a statement concerning non-permanent ports throughout Australia.

Mr Whittorn—Where is ‘Stormy Normie’?

Mr Clyde Cameron—‘Stormy Normie’, as the honourable member calls him, is sitting in the official advisers’ area. He is more of an adornment to the chamber than the honourable member is, if I may say so.

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

Mr CLYDE CAMERON (Hindmarsh—Minister for Labour)—Since the guaranteed minimum wage levy issue has become the subject of some particularly opportunistic politics by the Victorian Government and, in this Parliament, by the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser), I want to put on record the course of events which led to this statement today. The first point is that the Association of Employers of Waterside Labour chose to alter the funding basis of the
guaranteed minimum wage levy only a month ago. The day after—on Tuesday, 6th March—I told this House that I was deeply concerned at the implications of the move by the AEWL. I said that I was concerned because it might jeopardise the employment of some hundreds of waterside workers, because it might lead to the closure of ports in a way inconsistent with our developing decentralisation policies and finally because the AEWL had decided on this action without consulting me and in anticipation of the inquiry which I had initiated on 23rd February.

I undertook to examine the effects of the change and to determine what new financial arrangements might be appropriate to offset the ill effects of the move by the AEWL. That was on 6th March. The following day I sent a letter to all members of the Stevedoring Industry Council confirming that an inquiry into the industry should take place and that I would expect it to include an inquiry into the effect of the changes in the method of imposing AEWL levies to finance the guaranteed minimum wage in casual ports. I ask for leave to incorporate in Hansard a copy of the letter which I sent to all members of the Stevedoring Industry Council on 7th March 1973.

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

(The document read as follows)—

7th March 1973

Mr R. M. Northrop, Q.C., Chairman, Stevedoring Industry Council, C/o Owen Dixon Chambers, 205 William Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000.

Dear Mr Northrop,

I refer to my letter dated 23rd February in which I indicated my intention of seeking advice from the Stevedoring Industry Council on a number of matters relating to the future of the industry. The major parties represented on the Council have indicated to me that they see no difficulties in the way of the Council giving me advice in relation to the questions which I propose, namely:

(1) What scheme of permanent employment, if any, can be introduced into ports in which the 1967 National Conference scheme involving weekly hiring does not operate?

(2) What employment arrangements should be made in respect of ports in which no permanent employment arrangements appear to be viable in the foreseeable future?

(3) What special financial arrangements, if any, should be made in respect of ports covered in (1) and (2) above respectively?

(4) What changes, if any, should be made to the basis on which the Stevedoring Industry charge is presently levied, and in particular whether the present 'man hour' basis should be replaced or supplemented by some other method of assessment?

I would appreciate the Council furnishing me with its views on these matters no later than 31st July 1973. This would not, of course, preclude the Council advising me on any one of these issues at an earlier date if it felt in a position to do so.

You probably will be aware of the recent public comment concerning the effect of changes in the method of imposing AEWL levies designed to finance the guaranteed minimum wage in casual ports. In my view, this matter is comprehended by item (3) above, and I would expect the Council's advice to take into account considerations arising in this area.

Yours sincerely,

CLYDE R. CAMERON

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I thank the House. That letter was sent 2 days after I was informed of the AEWL decision. It is difficult to imagine the former Government, of which the honourable member for Wannon was a member, acting with the speed with which I acted in this case. Over the succeeding week my Department continued to monitor the effect of the AEWL levy. On 15th March—10 days after the AEWL decision became known—I told the House:

The inquiries I have made have convinced me that it is not a matter entirely in the hands of the employers to correct. It cannot be corrected at all unless we alter the legislation which brought about the disaster.

Honourable members will appreciate the significance of that comment a little later. During the same debate the honourable member for Wannon alleged, quite incorrectly, that I had not written to the AEWL. The letter dated 7th March, which I have incorporated in Hansard, proves him wrong. The honourable member has been consistently wrong and has consistently attacked me for inactivity when, in fact, I have expended a great deal of energy in correcting the mistakes of the Government of which he was a member. During my speech on 15th March this year I announced that Mr Norman Foster—

Mr James—A good man, too.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Yes, a good man. I agree with the honourable member. During my speech on 15th March I announced that Mr Norman Foster, together with 2 departmental officers had been dispatched to Portland to make an on the spot investigation of the trouble. The issue came up in the House again on 28th March, 3 weeks after the AEWL changed its levying
arrangements. I said in that debate that I would be seeking leave to make a statement in this Parliament concerning the Portland situation as soon as I received the report from my Department which would be reporting to me by Tuesday the following week. That is today. I am happy—indeed I am very proud—to be able to present that report now. That report is now tabled. It has been supplied or will be supplied upon request, to all honourable members.

It was on that date—28th March—that I read to the House part of a letter which I had sent to the Honourable Murray Byrne, Minister for State Development and Decentralisation in the Victorian Government. That letter replied to the criticism of me that had been made by Mr Byrne in the Press and clearly demonstrated the political opportunism of the Victorian Government and its allies in this Parliament in vilifying me during the period of the State pre-election campaign. I ask for leave to incorporate in Hansard the full text of my letter to Mr Byrne—to which, I might add, he has not yet cared to reply.

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

(The document read as follows)—

27 March 1973

The Hon Murray Byrne, M.L.C.,
Minister for State Development and Decentralisation,
232 Victoria Parade,
Melbourne, Victoria 3002

My dear Minister,

In the present controversy over the future of the port of Portland, a number of matters have been misrepresented, and in particular, the Commonwealth's role and the Commonwealth's responsibility.

I have been disturbed, for example, to notice the statements attributed to you in the Press attacking me as though Portland's problems were of my creation; and I was disturbed, too, on being informed that at a meeting concerning Portland which was chaired by you on Friday 23rd March, to which the Department of Labour was not initially invited, a motion was adopted which appears to shift the responsibility for the viability of Portland entirely off the State Government's shoulders and entirely on to mine. That resolution read:

'This meeting asks Mr Cameron to make a direct approach to the AEWL and to use his influence to have the decision reversed. If no satisfactory reply is received within a week (by 30th March 1973), Murray Byrne is empowered to send a representative group through Mr Fraser to see Mr Cameron'.

Let me say that I find the basis on which the motion was adopted on Friday quite erroneous. This is because it bears no relation to the true cause of Portland's problems. I think you know that I have already asked Mr Norman Foster to investigate the situation at Portland and I expect to have his report in a few days. However, it is clear to me, at this stage, that the problems that exist at Portland have been evident for months and even years before the change in AEWL levy.

As I am sure you are well aware, the viability of a port is ultimately determined solely by the volume of cargo which can be shipped through it. This in turn depends upon the industries which carry on their activities in the surrounding district and the arrangements which they make to obtain their raw materials and transport their products.

For some time cargo throughput at Portland has been declining and the cause of this is the way in which local industries have chosen to operate. So long as through-put continues to decline, the change in the AEWL levying system is of marginal significance—of less significance, for example, than extra costs on Portland shippers due to the increase in the Portland Harbour Trust levies from 1st March of this year.

I think recognition of my point is implicit in that Friday's meeting's decision to establish a committee to discuss wool shipments through the port. I am certain this approach will be of far more help to Portland than attacks on me through the newspapers.

This letter is intended to clarify the major issues involved as I see them, but a major statement on my views must await an opportunity to study Mr Foster's report on the situation.

I would be glad if you would pass the contents of this letter on to all those present at the meeting which took place last Friday.

Yours sincerely,

(clyde R. cameron)

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—If the Honourable Murray Byrne had the interest in the welfare of Portland that he pretended to have for the purposes of the election campaign, I would have thought that at least he would have replied to my letter to him dated 27th March, but not a word have I heard from the Honourable Murray Byrne. The day after that letter was sent—28th March—acting on advice from Mr Foster and other officers of the Department as to the seriousness of the situation in some smaller ports, I sent an urgent telegram to the parties to the Stevedoring Industry Council. That telegram read as follows:

In view of the difficulties at smaller ports I would be glad if Council could urgently advise me of their views on the guaranteed minimum wage levy. Specifically I seek its view on the desirability of funding the guaranteed minimum wage levy in non-permanent ports out of the uniform levy imposed under the Stevedoring Charges Act, on all ports permanent and non-permanent.

I had the added advantage that Mr Norman Foster had actually conferred with the members of the Stevedoring Industry Council and was able to report to me directly on the issues as the Council saw them.
This proposal seemed to me the only one which could advantage Portland, Cairns, Mackay, Coffs Harbour and Esperance—the ports in which the guaranteed minimum wage levy had been increased—without disadvantaging the remaining ports whose levy had been decreased. The effect of merely returning to the old system—the course advocated by the honourable member for Wannon—would have been to help Portland marginally, and only marginally, at the expense of ports like Geelong outside his electorate. I could not afford to be so partisan. I had to adopt a national outlook to this question and had to behave in more of a statesmanlike manner than the purely partisan parish pump attitude which the honourable member for Wannon has only recently been able to raise in himself. Until recently he did not bother to have even a parish pump interest in the electorate of Wannon but now at any rate he has been able to muster this interest while the Victorian State election campaign is in progress, a synthetic parish pump interest in the affair.

This afternoon the Stevedoring Industry Council informed me of its unanimous recommendation and I am pleased to be able to read now to the Parliament the text of the message that I received. The Council agreed, firstly, that it is desirable that the costs of the guaranteed minimum wage scheme should be funded through the stevedoring industry charge and, secondly, that in that event the cost of this particular item of expenditure should be made from the proceeds of all three rates of charge which will involve a contribution from permanent ports, as applies in the case of other industrial costs. I am able now to state to the Parliament that I am authorised by a unanimous decision of the Government members Industrial Relations Committee to recommend to the Cabinet that the guaranteed minimum wage levied in the non-permanent ports be funded from the charges made under the Stevedoring Charges Act. This means that all ports, permanent and non-permanent, will contribute to the minimum wage payments made in the smaller ports.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Could I ask——

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—No, you cannot ask anything. This will have a very substantial effect on the viability of some of these ports. For example, in Portland the guaranteed minimum wage levy will be reduced from $1.15 a man hour to about 2c or 3c a man hour.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Hear, hear!

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Now we have a cry ‘Hear, hear!’ from the honourable member who presided over the decision of Cabinet to destroy the smaller ports by the introduction of the former legislation which placed the full responsibility for maintaining these smaller ports in the hands of the employers concerned. Here is the guilty man sitting at the table, the honourable member for Wannon. He was responsible for the situation that we are in now. Not one word did he utter in this Parliament in protest against the Government’s action. Not one question did he ask while he was a private member in this Parliament about the future of Portland. He had 2 spells as a private member—one before his dismissal as a Minister and another during the interregnum till he got back into the Cabinet as the Minister for Defence. On not one occasion did he make any attempt to raise this in the Parliament, so meagre was his interest in the port of Portland. And if it were not for the fact that we have a State election in Victoria his interest now would be no more than it was then.

All the non-permanent ports will be advantaged by the change as this levy of 2c or 3c a man hour will be uniform. Only Geelong, whose levy has fallen to 2c now, will not gain by the change but neither will it suffer by the change. I believe that this recommendation represents a far better solution to the problem of the non-permanent ports than those which have been advocated by the honourable member for Wannon or by the Victorian Government. It is the solution advocated by Mr Bill Lewis, the member for Portland in the Victorian Parliament, who has been indefatigable in his representations to me on this matter. Every day since this dispute occurred Mr Lewis has been in touch with me and my office. Every day I have given him a running account of how the negotiations are proceeding and no one could have taken a greater interest in the affairs of the port of Portland than Mr Lewis. The only time I have heard from the honourable member for Wannon was when he twice got up in this Parliament and gazed up at the Press hoping that it would report him for the purposes of his local paper. Beyond that not a scintilla of interest did he show in the whole Portland dispute.

I believe we have the right solution. It was the inability of the honourable member for
Wannon to understand the working of the levy system which led to his quite erroneous and unworthy accusation that a deal had been done between the AEWL, the Waterside Workers Federation and the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the parties to the Stevedoring Industry Council. In fact, he showed so little knowledge of the industry that my informants advise me that when he was dealing with this matter in another place he made such a fool of himself that the Honourable Murray Byrne had to call him to one side and explain to him what it was all about. Even the Honourable Murray Byrne laughed about it. I do not know whether the Honourable Murray Byrne is a member of the Country Party or the Liberal Party but he was almost beside himself with mirth at the lack of interest which the honourable member for Wannon displayed when he was called upon to pontificate on the disputes at Portland. The honourable member for Wannon tabled in Parliament on 28th March a letter to Mr Murray Byrne from the Executive Director of the AEWL, Mr Craig, in which Mr Craig said that at a Stevedoring Industry Council meeting on Friday, 16th March, 'an arrangement whereby some casual out-ports were subsidising others was rejected entirely by the parties to the discussions, including the Waterside Workers Federation and the ACTU on the grounds that it was improper for some small ports which may well have problems of their own to be forced to carry additional costs to maintain another port or ports'.

The honourable member for Wannon implied that this was a conspiracy but I believe that the Council was quite correct in rejecting a scheme of cross-subsidisation between out-ports—that is, temporary ports—just as it was quite proper to recommend a scheme of cross-subsidisation which would involve the permanent ports. That is just another example of the disregard of the facts by the honourable member for Wannon. I believe a solution of this kind justifies the 4 weeks time between the AEWL's change and this announcement during which we have examined the possibilities within my Department. After 23 years of inaction by the former Government, of which the honourable member for Wannon was a member, my Government and my Department in the short space of 4 weeks has been able to come up with a solution which will, providing the State Government does its part—and I emphasise that provision—bring a solution to the problems of the port of Portland.

I turn now to the report on Portland prepared by Mr Foster and other officers of my Department. Although the report has been prepared very quickly in response to the urgency of Portland's problems, I believe it makes a profoundly important contribution to the future of smaller ports generally. The report makes it quite clear, as I have already pointed out in my letter to Mr Byrne, that the viability of smaller ports like Portland will not, in the end, be judged by the nature of the levying arrangements for the guaranteed minimum wage. The causes of Portland's decline go far deeper and quite beyond the ambit of my portfolio. There is, however, a great deal that the Victorian Government, which has attacked me with such ferocity over this issue, could do to ensure Portland's future. My Department's report concludes in the following manner:

Having considered a wide range of views, examined submissions and documentation together with the results of inspections at Portland, the following matters are noted.

The port faces a number of problems which threaten its viability. They include trends toward centralisation and containerisation, seasonal factors and special overseas customer requirements. These have not occurred suddenly (except perhaps for seasonal factors) but have been evident for several years.

Although the Victorian Government has espoused the development of Portland as an example of decentralisation, a pattern of trade and transport has been allowed to develop which has resulted in cargoes by-passing Portland in favour of Melbourne and Geelong. These developments, depending as they do on road and rail transport, lie within the power of the State Government to correct.

The introduction of the changed levy arrangements has caused considerable concern in Portland. This concern was exacerbated by what was seen as a cavalier attitude on the part of the AEWL, whereby interested parties were denied an opportunity to express a viewpoint on this matter prior to changes being made. The change in levy arrangements was seen as a fundamental departure from the established practice of uniform levies, and not merely an increase in the rate. It was interpreted by some parties that smaller ports such as Portland were being deliberately driven out of existence. In this context, the view was put that the AEWL represents shipping companies and was subject to control and direction by overseas shipping interests to this end.

Having regard to suggestions that the former basis of funding the guaranteed wage should be restored, it is clear that the pattern of cargoes moving through Portland developed under the old
basis of funding when a uniform rate of levy was applicable. It follows then that reverting to the former basis of funding will do nothing to encourage the future balanced growth of the Port.

It was suggested that the establishment of a container facility for roll-on roll-off vessels should be given consideration as a first step in a co-ordinated approach to ensuring the future of the port. In view of the declining pattern in non-bulk cargoes, and existing competition from road/rail transport, such a step could only be justified if suitable action were taken by State and local authorities to ensure a worthwhile volume of cargoes being available for shipment.

Future employment arrangements for waterside workers in small ports (including Portland) were the subject of a communication from the Minister for Labour to the Stevedoring Industry Council on 23rd February 1973. The Minister sought the Council's consideration of this whole area and such an examination by this forum would give the Minister guidance as to the future of small ports and place the labour aspects of this matter in the proper perspective.

In other words, the report notes that a change to the minimum wage levy will not save Portland. Its vitality depends on action by the Victorian State Government. Without that, nothing that we can do by way of levies will provide a cure for the problems of Portland. Figures within the report sustain the argument that Portland's decline began long before 5th March when the employers' organisation decided to increase the charges. For example, in the financial year 1967-68, 63,942 bales of wool were shipped from Portland. This represented 38.98 per cent of the bales sold in Portland.

Mr James—How much of that wool was from the honourable member for Wannon?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—that is what I am trying to find out. I do not know whether he sells all his wool through the Portland wool stores. I do know that there was one time when, according to reports—I do not know whether they are true and I cannot vouch for them but the honourable member will tell us later—he shipped his wool direct to the London wool stores. He did not worry about the Portland wool sales. I do not know whether that report is correct but he has friends in London and he knows more about London than he does about Portland so he probably decided to do that. By the financial year 1971-72 only 5,309 bales were shipped from Portland. This represented 2.24 per cent of the wool sold. A similar situation is reflected in the export of dairy products from Portland. I do not know whether the honourable member for Wannon also milks cows but if he does he might be able to explain how these figures came about. In 1967-68, 11,410 tons of dairy products were exported through Portland. In 1971-72, 5,930 tons were shipped. As the report notes:

It would seem that rail and road transport organisations have been able to apply policies which have operated to oppose the Victorian Government's announced policy of decentralising trade at Portland.

It is for that reason that the report says that it is:...

unlikely that a reversion to the former funding arrangements will have any significant effect in developing trade through the port.

The Government has decided not to revert to the former funding arrangement, but even the new and generous arrangements which I now recommend to Cabinet will have insufficient effect on stevedoring costs to save Portland without rapid action from the Victorian Government of the kind referred to in the report.

I place on public record my appreciation of the tremendous interest of and the great help I have received from Senator Primmer in this matter. He has given a great deal of his time to this subject and, like the local State member, Mr Bill Lewis, M.P., has been in daily contact with me to ask that my Department indicate clearly what it proposes to do in this matter. I have now done that, but I repeat that if the Victorian Liberal Government does not get off its backside and do something about it the port of Portland will be doomed no matter what the Australian Government does. The port of Portland will not survive if the Liberal Government of Victoria pays special concession freights to take the wool and other materials that normally would be shipped through Portland down to Melbourne for shipping. We will not get the best out of Portland if the Victorian Liberal Government does not do something about the roll-on roll-off facilities that must be introduced into Portland. We need stern loading also in Portland if we are to get the best out of the port. It is a good port. I believe it has a draft of something like 70 feet. It is one of the deepest ports—if not the deepest, very nearly the deepest—between Melbourne and Fremantle. As I say, it is a good port. It does not deserve to languish and it does not deserve the shocking treatment and neglect which the former Government demonstrated towards it when that Government had the opportunity to
do something positive to save the port from the disaster that is now overtaking it. I present the following paper:


and move:

That the House take note of the paper.

Suspension of Standing Orders

Motion (by Mr Clyde Cameron)—by leave—agreed to:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the honourable member for Wannon speaking for a period not exceeding 30 minutes.

Mr MALCOM FRASER (Wannon) (8.42)—Mr Speaker, the Minister for Labour (Mr Clyde Cameron) has tried to hide in a mild political barrage—mild for him—a complete recognition that what had occurred around the levy question was a Federal responsibility resting upon his shoulders. Many people would have been a good deal happier during the last month if there had been public recognition of that fact. If the Minister had practised, as his Government is meant to practise, a pattern of open government and had advised people—the Portland Harbour Trust commissioners and others—of the moves that have now been revealed in his statement, a good deal of the public concern and public agitation which has occurred would not have occurred. It is quite clear that the Minister for Labour has been responsive to the very real pressure that has come from the Portland Harbour Trust, the Port Development Authority, the State Government, and all the local members of Parliament concerned—members of the Liberal Party, the Australian Labor Party and the Australian Country Party, including my friend the honourable member for Wimmera (Mr King)—and has acted in a way which certainly will assist the small ports around Australia. I only hope that the Minister has success in having his recommendation accepted by Cabinet. The House needs to note that what he has said tonight is a recommendation that he will put to Cabinet. At this stage it is not in fact a Cabinet decision. I hope that the Cabinet decision will be made promptly and that any necessary amending legislation will be introduced equally promptly.

It needs to be remembered that what happened regarding these levies occurred during the term not of the previous Government but of the present Minister for Labour and there-fore the responsibility for this matter rested upon his shoulders. That has now been recognised. It was recognised in a resolution moved in the Upper House of the Victorian Parliament and supported by every member of that Parliament. It was recognised by every member of that Parliament from all parties representing Western Victoria. I think that it would have been better if the Minister for Labour could have shown acceptance of his responsibility initially and dealt with this matter in a manner that befits this Parliament instead of hiding it under a political smoke-screen as he has sought to do.

I recognise that this might be in part a mild bait from the Minister for Labour, but I think it needs to be put on record again that in the initial battle to have wool sales established in Portland we broke a 70-year relationship with another wool broking firm, first to try to sell at Portland when wool buyers did not turn up to buy and then, as the only way in which Portland could be supported under those circumstances—as many other people from western Victoria did, by exporting through the port of Portland did—selling of necessity in London until wool sales were established at Portland. Since then many other people, including myself, have done nothing but sell wool in Portland, and that will continue. But what has occurred—what the Minister has announced—is in plain terms a victory for Portland and for decentralised ports. I thank the Minister for Labour for it, but I could have thanked him more warmly if he had left the politicking out of his speech.

I am glad that the Minister has come to the conclusion that he has come to because I believe it is the right conclusion. He has come to a conclusion which will enable Portland and many other decentralised ports in Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia to continue on a competitive basis. His statement is full justification for the view that has been expressed by representatives of all political parties in Victoria, that the levy was a matter for the Minister for Labour and the Minister for Labour alone. But he has responded to that by the statement he has made accepting that responsibility. If he could only have shown a greater degree of concern, given some indication of his thinking earlier than this, then much of the concern and the moves that have taken place in the last month would not have been necessary. The recognition was belated, but it is recognition as a result of
pressure from all parties and from many different people. Pressure has come from all local members of Parliament, from the Portland Harbour Trust, from the Port Development Authority and from the State Government, and it is noted that members of all political parties have supported the resolutions that were sent and put to the Minister for Labour on this matter.

But the Minister's statement glosses over the importance of the levy. It says, really, that the levy is not important to Portland. In his speech the Minister said:

... the report notes that a change to the minimum wage levy will not save Portland. Its vitality depends on action by the Victorian State Government.

Later he said:

It is for that reason that the report says that it is 'unlike that a reversion to the former funding arrangements will have any significant effect in developing trade through the port'.

Earlier in his statement he quoted the report as saying:

It follows then that reverting to the former basis of funding will do nothing to encourage the future balanced growth of the port.

That statement in the report is grossly inaccurate and it may be that its inaccuracy is due to the haste with which it was prepared. If the report had been checked with the Portland Harbour Trust and the Port Development Authority, they would have known of its inaccuracy.

Let me give one example. A significant trade has been developed through Portland in bagged wheat. Now, because of the changed levies that had occurred as a result of the decision of the Association of Employers of Waterside Labour, 5,000 tons of bagged wheat were going to attract an additional levy of more than $7,000 in Portland and, I think, under $200 in Geelong. There was trade of about 40,000 tons of bagged wheat, and additional levies therefore would have approached $60,000 through Portland. Clearly, the levy for this trade in bagged wheat, bagged grain, was going to be a complete killer. Also, an export trade in oats was developing which I think would have been affected in a somewhat similar manner. These facts, I think, do not find proper recognition in this report which I have not had time to examine in detail. Of course, I have seen the extracts contained in the Minister's speech, and they show that the report is deficient and deficient in serious respects, in trying to suggest that this levy was not really an important matter for outports and was not going to have a material effect. In terms of bagged wheat and labour intensive cargo of that kind, it was going to have a very material effect.

The Minister for Labour on 2 occasions in this Parliament has tried to suggest that there are substantial problems facing Portland as a developing port, a growing port. In order that that might be put at rest, I would ask leave to incorporate in Hansard the last report of the Portland Harbour Trust commissioners.

Mr SPEAKER—Is leave granted?

Mr Clyde Cameron—Not that book, is it?

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Yes.

Mr Clyde Cameron—Turn it up. No. of course leave is not granted.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Well, at the very least, Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER—I think it is a bit too much to ask that a booklet be included in Hansard. We have to make arrangements with the Government Printer. It is a big job to put the whole of a booklet in Hansard. The Printer will complain about this, as he has done in the past.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Leave has been refused. I am not arguing about that. But, at the very least, may I ask that a comparative trade summary for the years 1967-68 to 1971-72, as set out at page 17 of the report, be incorporated in Hansard.

Mr SPEAKER—Is leave granted?

Mr Clyde Cameron—I would just like to have a look at it.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—That is the table.

Mr Clyde Cameron—I cannot read it from here.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Is leave granted or is it refused?

Mr Clyde Cameron—I do not know what it is. You say that it is something, but I cannot see it.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—I will read it into Hansard. I have sufficient time to do so in the generous half an hour that the Parliament has given me. In 1967-68 the total tonnage which passed through the port was 330,000. In 1968-69 the total tonnage which passed through the port was 473,000 or a little better. In 1969-70 the total tonnage which passed through the port was 609,000.
COMMONWEALTH ELECTORAL BILL
(No. 2) 1973

Second Reading

Debate resumed (vide page 1004).

Mr MALCOLM FRASER (Wannon) (8.54)—The political nature of the second reading speech of the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly)—the Minister responsible for electoral matters—is, I think, without precedent in this Parliament. There has been a long-standing tradition in this Parliament that when Bills are introduced they will be introduced in a factual manner, giving the reasons for the government's proposals and the reasons for the government's decisions. But the Minister, in introducing the Commonwealth Electoral Bill, did so in an entirely political way which was without precedent and which did the Government no credit. The tone for what the Minister did clearly was set by attitudes that are deeply held and deeply expressed in the Australian Labor Party. For example, Mr Hawke, of whom we are not hearing quite so much at the present time, was reported in the 'Australian Financial Review' of 19th February 1970 in this way:

'The cost price squeeze argument', he said—

This is what we are hearing about today—

'amounted to little more than a plea for maintenance of a rural production structure which includes a substantial number of inefficient marginal producers without whom we would all be better off.'

There is a better quotation from the present Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), as reported in the 'Sydney Morning Herald' of 21st August 1965—a little longer ago. But he is not known as a man who changes his view. He was reported as follows:

'Concentrate on better cities', says Whitlam. 'too much attention is being paid to the wishes and needs of rural areas and too little to the needs of the cities', the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Whitlam, said last night.

Cities and civilisation go hand in hand, he told the Sydney division of the Australian Planning Institute last night.

By derivation civilised men are those who live in cities, pagans are those who live in the country.

That is the end of the quotation from the then Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It is that basic attitude which underlines the electoral redistribution proposals of the Minister and the Government and their attitudes to rural communities throughout Australia.

The purpose of the Electoral Bill quite plainly is to achieve permanent Labor rule. I
think it needs to be noted—this is the ultimate test of fairness of an electoral system—that in the one year, under the first redistribution which we had undertaken, in which the Labor Party obtained a majority of votes in total that Party at the same time won office. In 1954 Labor won a greater number of votes in total than did the present Opposition parties. But that was an election fought under a redistribution introduced by a Labor government. But under all the redistributions that we have introduced the party that won the majority of votes was the party that won office, and that includes the last election. That, I believe, is the test of a fair electoral system. It will not be the test if this present Electoral Bill is allowed to go through.

It is worth noting that no redistribution is required under the present law, except in Western Australia. That in itself is the test of a good Act because it is not good government and does not provide for a good Parliament or for continuity if redistributions need to be held too frequently. The Opposition now argues against the 20 per cent provision which has been in the Electoral Act since 1902, pre-dating, I think, the existence of the Country Party by 16 or 17 years. It was a measure that, we were told earlier today, was passed without dissent and without argument because it was accepted as being reasonably fair and proper. The 20 per cent provision, as has been explained on a number of occasions, is necessary to allow for population changes. If we are not to have a 20 per cent variation from the average, if it is to be only 10 per cent as this Government wants and if we couple that with the other electoral changes it wants to introduce into the Act, we will be faced with 3-yearly redistributions. That would be a nonsense and a disastrous proposal. It is worth noting that in the United Kingdom, because as I understand it, that country had become concerned about the frequency of redistributions, amendments were introduced so that there would not be redistribution changes more frequently than every 10 to 15 years.

We need to look at the proposal in this Bill in the light of other proposals that have been foreshadowed. The Prime Minister was put through the wringer and ultimately gave an assurance that the actual method of voting would not be altered in the life of this Parliament. But he was playing with the prospect of an optional preferential system. It has been made quite plain that if the same Party were returned to office after another election there would be the first past the post voting system, which is the second plank in trying to ensure perpetual Labor rule. The 2 proposals that we are now debating, coupled with the foreshadowed Labor rule, which is lucky enough to win it, need to be looked at in that light. The insidious changes that are proposed are being introduced under a very attractive slogan—one man, one vote, one value. But what is the difference in principle between a 20 per cent variation from the mean and a 10 per cent variation from the mean? There is no difference in principle between the two. It is a question of degree. What is being proposed in this area needs to be looked at alongside the changes that the Government wants in section 19 of the Act, to which I shall refer in a moment.

It is interesting to note that some Government supporters do not believe their own words. The honourable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr Collard) on 11th March 1968 had this to say to the Chairman of the Redistribution Committee at a hearing in Western Australia. He said:

If this is so then I would respectfully draw attention to certain factors which in my opinion are such as to warrant the boundaries of the Kalgoorlie electorate being drawn to ensure that it contains no more than the absolute minimum of electors.

This meant 20 per cent below the average figure. In 1968 the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), who was then Leader of the Opposition, in a letter reiterated a view he had expressed in 1962. From any plain reading of his letter he was surely asking the distribution Commissioners in New South Wales to use the maximum provision of the law—20 per cent. Now the Government says that the maximum provision should be 10 per cent to follow the slogan 'one man, one vote, one value'. The facts are that because of movements in population an allowance is needed—not a mandatory allowance but an allowance which the Commissioners may use if they believe it is necessary and desirable having in mind the various factors which this Parliament determines that they should take into account in drawing the boundaries of electorates.

Again, do we find any proposal from the Government to reduce the number of electorates in Tasmania from the constitutionally
guaranteed 5 seats? Do we hear Government supporters saying that the principle of one man, one vote, one value must apply in Tasmania? Is it going to take seats away from Tasmania in a constitutional referendum? Tasmania has 10 senators and 220,000 voters and New South Wales has 10 senators for more than 2½ million voters. This difference is for good and valid reasons. The Government has mooted the prospect of having 2 senators for the Australian Capital Territory and 2 for the Northern Territory. Where is the one man, one vote, one value principle in these aspects of the Labor Party's proposals? For a moment it has been put aside.

The difference between 20 per cent and 10 per cent is a difference of degree; it is certainly not a difference of principle. Government supporters who tried to suggest that there was some basic and pure principle involved in this proposal certainly were not depicting the matter properly. The 20 per cent provision enables the Commissioners more nearly to achieve proper equality of representation throughout Australia. I think it is necessary to have in mind that this is not just the Australian view. In Canada the variation from the mean may be 25 per cent either way. In the United Kingdom electorates move from 40,000 to 80,000 voters and in the United States of America, under its Supreme Court ruling, variations of more than 15 per cent from the average have been accepted.

When we look at section 19 of the existing Act and the changes which the Labor Party wants to initiate in that area we find the really insidious nature of its proposals which would have a dramatic and unfortunate impact upon representation in this Parliament. The Government wishes to remove all reference to area, remoteness, density or sparsity of population. This, I believe, shows a complete misunderstanding of rural representation. It shows a complete misunderstanding of the time lost in travelling from one centre in a remote electorate to another centre in that electorate. It is important that honourable members within this Parliament should have the capacity and the assistance to enable them to provide equal representation to the people in their electorates. The honourable member for Kalgoorlie obviously would find it difficult to cover his electorate as easily as one of his colleagues from metropolitan Melbourne or Sydney would find it to cover his electorate.

The Government wants changes by removing references to area and disabilities arising from remoteness or distance. But at the same time it wishes to leave in a change that was introduced as a proper balancing factor in the 1965 changes to the Act. I refer to the trend of population changes. An analysis of that provision reveals the real and true effect of the proposed amendments suggested by the Government. The effect of removing those references to area and of leaving in the reference to population changes would mean that the extra-metropolitan seats would not only be smaller in size, as obviously they must be, but also they would be smaller in population than the large rural electorates of Australia. I do not believe that there is anyone, whether he is in an inner area of a great city or in a remote country town, who would believe that it is a viable or a just proposition to have the extra-metropolitan seats not only smaller in size, as they obviously are, but smaller in population and smaller in their numbers of voters than the great and large rural electorates of Australia.

This is the effect of the proposals of the Government. This is the result that they would achieve. That, I believe, would be a quite unjust result. It would be unjust and it would be inequitable. It reveals the blatant sell-out of rural Australia by the present Government. It reveals the falsity of the claims to support the principle of one man, one vote, one value in all its purity. That concept is something which the publicity machine of the Government has been trying to spread for the last several weeks. Under the proposals as many as 10 seats could be moved from great and large areas of the country, from provincial towns, to the smaller electorates of the extra-metropolitan areas which I have mentioned. This would not be of advantage to a nation which is the most centralised in the world. Surely we want a parliament which has a real concern for decentralisation, not just in one area in Albury-Wodonga but over the whole of this nation, and we want a parliament which will have a balance within it and which will do something to achieve decentralisation. The kind of electoral changes which the Government wants to introduce certainly would not achieve that. I think that the best point to return to is the quote from the then Deputy Leader of the Opposition when he said:

By derivation civilised men are those who live in cities. Pagans are those who live in the country.
That was a report of what was said by the then Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Whitlam, in the 'Sydney Morning Herald' of 21st August 1965. If that is what he believes, the Electoral Bill which his Government has introduced certainly shows the kind of regard that he has for rural interests. We need only to look at other matters which the Government has done or has not done in its short few months of office to see where it has either recanted utterly on promises made to the rural community or forgotten about them completely. The Treasurer (Mr Crean) is on record as having said that the Government would follow the revaluation compensation principles of the previous Government. He said that before Christmas. It is now quite plain that his Government has no intention of following that principle. Two great rural spokesmen for the Labor Party promised $500m at 3 per cent interest for loans for the rural community. Not a word has been said about that. Not a word about that appeared in the Governor-General's Speech and not a word about it has come from the Government since that time. The research funds for rural organisations and the promotion funds for the International Wool Secretariat are very much under threat. Commitments entered into by previous governments are likely to be put aside. The wheat industry is in real difficulty with the negotiations of a new stabilisation proposal because of the attitude of the present Government. Rural reconstruction funds were cut by half. An attempt to increase the rate of interest on those funds was thwarted only because of the opposition of various State Ministers. This is the record up to the present time of the Government's attitude to the rural community of Australia. This Electoral Bill would reduce the rural voice within this Parliament and would make it possible for the great metropolitan cities to utterly swamp other sections of the Australian community. The result would be unjust and inequitable and against the best interests of proper and balanced development in Australia.

The Liberal Party has said that it is opposed to these measures for a variety of reasons and it will be opposing them in this House and in the Senate, the first time round and the second. I would be delighted to see the fight on this measure on any occasion and the empty threats of the Minister for Services and Property about a double dissolution on a measure of this kind will carry no particular weight with the rural community. It will carry no weight with the Minister for Northern Development (Dr Patterson) and the Minister for Immigration (Mr Grassby) or at least with the people who elected them on the last occasion but will think better of it on the next, because they know that they have now elected to this Parliament a Government that is concerned only with votes in large cities and is not concerned with the remoter country towns, provincial cities or the people who live in the rural communities—not just the farmers but the totality of people who live outside the great metropolitan areas. I believe it is a tragedy for Australia that we have such a Government and I hope that it is short-lived.

Mr WALLIS (Grey) (9.12)—I rise to support the Bill before the House which was introduced by the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly). The Minister in the opening remarks of his second reading speech correctly stated:

Free elections are basic to a democratic society. But free elections by themselves are not enough—the results must reflect the will of the majority both in individual constituencies and throughout the nation.

(Quorum formed) The quote continues:

If the electoral laws do not result in the Government desired by the majority—if they are manipulated to reflect the political interest of persons or parties—it would be a denial of the very essence of democracy . . .

To give effect to these thoughts the Government has introduced this Bill in line with its more forward thinking attitude on electoral matters. We have already introduced legislation to give full voting rights to 18-year-olds. The Minister stated in his second reading speech that there would be a comprehensive review of the Commonwealth Electoral Act. He stated also that the question of providing additional representation to both the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory would be the subject of legislation that he intended to introduce into this House at a later date.

The plans of the new Labor Government are in line with the Party's attitude in the past in that it has been from this quarter that electoral reform has always come. We have led the fight against the established interests in our society to obtain some form of electoral justice. This has been the case not only in this country but also in every country that aims to live under a system people like to call democratic. Man for centuries has
desired to take a hand in the manner in which he has been governed. We as a Parliament have always taken many of our customs from the Parliament at Westminster and, whilst that institution is referred to as the mother of Parliaments, the stage that it has reached today did not come about without a continuing fight for fair representation and some form of electoral justice. We can refer to the struggle that took place in the United States of America to set up that country's constitution when lack of representation resulted in the American Revolution and the subsequent setting up of that country's own form of Government. We can look to the present troubles in Ireland, much of which has been caused by lack of representation and repression of the common people of that country in years gone by. France is another example where the fight for democracy has taken place.

Whilst our own situation has been to a certain extent free from the violence of many other countries in their aspirations to seek fair and democratic representation for their people, our own past shows that the political struggles to establish our own form of democracy have been a continuing political confrontation with the Establishment and the forces of privilege, and unfortunately this political fight for fair and democratic representation has not been finally won. The present Bill, besides bringing about a redistribution of seats following the 1971 census—a move which the previous Government dodged—is a further step towards the Labor Party goal of one vote one value. Whilst we realise that there are problems in carrying out this goal in its entirety we believe that this legislation is a big step along the way.

The Bill endeavours to alter the existing tolerance of 20 per cent in the numbers of electors in an electorate to a tolerance of 10 per cent. It also alters other factors. Any examination of the numbers of people eligible to vote in the various electorates as they stood at the election on 2nd December clearly indicates the great variations that exist. These figures certainly show a great difference in representation in this House. Perhaps we can look at some of these variations. In New South Wales, which at the time of the last election had an electoral quota of just over 57,000, the number of electors varied between 47,000 in the seat of Calare, 68,000 in Chifley, 44,000 in Darling and 71,000 in Mitchell. The difference between the largest and smallest electorate in this State was 27,000 voters. In Victoria, which had an electoral quota of nearly 57,000 electors, the electorate of Diamond Valley was made up of 72,000 voters and Mallee was made up of 45,000 voters. The difference between the largest and smallest electorate in that State was 27,000 voters. In Queensland, which had an electoral quota of 57,000 electors we find that Bowman contained 68,000 electors and Maranoa 43,000. The difference between the smallest and largest electorate in that State was 24,520 voters. In my own State of South Australia, where the electoral quota also was 57,000, the electorate of Bonython was made up of 67,000 voters and the electorate of Wakefield contained 45,000. The difference in that State between the largest and smallest electorates was 21,800 electors. Western Australia varied from 64,000 voters in Canning to 50,000 in Forrest, a difference of approximately 14,000 voters. If we look at Tasmania, where of course the position is different because the population is lower, we find a difference of only 3,684 between the largest and smallest electorates. These figures indicate the differences in the size of electorates in the various States.

This Bill will be a progressive step towards the goal of one vote one value. Whilst we realise that some tolerance is essential, this legislation certainly will help to break down the wide disparity that exists now between the various electorates in our Federal system and bring about a system that gives equal voting rights to every elector, irrespective of what he is, what he does or where he lives. As a member for one of the larger electorates, I can fully appreciate the difficulties of distance in these large electorates and the amount of travel involved in endeavouring to give some service to the people, but I feel that this situation does not justify the large disparity in numbers that exists at present. It should not be used to reduce the value of electors' votes in other areas. The best way in which we can overcome this problem is not to reduce the numbers in those electorates to a ridiculous level, making the possibility of a gerrymander of seats very easy, but by the provision of greater facilities to members who represent the larger electorates to enable them to give their electors the service they should be able to expect. I understand that the Minister, fully realising the problems of these electorates, is having investigations made as to how these
members can be assisted. I am sure that he will come up with some worthwhile ideas in an endeavour to overcome these problems.

I note that in the Press last week the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) is reported as having said, in the course of comments he made on this Bill and the proposal to reduce the tolerance from the present 20 per cent to 10 per cent, that few overseas countries had as good a record as Australia in keeping electoral districts politically equal. Surely the Leader of the Opposition could not have been referring to the electoral system that exists in most of our States. With the exception of Queensland, every State has an upper House and in every one there is some grave anomaly in the matter of representation. I am of the opinion that under our present system of government grave doubts exist as to the efficiency or usefulness of upper Houses in the State electoral setup. In most cases they are leftovers from the political power of the landed squattocracy and the wealthy of the last century. In every case they can frustrate the democratic wishes of the people as reflected in the franchise that exists in the State lower Houses, despite the fact that there are inequalities in these themselves.

If we look at the upper Houses that exist in the 5 States other than Queensland we find that in New South Wales the upper House may delay Appropriation Bills for only one month but not reject them; otherwise its powers are unlimited. In Victoria it may not initiate money Bills and can reject, not amend, any financial legislation. In South Australia it may not initiate financial legislation, but here again its powers are practically unlimited except only in that regard. In Western Australia the upper House may not initiate financial legislation. In Tasmania it may not amend annual supply Bills but can reject or delay them indefinitely. so in every one of the States we find that the power of the upper House is far beyond what it should be in a democratic society. In the upper House in South Australia, that is the Legislative Council, we have a clear example of the undemocratic procedure of upper Houses. It is elected on a restricted franchise, with the State divided into 5 electoral districts. These districts each elect 4 members, 2 being elected every 3 years. The franchise, as I mentioned before, is restricted, and as a result denies a considerable percentage of the people of South Australia their right to vote in Legislative Council elections. A further hurdle to democratic government is the fact that the number of electors in the 5 districts varies from 106,000 in one district, that is Central District No. 1, which is an Adelaide seat, to 50,000——

Mr McLeay—Mr Deputy Speaker, I wonder whether you could ask the honourable gentleman to read his speech slightly more slowly. He is talking about South Australia. I am interested in his views.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr MacKellar)—Order! There is no substance in the point of order. The honourable member may deliver his speech as he sees fit.

Mr McLeay—Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to draw your attention to the state of the House. There are members on this side who are interested in the honourable gentleman’s speech. There are about only 6 members from the Government side in the chamber.

Mr Daly—I rise on a point of order. Is it in order for a member who has come into the House for only the first time today to call a quorum?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! There is no substance in the point of order.

Mr WALLIS—(Quorum formed). I thank the honourable member for Boothby. I hope that the people in South Australia now realise the number of electors in the Legislative Council districts in that State. I was mentioning that in Central District No. 1 there are 106,000 voters and that in the Northern District, which is the smallest, there are only 50,000 voters. Prior to the recent election on 10th March the Liberals were able to control 16 of the 20 seats in that House, despite the fact that the Australian Labor Party in South Australia consistently polls well in excess of 50 per cent of the overall vote of the people. As the honourable member for Boothby will well know, it was clearly indicated on 10th March what the people of South Australia thought. I think that the last election showed the Liberal Country League in South Australia that the people of South Australia are not prepared to tolerate such undemocratic political power any longer. The LCL in fact at the last election, despite the unjust electoral set-up, lost 2 of its seats in the Legislative Council and certainly received a big fright in another Legislative Council district.

Efforts to give this upper House some semblance of democracy in the past have always
been rebuffed by the use of the undemocratic power that it has consistently used against the political interests of the people of South Australia. However, the results of the last election are a clear warning to the Legislative Council that refusal to pass legislation from the House of Assembly on matters in which the State Government has a clear mandate from the people will result in the Legislative Council having to answer to the South Australian people for their actions. So much for the South Australian upper House. In every other State upper House we find conditions that have some parallel with the South Australian Legislative Council situation, and until these Houses are reformed to reflect the political wishes of the majority of the people we cannot say that we are a true democracy.

I would like to refer also to the electoral setup in the South Australian lower House, the House of Assembly. Until a few years ago we had the dubious honour of having the most gerrymandered electoral system in Australia under the former Premier, Sir Thomas Playford. We had electorates varying from 4,000 to 40,000 voters. I might add that the numerically smaller electorates were held by LCL members and that the numerically larger electorates had elected Labor members. The former LCL Premier, Mr Steele Hall, apparently had some twinges of conscience about the unfair setup in South Australia and some twinges of conscience over the gerrymander, and as a result had a redistribution carried out in 1969 that did in some measure take some of the worst features out of the gerrymander; but he clung to the weighting of the electorates in areas where the LCL was in favour. Incidentally, Mr Steele Hall has since had the chop for his more progressive ideas. City seats after the redistribution had over 14,000 voters while rural seats had approximately 9,000. It is interesting to note that at the election on 10th March the size of some electorates had remained at 9,000 while some had grown to 23,000 or 24,000. Here again most of the small seats numerically are held by the LCL and the larger seats are held by the Labor Party.

But whilst we still have our anomalies in South Australia, I think we have lost our crown as the most gerrymandered State to Queensland, where we see the reaps of government in the hands of a Party which is receiving only 20 per cent of the overall votes of the Queensland people. Perhaps this is the good record that the Leader of the Opposition mentioned when he referred to the good record Australia has in dividing our electorates equally for political reasons. We on this side of the House firmly believe that one man's vote is as good as another's, and we will continue to press for reforms in the electoral system of our society so that we can say that our society is democratic in every sense of the word. This Bill is a further step along that road, and I therefore fully support the measures contained in the Bill.

Mr NIXON (Gippsland) (9.30)—We are debating a Bill tonight that was introduced by the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) on Tuesday, 13th March, and, without question, Parliament reached a new low in its proceedings with the speech by the Minister. Second reading speeches traditionally and correctly are expected to be technical documents of impeccable accuracy that can be used by all as the basis of judgment on the matter under debate but the Minister for Services and Property used the occasion for the presentation of a blatant, political speech not matched in this Parliament. Knowing the complete impartiality and integrity of the electoral officers, I hope the Minister will have the decency to clear them from any involvement in the political aspects of his speech. He took the occasion to smear the Australian Country Party with statements that were both misleading and untrue. The Standing Orders do not permit me to brand him a liar but were that not so, the Minister would stand condemned by this Parliament as a liar extraordinary.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr MacKellar)—Order! I suggest that the honourable member moderate his language.

Mr NIXON—I am fully aware that I am unable to brand the Minister as a liar. I have made that particularly clear. Such statements as '... the Country Party at both State and Federal levels has consistently exercised ruthless control of the machinery of Parliamentary elections, both Federal and State' were contained in the Minister's speech. As far as I can ascertain, I have been the only member of my Party to be in charge of a redistribution in this Parliament and I had that responsibility because members of both parties in the coalition recognised that the matter would be treated with complete propriety. In regard to the States, only in
Queensland in recent years has a Country Party Minister held the responsibility for redistribution. This has never occurred in South Australia, Western Australia or Tasmania; it occurred more than 30 years ago in Victoria and, as far as I can ascertain, it has never occurred in New South Wales.

That is only one example; research shows that at least another half dozen misleading statements were contained in the Minister's second reading speech. That he should so abuse his privilege as a Minister is a reflection on him, so much so as to call into question the propriety of his holding such a position. That a second reading speech should contain false and misleading statements will also lead to reflections against the traditions of Parliament as a whole. The purpose of this Bill is three-fold. Firstly, it is to enable redistribution to take place in Western Australia, following a census of population demonstrating the need for an extra seat in Western Australia as determined under section 10 of the Representation Act. The nub of the matter is that the census figures do not demonstrate that any change is required in other States and so it is to section 25 (2.) (b) of the Electoral Act that the Minister looks to obtain justification to introduce his electoral gerrymander and it is by a reduction of the 20 per cent differential that has applied since Federation to 10 per cent in the number of electors in each seat above or below the quota of each State that the Minister looks for the right to implement his gerrymander.

Let the people of Australia recognise this stunt for what it is—no more than a justification for the Minister to hold a redistribution as soon as possible. Let me quote the figures to honourable members. Under the Act that has been with us since Federation and as proposed by our founding fathers, only 3 seats out of 45 in New South Wales have more than a 20 per cent variation from the quota. There are 3 seats out of 34 seats in Victoria with such variation; 3 out of 18 in Queensland; 1 out of 12 in South Australia; none out of 9 seats in Western Australia, and none out of 5 seats in Tasmania. By reducing the variation as is now proposed from 20 per cent to 10 per cent, the number of seats that would vary from the requirement would be 18 out of 45 seats in New South Wales, 13 out of 34 in Victoria, 8 out of 18 in Queensland, 4 out of 12 seats in South Australia, 4 out of 9 in Western Australia and none out of 5 in Tasmania. Section 25 (2.) (b) states that a redistribution shall be made:

...whenever in one-fourth of the Divisions of the State the number of the electors differs from a quota ascertained in the manner provided in this Part to a greater extent than one-fifth more or one-fifth less;

So, by reducing the variation in numbers of electors from 20 per cent to 10 per cent, the criteria applying in section 25 (2.) (b) gives the Minister for Services and Property the opportunity for which he says he has been waiting 23 years, and that really is to gerrymander the electorates in favour of the Australian Labor Party.

That really is what this proposition is all about. To achieve that end, the Minister claimed that his entire approach was predicated on the wish to achieve one vote, one value, although he admitted 'that a degree of variation must be allowed, that exact equality in the number for division cannot be achieved, nor is it desirable'. Sensible admission though that is, it is an extraordinary one from this Minister, having regard to the vilification poured out by him and others who have expressed the same view. The only difference is that to obtain the gerrymander the Minister so dearly wants, he suggests that 10 per cent is better than 20 per cent. The 20 per cent variation is a basic factor in the Electoral Act which was no doubt well thought out by our founding fathers and it has stood the test of time.

The Minister made great play of the fact that, in the last redistribution, the Commissioners had made variations in certain electorates, such as Kennedy of 17.95 per cent below the quota, Kalgoorlie of 18.56 per cent below the quota, Darling Downs of 18 per cent below the quota and Grayndler 14.01 per cent above the quota. He made extravagant claims that these variations occurred as a result of amendments to the Act passed by this Parliament in 1965. As far back as 1948 Parliament accepted variations such as 16.4 per cent below the quota for Kalgoorlie, 15.3 per cent below for Bonython and 13.1 per cent above for Curtin. My own electorate of Grampians was 14.3 per cent below the quota in the 1948 redistribution. And what Government controlled that redistribution? None other than the great Australian Labor Party—the great one vote, one value Party. What sheer hypocrisy this is. What utter bunkum for the Minister to use figures of that kind
and state in such a misleading way in what is supposed to be an accurate, technical document, that the Commissioners were forced to produce figures like the ones he quoted because of changes to the Act in 1965. Such misleading statements do the Minister little credit.

The Minister's only interest in one vote, one value is the belief that there is electoral advantage for the Labor Party in such a proposition. The sheer hypocrisy of the Labor Party can best be pointed out by the actions of the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) during the course of the last redistribution. The Prime Minister made a submission to the Commissioners that an extra 4,000 voters should be taken from the seat of Prospect and added to the seat of Reid. The acceptance of this proposal would have been to move further away from the principle of one vote, one value. The proposal of the Prime Minister would have increased the electorate of Prospect from 3.68 per cent to 11.0 per cent below the quota and the electorate of Reid to 16.82 per cent above the quota.

Mr Keogh—There was a good reason for it.

Mr NIXON—Yes, there was a good reason. It emerged that the Prime Minister's son wanted to stand for pre-selection for Prospect and the 4,000 voters included in the area proposed to be shifted to Reid contained the most left wing members of the ALP who were opposed to having the Prime Minister's son as a candidate. Was that a good reason? I consider it a very base reason indeed. But it shows the real attitude of the Labor Party to the principle of one vote, one value—that is, that it should be advanced only when politically expediency demands it. There is one other aspect of the one vote one value concept about which more needs to be said. Right through the Minister's speech he kept making statements such as 'we should not accept regional discrimination', 'the principle of substantial equality of representation between electoral divisions was almost eliminated' and 'every worthwhile authority supports the case for one vote one value and equality of electorates'.

If that is the Minister's view, why does he not do something about the fact that on 2nd December the quota for New South Wales was 57,386 and the quota for Tasmania was 43,902? If he believes that all people should be equal in making the law, why is he not first seeking an amendment to the Constitution to abolish this differential between the States? How does he explain the fact that in Tasmania 10 senators represent only 221,000 electors and in New South Wales 10 senators represent 2.6 million electors? Surely the fact that the Minister has not even mentioned such a difference demonstrates his real lack of sincerity on the question of one vote one value. Why not ask the people of Australia by way of referendum to overcome such sweeping differences? Has the Minister sought to have this matter raised at the constitutional review conference? The fact is that, just as our founding fathers provided for there to be variations in the numbers represented by senators from State to State and for variations in the quotas for members of the House of Representatives as between one State and another, so they provided for a variation from the quota within each State. I suggest that we should not consider departing from the latter provision until consideration has been given to the broader constitutional provisions.

Let me deal with the third area of this Bill. That is the removal of the amendments put into the Act in 1965 for clarification—to remove the words 'disabilities arising out of remoteness or distance, the density or sparsity of population and the area of the division'. No thinking member would challenge the fact that there are enormous difficulties facing members in large country electorates in being able to make themselves available to meet their constituents. Electors in such electorates are often faced with driving hundreds of miles or making expensive trunk line calls when urgent matters arise which require consultation with their Federal member. Similarly, the Federal member in such an electorate is required to drive thousands of miles a year to give his constituents an opportunity to put their case.

The electorate of Gippsland covers 14,524 square miles. It has 15 local government bodies, more than 200 schools, and 27 towns and cities with no commercial air service connecting any of those towns. Compare that with the electorate of Grayndler which covers 8.4 square miles. It is not even the size of a decent property in some parts of Australia. The honourable member for Grayndler could ride around the electorate on a pushbike before breakfast if he had the energy to do so. I understand that the only difficulty he has is when the lift drivers go on strike. He does not walk up the 12 flights of stairs to see
some of his constituents; he makes them walk down the stairs. Equity surely demands that a person living in Gippsland should be able to reach me as easily as a person living in Grayndler can reach the Minister.

The Minister has stated previously that he recognises the great disadvantages and extra cost involved in country electorates and he proposes to assist country members to overcome their disabilities. We all look forward to that assistance. But I noticed the other night, when a certain Bill came into this House, that he voted in favour of all allowances, whether for city or country members, being the same amount. I wonder just how much he is going to do to overcome the disabilities of country members. It remains a simple fact that Canada—a country so often likened to Australia—has a variation of 25 per cent above or below the quota. In the United Kingdom, small though it may be—it would fit into the State of Victoria—at the time of the last redistribution, variations of up to 50 per cent from the quota were given for remoteness, of all things. The Minister has not put forward a satisfactory case to support his amendments reducing the variation from 20 per cent to 10 per cent. All that would do would be to create the unsettling situation of forcing a redistribution every Parliament.

Suspension of Standing Orders

Mr NIXON—The Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) told me a moment ago that he proposes to gag this debate. I believe that he ought not to gag this debate because, as I indicated to him, a number of Opposition members still want to speak on this very important matter. For that reason I propose to move that standing order 93 be suspended during the consideration of the Commonwealth Electoral Bill (No. 2) 1973. The Minister does not know what that standing order says, so I will read it to the House. It says:

After any question has been proposed from the Chair, either in the House or in committee, a motion may be made by any Member, rising in his place, and without notice, and whether any other Member is addressing the Chair or not, 'That the question be now put', and such motion shall be put forthwith and decided without amendment or debate.

So I move:

That standing order 93 be suspended during the consideration of the Commonwealth Electoral Bill (No. 2) 1973.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr MacKellar)—Does the honourable member propose to speak to that motion straight away?

Mr NIXON—Certainly—if I have a seconder.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—If the honourable member speaks now the motion can be seconded after he has concluded his speech.

Mr Daly—Has the honourable member moved that the question be put?

Mr NIXON—No. I am moving for the suspension of standing order 93 so that the Minister cannot gag this debate and so that the debate can proceed after the discussion on the motion for the suspension of the standing order has taken place. The Minister indicated to me across the table that he intended to gag this debate. I believe that what he is doing is gagging—

Mr McLeay—It is shocking.

Mr NIXON—It is shocking. I can understand why my colleagues in the Opposition are upset, because what the Minister is doing is gagging the Parliament on a fundamental issue. We have heard for 2 days from Government supporters about why democracy should be protected and encouraged. They put forward all sorts of statements that they believe support the concept of democracy. Let us have a look at that proposition. The simple fact is that here tonight the Minister shows what he thinks of democracy. He is going to gag the people's representatives in this Parliament and prevent them from speaking on a fundamental issue—that is, how the electoral divisions will be sorted out and how the people will have the right to choose their representatives in this Parliament. It is sheer hypocrisy for the Minister for Services and Property to say that he is going to gag such a debate. If he tells me that he does not propose to gag the debate I will not go on with my motion for the suspension of the standing order. But I suspect that his words to me across the table were correct and that he is going to gag the debate.

The Minister talks about freedom of the individual and the right of one vote one value. How is a member of Parliament in the Opposition in this place going to achieve one vote one value in this place? Only on the sheer brutality of numbers do the Minister's figures count. My colleagues on this side of the House want to debate many aspects of
the Minister's second reading speech. Let us look at the list of speakers. It is fascinating to see the list of Opposition speakers who have not had a chance to speak and whose names are on the speakers list. They are Mr Fairbairn, Mr Adermann, Mr Garland, Mr Hallett, Mr Giles, Mr Lucock, Mr N. H. Bowen, Mr Sinclair, Mr Street, Mr Corbett, Mr Katter, Mr Calder, Mr Holten, Mr Fisher, Mr McVeigh, Mr Lloyd and Mr England. I must say that it is a very good team. They should be given their chance to speak in their rightful place in this Parliament where they were sent to speak. They should not be gagged by the little dictator sitting across the way. Already we have seen the Prime Minister take the opportunity to use Press conferences to avoid making statements in the Parliament on Cabinet decisions. We have seen the Attorney-General (Senator Murphy) wanting an FBI-type political police force for himself, and now tonight we have the last straw from the last bastion of democracy that I thought we had in this place, the Minister for Services and Property, who when on this side of the House used to make great speeches about the rights of individual members of Parliament. But look at him now. He leaned across the table a while ago and told me he was going to gag the debate. Let him rise and deny that he is going to gag the debate. He will not deny it. One has only to look at the list of speakers to follow me to see that Mr Keogh was on the list.

Mr Keogh—I rise to order. Is it in order for the honourable member for Gippsland to refer to honourable members on this side of the House by other than the name of their electorate?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr MacKellar)—Order! The honourable member will refer to honourable members by their electorate.

Mr NIXON—Far be it from me to depart from your ruling but I was quoting from the list of speakers as provided by—

Mr Keogh—I rise to order.

Mr NIXON—As provided by the honourable member for Bowman.

Mr Keogh—The honourable member for Gippsland was attempting to defy your ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker. I note now that he has acceded to your request.

Mr NIXON—The honourable member for Bowman had his name on the list but obviously, being a good friend of the Minister for Services and Property, he was not intending to rise. The fact is that whilst there are 17 or 18 Opposition members ready to rise and tell the Minister that he was wrong in what he said when introducing the Bill, to point out all the misleading statements he made in his speech and what is wrong with the Bill he has introduced, there are no more Labor members on the list who are prepared to get up and defend him. Or are they in the know? Do they know that the Minister intends to gag this debate, that he is going to gag democracy? One can well remember the great speech made in this House by the honourable member for Bradfield (Mr Turner) recently in relation to televising the proceedings of the Parliament, when he referred to democracy and Parliament, and his personal explanation today. I think it is true to say that the Minister is wanting to make this place a forum for Labor Party performance and to use Parliament as a rubber stamp. We on this side of the House cannot accept that. I think that Government members who have their names on the list should be given their rightful opportunity to speak and I do not think that the Minister who made all those misleading statements in such a blatant political speech should be permitted to get away with them for a moment. That is why I have moved for the suspension of standing order 93.

The honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser) is very keen to support me I know because he, as I do, feels hurt that all members in this Parliament this Minister should propose such action. I can recall the great speeches he has made in the past in support of the Parliament and democracy but here tonight he is wanting to gag the people's representatives in the Parliament. It is a thorough shame. He ought to be ashamed. The Minister is red faced; probably he is thoroughly ashamed of himself. This is the third incident we have seen recently. The Attorney-General announced that he wanted to set up his own political FBI and we have the Prime Minister holding Press conferences outside and making major announcements to the Press rather than to the people's representatives in this chamber. This is the last straw—the Minister for Services and Property wants to gag democracy and gag the Parliament.

Mr SPEAKER—is the motion seconded?
Mr MALcolm FRASER (Wannon) (9.55)—I second the motion. The motion moved by the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) is worthy of the support of this Parliament. On the information available to us it appears that the Government intends to gag 17 members on this side of the House who wish to speak on a matter of quite fundamental importance to the future of this Parliament and representative democracy in Australia. This Government was in part elected on a plank of open government which means allowing people within the Parliament to say what they feel they need to say, and making known to the people of Australia the various decisions of the Government and the background to those decisions. Instead we have seen a Government that is already using the gag and restricting the rights of private members in this Parliament more vehemently and viciously than any Government since 1945, certainly any government since the Minister for Services and Property (Mr Daly) has been in the Parliament.

Also we find the Government, far from adhering to its principle of open government, becoming secretive. It is by-passing the organs of this Parliament and is reducing the rights and prerogatives of members of this Parliament. It is doing this now because it is ashamed of what the Bill contains, ashamed to have exposed in debate for another 2 days the provisions of the measure which the Minister has introduced and which he knows is designed to perpetuate Labor rule and to establish a circumstance in which many metropolitan or extra-metropolitan seats would be smaller in terms of the number of voters than some of the large and vast electorates of Australia. That is an utterly unjust proposal and it ought to be debated and exposed to the full. But 17 honourable members on this side of the House are being gagged deliberately. Under the catch cry 'one vote one value' the Government is trying to conceal what could become for the first time in the Commonwealth's history a gerrymander of electoral boundaries. This has not been the case in past redistributions whether undertaken by a Labor or a Liberal-Country Party government. This Bill is all the more important because, bluff though it may be, the Leader of the House has said that it is a measure that could lead to a double dissolution. That makes it all the more important for it to be debated fully and openly.

Mr Daly—I rise to order. We are debating standing order 93 which states:

After any question has been proposed from the Chair, either in the House or in committee, a motion may be made by any Member, rising in his place, and without notice, and whether any other Member is addressing the Chair or not, 'that the question be now put', and such motion shall be put forthwith and decided without amendment or debate.

I submit that those moving and seconding the motion should speak to it and not discuss in broad detail a matter which is at present under discussion in this Parliament.

Mr SPEAKER—that is the rule of the House and should be abided by. The honourable member must speak to the reason for the suspension and not debate the question.

Mr MALcolm FRASER—Mr Speaker, thank you for your ruling. I am relating the reason for the suspension of the standing order to the importance of the measure and the necessity to allow free debate. One of the reasons for the importance of the measure is that although it could lead to a double dissolution 17 honourable members are to be gagged. What is the Government frightened of in this debate? It says it wants open government. We have had a certain lack of enthusiasm on the part of Government supporters in supporting the Bill. Has the Government run out of speakers or has it no more supporters for this measure and does not want Opposition speaker after Opposition speaker to rise and speak on it? Or is it just another of those tactics we saw earlier today when the Prime Minister virtually accused senior public servants of conspiracy? They, of course, are not able to reply under Public Service rules. For the Prime Minister it is open season on all whether they have the right to reply or not, and for members of this Parliament it is the gag denying them the right to speak on matters which are of fundamental importance to Australian democracy.

Mr DALY (Minister for Services and Property) (10.0)—There is no doubt that the Opposition is extremely edgy. Whether it is because of this legislation or the prospect of facing the electors again I leave to the populace to judge. Tonight a motion has been moved to suspend Standing Orders in respect of something that members opposite do not know will happen. I told the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) that something might happen, but how does he know that I am not pulling his leg? Honourable members
opposite will look silly if his claim is not correct. Here we have the great defenders of democracy opposite demanding that Standing Orders be suspended to enable them to debate this great issue that is before the Parliament. Do honourable members know why they have moved this motion? Honourable members opposite want their long list of speakers to be heard in order to stop me from speaking and tearing their attack to ribbons. The world knows this is so.

When this debate commenced a list of 16 speakers was supplied by the Opposition. The Government nominated 16 speakers also. Members opposite knew that when those speakers had been heard I would reply to the Opposition's spurious arguments, but today they introduced further speakers—members who could not speak in an iron lung—to defend their attitude. Many of the defenders opposite are from the Country Party. They are clinging to their ill-gotten gains and trailing behind them like poodle dogs yapping at their heels are members of the Liberal Party. They know that if they do not hang together they will hang separately. That is why they have moved this motion to enable them to discuss this great measure. However, in debating this motion for the suspension of Standing Orders on such a high sounding principle, as they call it, they have wasted the time which would have been allotted to a couple of speakers. I told members opposite this morning that in due course the second reading debate would finish and the Government would allow every member of the Opposition who so desired to speak during the Committee stage of the Bill. This would have enabled those who now cry to high heaven for justice in this place the right to express their point of view, certainly with a limited time of 10 minutes, but when all is said and done not everyone can speak for 20 minutes on every second reading debate. Was that not a fair offer to make to honourable members opposite?

Mr Malcolm Fraser—No.

Mr DALY—Was it not? I tell the people of Australia that this morning I offered every member opposite the right to speak on this Bill but they rejected it. I do not say that members of the Liberal Party would have rejected it but they were told to do so by the Country Party. We know that when the Country Party speaks all those brilliant men opposite—

Mr Giles—Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not want to stop the fun and games or the tirade of the Minister but I think I should take a point of order for the sake of accuracy. At the tail end of last week a complete list of speakers from the Liberal Party and the Country Party was given to the Government Whip. It is not my fault if there is no co-operation on the Government side, but that is the truth.

Mr SPEAKER—There is no point of order. The Chair is not made aware of any arrangements between the Whips.

Mr DALY—I point out to honourable members that when this debate concludes, even if it is gagged now, about 7 hours will have been allowed for the second reading debate and 20 members will have spoken. As every supporter of the Government knows, those in Opposition have been guilty of tedious repetition. Honourable members know as well as I do that the Government gave the Leader of the Country Party (Mr Anthony) an extension of time, and he is only the third most important man opposite. In addition the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) was given 45 minutes in which to speak, which was stretching it a bit. The Government was prepared to give extra time to any third member opposite who wanted to speak, but no one accepted the offer. Yet these are the members who say they want time to talk on this measure. This is nothing but a lot of humbug, as honourable members opposite know. The honourable member for Gippsland spoke about the gag. Members from this side of the House knocked up coming in and out to vote on gag motions when the Opposition was in Government. Members opposite forget that for 23 years when we sat in Opposition we were constantly gagged because the then Government did not have a case. In the 4 weeks of this Parliament on only 2 or 3 occasions has the curtailment of a debate occurred and this was simply because members opposite were frustrating the duly elected Government of Australia, which has an overwhelming mandate to legislate in the interests of the people. Everyone knows that this motion is a phoney proposition. Members opposite are desperate. No doubt they have read the Brisbane municipal results, so why would they not be upset? Why would not the members of the Country Party be worried about what is happening from Brisbane to the Gulf of Carpentaria?
Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Minister is becoming very provocative.

Mr DALY—Mr Speaker, you realise that I have been unduly provoked by this episode. I contend, however, that this motion is a phoney proposition. We listened to the honourable member for Gippsland this evening. He did not say anything new but repeated the same old Country Party philosophy that he has put forward in days gone by. This Government believes in open government. It believes also in freedom of discussion. I repeat that I offered all honourable members opposite the right to speak on this Bill but they would not accept that offer.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Mr Speaker, I take a point of order. If the Government believes in freedom of discussion will those public servants against whom a charge of conspiracy was made this morning be allowed to speak to it?

Mr SPEAKER—Order! That is not a point of order.

Mr DALY—Is it interesting to note how touchy the Opposition is on this question. Had the time of the House not been taken up with this particular debate we would have been listening to a first class speech from a supporter of the Government on this Bill. By moving this motion honourable members opposite have denied to one of their shadow Ministers the right to speak on the measure. I did not deny him that right. This has been caused by the moving of this motion. The former Minister for Shipping and Transport, the honourable member for Gippsland, ran out of matter when he was debating this Bill and with 5 minutes of his time remaining moved this motion to fill in his time. The world knows this, and that is why I mention it now for the benefit of honourable members.

Let me give a clear exposition of what will happen with this Bill. The second reading debate is not yet finished, and I will not indicate what my intentions are in that regard, but tomorrow honourable members will be debating this Bill for a reasonably considerable time. Members will be given the opportunity to participate in the debate during the Committee stage of the Bill. Unless there is undue frustration they may debate the Bill. The fact of the matter, however, is that members of the Liberal Party are prepared to drag along at the heels of the Country Party and frustrate the will of the Parliament by trying to stop legislation. The Government must, in the interests of the people this Bill seeks to serve, take effective action in the Parliament to see that its legislation is passed. The former Minister for Education and Science, the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser) has said: 'Let us have a dissolution'. There were not many cheers when he said that because even if he has not done so, many others opposite have read the election results. In the other place where the Opposition has the numbers the attitude to this Bill can be decided. Let members of that place decide what they will do. In the other place there is unlimited speaking time. The interesting feature of this debate is that every member of the Country Party is in the chamber at this stage. This is unusual but they know that they are desperate men and anything they can do to try to discredit this legislation is worth attempting. Do members of the Country Party say that they do not believe in one vote one value? The honourable member for Wannon says that he does.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Is the Minister not moving a little wide of the debate about the suspension of Standing Orders?

Mr SPEAKER—I think the honourable member is right. The Minister will come back to his reasons why the motion to suspend Standing Orders should be rejected.

Mr DALY—I thought I had summed the situation up clearly. I can understand the touchiness of members opposite. If members opposite wanted to debate this measure they would not have interrupted it with a frivolous motion of this kind. It is clear that they do not want to debate the Bill. If they had wanted to do so they would have permitted one of their shadow ministers to proceed with the debate and not fallen for the claim of the former Minister for Shipping and Transport who said that he has read my mind and knows that the debate will be stopped. Members opposite are very touchy if they get upset about a debate being stopped on one occasion because they know that on hundreds of occasions members from this side, when in Opposition, were not allowed to debate not only the most important matters but also the most flimsy matters. The worst offender in seeing that the gag was moved was the former Minister for Supply. So tonight I am not upset by the phoney opposition to the proposition that we are putting up. Why do not honourable members
opposite allow the debate to take its course and in that way see what God will bring to them? Then they will know our intentions.

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

Motion (by Mr Nicholls) put:

That the question be now put.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

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<td>Cameron, Clyde</td>
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<td>Coates, J.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacobi, R.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Question put:

That the motion (Mr Nixon's) to be agreed to.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

AYES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armitage, J. L.</td>
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<td>Ashley-Brown, A.</td>
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<td>Haydon, W. G.</td>
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<td>Harford, C. J.</td>
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<td>Innes, U. E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacobi, R.</td>
<td></td>
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Majority: 9

NOES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armitage, J. L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashley-Brown, A.</td>
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<td>Cramer, Sir John</td>
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<td>Drummond, P. H.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innes, U. E.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Question so resolved in the negative.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The question now is that the Bill be now read a second time. There seems to be some confusion. We are now back on the Commonwealth Electoral Bill (No. 2). The question is that the Bill be now read a
second time. I have to put the question if nobody rises seeking the call. I now call the honourable member for Farrer.

Mr FAIRBAIRN (Farrer) (10.20)—I am glad to have the opportunity to speak on this Bill because I think it is extremely important that there should be—

Motion (by Mr Hansen) put: That the question be now put.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

Ayes ... ... ... ... 63
Noes ... ... ... ... 54

Majority ... ... ... 9

AYES

Armitage, J. L.
Ashley-Brown, A.
Barnard, L. H.
Beazley, E. E.
Bennett, A. F.
Berenson, J. M.
Birrell, F. R.
Bowen, Lionel
Bryant, G. M.
Cairns, J. F.
Cameron, Clyde
Cass, M. H.
Coates, J.
Cohen, B.
Collard, F. W.
Connor, R. F. X.
Crean, F.
Cross, M. D.
Daly, F. M.
Davies, R.
Doyle, F. E.
Duthie, G. W. A.
Endersby, K. E.
Everingham, D. N.
Flitpatrick, J.
Fulton, W. J.
Garrick, H. J.
Grassby, A.
Gun, B. T.
Hayden, W. G.
Hurford, C. J.
Innes, U. E.
Jacobi, R.
James, A. W.
Jenkins, H. A.
Johnson, Keith
Johnson, Les
Keating, P. J.
Keogh, L. J.
Kelvin, J. C.
Knight, R. B.
Lamb, A. H.
Luchetti, A. S.
Martin, V. J.
Mathews, C. R. T.
McKenzie, D. C.
Morris, F. F.
Morrisson, W. L.
Mulder, A. W.
Oldmeadow, M. W.
Olley, F.
Patterson, R. A.
Riordan, J. M.
Scholes, G. G. D.
Sherry, R. H.
Stewart, F. E.
Thoburn, R. W.
Tellers:
Hansen, B. P.
Nicholls, M. H.

NOES

Adermann, A. B.
Anthony, J. D.
Bennett, R. N.
Bourchier, J. W.
Bourne, L. H. E.
Calder, S. B.
Cameron, Donald
Chipp, D. L.
Cook, N. M.
Corbett, W.
Crammer, Sir John
Drummond, P. H.
Druery, E.
Dwyer, H. R.
Erwin, G. D.
Fairbairn, D. E.
Fisher, P. S.
Forbes, A. J.
Fraser, Malcolm
Garland, R. V.
Giles, G. O'H.
Gorton, J. G.
Graham, B. W.
Hallett, J. M.
Hamer, D. J.
Hewson, H. A.
Holten, R. McN.
Hunt, R. J. D.
Jacobi, R.
James, A. W.
Jenkins, H. A.
Johnson, Keith
Johnson, Les
Keating, P. J.
Keogh, L. J.
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Luchetti, A. S.
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Sherry, R. H.
Stewart, F. E.
Thoburn, R. W.
Tellers:
Hansen, B. P.
Nicholls, M. H.

PAIRS

Whitlam, E. G.
Reynolds, L. J.
Jones, Charles
Snedden, R. M.
Bowen, N. H.
Sinclair, J. McC.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Question put:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

Ayes ... ... ... ... 64
Noes ... ... ... ... 54

Majority ... ... ... 10

AYES

Armitage, J. L.
Ashley-Brown, A.
Barnard, L. H.
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Birrell, F. R.
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Druery, E.
Dwyer, H. R.
Erwin, G. D.
Fairbairn, D. E.
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Forbes, A. J.
Fraser, Malcolm
Garland, R. V.
Giles, G. O'H.
Gorton, J. G.
Graham, B. W.
Hallett, J. M.
Hamer, D. J.
Hewson, H. A.
Holten, R. McN.
Hunt, R. J. D.

Tellers:
England, J. A.
Fox, E. M. C.

PAIRS

Whitlam, E. G.
Reynolds, L. J.
Snedden, R. M.
Bowen, N. H.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.
ADIJOURNMENT

Mr SPEAKER—Order! It being 10.45 p.m., in accordance with the order of the House I put the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 10.46 p.m.
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

The following answers to questions upon notice were circulated:

Commonwealth Employment Service: Handicapped Persons
(Question No. 20)

Mr Lynch asked the Minister for Labour, upon notice:

(1) How many handicapped persons applied for employment through the Commonwealth Employment Service during each of the last 10 calendar years.

(2) How many of them were assisted in finding suitable employment.

(3) How many firms were personally approached to accept the policy of employing handicapped people in each of those years.

(4) What (a) number and (b) percentage of these appointments was successful in each of those years.

Mr Clyde Cameron—I am informed that the answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) In the calendar years 1963 to 1972 the following numbers of handicapped persons applied for employment assistance through the Commonwealth Employment Service—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of handicapped persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>25,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>26,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>25,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>26,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>27,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>30,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>33,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>35,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>41,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>48,328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) In the calendar years 1963 to 1972 the following numbers of handicapped persons were placed in employment by the Commonwealth Employment Service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of handicapped persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>10,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>12,446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>10,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>9,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>10,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>12,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>15,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>15,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>15,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>17,348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Statistics are not maintained of the numbers of firms approached by the Commonwealth Employment Service concerning the employment of handicapped persons.

The policy of the Commonwealth Employment Service is to promote the employment of the handicapped and, in the main, this is done during discussions with employers about the engagement of particular individuals and through special campaigns such as that conducted between 1967 and 1972 in conjunction with the Australian Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled. This campaign was to encourage employers to adopt a written policy of non-discrimination against employment of the handicapped. As far as was practicable, all major employers in Australia were contacted. The numbers of firms personally approached to accept the policy in each of these years were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of firms</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,048</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(4) In each of the years during which the campaign referred to in (3) above was conducted the number and percentage of firms approached which accepted the policy in whole or substantially or which already had a similar policy were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of firms</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1,315</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,483</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commonwealth Employment Service: Professional Employment Section
(Question No. 29)

Mr Lynch asked the Minister for Labour, upon notice:

(1) What is the function of the Professional Employment Section of the Commonwealth Employment Service.

(2) What is the staff establishment of this section in each region of the Service.

(3) How many officers are employed with the duties of:

(a) officer in charge,
(b) professional employment interviewer,
(c) overseas inquiries,
(d) promotional officer and
(e) clerical assistance in each region.

(4) What was the last number of:

(a) applicants registered,
(b) referrals to employers,
(c) placements confirmed and
(d) new vacancies notified in each of the last 10 calendar years.
Mr Clyde Cameron—I am informed that the answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) The principal function of the Professional Employment Offices of the Commonwealth Employment Service is to assist professionally and technically qualified persons and those who though not so qualified have experience appropriate to senior level positions to obtain employment and to assist and advise employers seeking to recruit such personnel.

(2)——

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Officer in charge</th>
<th>Professional employment interviewing</th>
<th>Overseas inquiries</th>
<th>Promotional officer</th>
<th>Clerical assistants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>New South Wales and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4) The information is set out in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Registrations</th>
<th>Referred to employers</th>
<th>Places confirmed</th>
<th>New vacancies notified</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>10,635</td>
<td>7,842</td>
<td>4,144</td>
<td>8,240</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>10,543</td>
<td>8,597</td>
<td>4,403</td>
<td>9,354</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>11,141</td>
<td>10,248</td>
<td>4,190</td>
<td>9,855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>11,963</td>
<td>11,154</td>
<td>4,987</td>
<td>9,183</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>12,876</td>
<td>12,146</td>
<td>5,248</td>
<td>9,884</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>12,712</td>
<td>13,456</td>
<td>5,309</td>
<td>10,308</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>13,071</td>
<td>13,101</td>
<td>5,321</td>
<td>13,980</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>13,640</td>
<td>14,808</td>
<td>4,766</td>
<td>13,016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>16,048</td>
<td>14,551</td>
<td>4,482</td>
<td>11,957</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>18,872</td>
<td>15,420</td>
<td>4,207</td>
<td>12,042</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) What was the cost of each employment training scheme for each calendar year from and including 1966.

(7) What is the estimated cost of each employment training scheme for 1973.

Mr Clyde Cameron—I am informed that the answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) Post-Discharge Vocational Training Scheme for Members of the Permanent Forces; Employment Training Scheme for Aborigines; Employment Training Scheme for Women Restricted from Employment by Domestic Responsibilities; Employment Training Scheme for Persons Displaced by Technological Change; Rural Reconstruction Employment Training Scheme; Employment Training Scheme for Persons Displaced by Redundancy; General Employment Retraining Scheme. National Apprenticeship Assistance Scheme.

(2) The essential feature of each of the Schemes is to provide training and employment for persons in categories for which the Schemes have been devised.

(3) Post-Discharge Vocational Training Scheme for Members of the Permanent Forces:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Answers to Questions 3 April 1973

Employment Training Scheme for Aborigines:
1969 (inception July 1969) ... ... 155
1970 ... ... ... ... 419
1971 ... ... ... ... 678
1972 ... ... ... ... 800

Employment Training Scheme for Women Restricted from Employment by Domestic Responsibilities:
1970 (inception 14.9.70) ... ... 50
1971 ... ... ... ... 1,928
1972 ... ... ... ... 1,777

Employment Training Scheme for Persons Displaced by Technological Change:
1971 (inception 1.7.71) ... ... 2
1972 ... ... ... ... 224

Rural Reconstruction Employment Training Scheme:
1971 (inception 1.10.71) ... ... 1
1972 ... ... ... ... 97

Employment Training Scheme for Persons Displaced by Redundancy:
1972 (inception 1.9.72) ... ... 65

General Employment Retraining Scheme
1972 (inception 15.9.72) ... ... 811

National Apprenticeship Assistance Scheme: (Inception 1.1.73):
Figures not yet available.

(4) Yes.

(5) The limit of $80 on the allowance for essential books and equipment has been removed where applicable. Under the National Apprenticeship Assistance Scheme, living-away-from-home allowances have been increased and restrictions on their availability have been removed.

(6) and (7) Costs for calendar years are not available. Below are given the costs for the fiscal years and the estimated expenditure for the current fiscal year.

Post-Discharge Vocational Training Scheme for Members of the Permanent Forces:

1965-66 ... ... ... ... 1,150
1966-67 ... ... ... ... 1,650
1967-68 ... ... ... ... 1,546
1968-69 ... ... ... ... 3,702
1969-70 ... ... ... ... 4,788
1970-71 ... ... ... ... 3,874
1971-72 ... ... ... ... 5,110
1972-73 (estimate) ... ... 8,000

Employment Training Scheme for Aborigines:
1969-70 ... ... ... ... 23,158
1970-71 ... ... ... ... 94,932
1971-72 ... ... ... ... 190,988
1972-73 (estimate) ... ... 270,000

Employment Training Scheme for Women Restricted from Employment by Domestic Responsibilities:
1970-71 ... ... ... ... 138,784
1971-72 ... ... ... ... 399,917
1972-73 (estimate) ... ... 500,000

Employment Training Scheme for Persons Displaced by Technological Change:
1971-72 ... ... ... ... 3,981
1972-73 (estimate) ... ... 65,000

Rural Reconstruction Employment Training Scheme:
1971-72 ... ... ... ... 27,016
1972-73 (estimate) ... ... 100,000

Employment Training Scheme for Persons Displaced by Redundancy:
1972-73 (estimate) ... ... 225,000

General Employment Retraining Scheme:
1972-73 (estimate) ... ... 310,000

National Apprenticeship Assistance Scheme:
1972-73 (estimate) ... ... 1,400,000

French Nuclear Tests
(Question No. 109)

Mr Lynch asked the Minister for Science, upon notice:
(1) Has the Government received any reports from the National Radiation Advisory Council relating to the French nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean during 1972.
(2) If so, what are the main findings.
(3) What action has been taken as a result of the reports.

Mr Morrison—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:
(1) The Government has not received the final report from the National Radiation Advisory Committee relating to the French nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean during 1972.
(2) and (3) Not applicable.

35-Hour Week: New South Wales Electricity Commission Employees
(Question No. 124)

Mr Lynch asked the Minister for Labour, upon notice:
(1) Can he say what were the main findings of the inquiry held by the New South Wales State Industrial Commission into the introduction of a 35-hour week for employees of the New South Wales Electricity Commission.
(2) Can he also say (a) what were the terms of reference of the inquiry, (b) how many persons gave evidence at the inquiry, and (c) what was the date of (i) commencement, and (ii) closure of the inquiry.
(3) Has he studied the findings of the inquiry.
(4) Does the Government agree with the findings of the inquiry.
(5) If not, with which of the findings does it disagree and what are its grounds for disagreement in each case.

Mr Clyde Cameron—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:
(1) The New South Wales State Industrial Commission’s main findings were that:
(a) it rejected the employers’ submission that there could be no ground for a reduction in working hours unless it was common throughout the electricity supply industry;
(b) it would be proper to support a shorter working week if special circumstances applied to a particular industry;
(c) there have been enormous changes in the electricity supply industry, resulting in increased efficiency, since 1952.
(d) almost half of all employees in the industry belong to the Salaried Division;
(e) the electricity generation sector of the industry is the most capital intensive of all industries;
(f) during the year 1971 alone the Electricity Commission extracted from charges no less than $48m towards capital expenditure;
(g) 8,354 persons employed in the electricity supply industry already work less than 40 hours a week, and that 5,971 of these work a 35-hour week and 2,296 work a 36-hour week.
(h) there are 2 subsidy schemes in operation which are designed to assist country Electricity Councils to pursue a policy of rural electrification which are financed from charges made to city consumers;
(i) most of the Electricity Commission's employees work only a small amount of overtime and the average weekly overtime paid to employees of Electricity Councils is substantially lower than the average overtime paid in all other industries in Australia;
(j) the 35-hours a week employees of the Electricity Commission earn a net 35 hours;
(k) the effective daily working hours of field crews are as low as 5 or 6;
(l) the differentiation between the ordinary hours of 40 hours per week for the predominantly manual workers and the ordinary hours of 35 hours a week for the predominantly professional administrative and clerical group is paralleled in the United Kingdom where the National Board for Prices and Incomes described it as 'the result of an historical accident';
(m) the awards covering employees in the industry provide the same hours as the awards covering employees in more labour intensive industries;
(n) 'It is an indubitable and uncontested fact' that the industry has demonstrated a capacity to improve its productivity and efficiency in terms of the number of units produced and distributed compared with the number of persons employed;
(o) advances in and the utilisation of the latest technology are the most important contributing factors to the increased productivity and efficiency in the industry and that the growth of the economy and the consequent increase in sales of electricity are yet another factor in increased productivity;
(p) employees' willingness to transfer from the older power stations to other establishments does not assist their case for a shorter working week;
(q) the fact that a particular industry has a special economic capacity is an irrelevant factor in according its employees a shorter working week;
(r) the benefits of increased productivity itself from utilisation of advanced technology belong to the community to be shared by all for the general good;
(s) productivity gains belong to the community as a whole and not to a particular group of employees (or, presumably, employers);
(t) It could not assert any sound logical justification for the widespread differentiation which exists between the hours of manual and non-manual workers;
(u) the shorter week should apply to all employees in all industries or not at all;
(v) no firm conclusion was reached on the costs and prices of a shorter working week;
(w) other employers would lose tradesmen to the electricity industry if a 35-hour week were introduced into that industry;
(x) a 35-hour week would provide work for additional employees in the electricity industry in New South Wales, and that it is unlikely that the number would be obtained;
(y) there would be a loss of productivity by other industries which lost the benefits of the work done by those transferred to the electricity industry;

The Commission made its report on the basis of whether special circumstances distinguished the work performed by the Wages Division rather than on the special circumstances of the industry itself.

The Commission's findings appear to merely reflect the status quo rather than provide a design for progress. The findings were partly influenced by the working hours operating in foreign countries and by the standards set by the International Labour Organisation which are designed to uplift working conditions for the emerging countries of Africa, Asia and South America and for territories like Papua and New Guinea and the colonial possessions of Portugal.

(2) (a) Pursuant to the provision of section 31 (1) (a) of the New South Wales Industrial Arbitration Act, the Commission was asked to consider and report upon the following matters:

'\text{The terms and conditions of employment of persons employed in the electricity supply industry, that is, the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity in New South Wales; and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, whether there are any grounds for a reduction in the ordinary working hours or ordinary working days of persons now working a 40-hour week in the said industry; and, if there were a reduction in such working hours or working days, on the economic effects which would result from such reduction'}."

(b) Over 100.
(c) (i) 3rd August 1971. (ii) 25th September 1972.
(3) Yes.
(4) and (5) It would not be proper for me to comment on the findings of a State industrial tribunal.
Registered Unemployed and Vacancies
(Question No. 125)

Mr Lynch asked the Minister for Labour, upon notice:

(1) Can he say whether there are any labour shortages?

(2) If so, what is the extent of the labour shortage in (a) each State and (b) each region of each State in respect of (i) skilled, (ii) unskilled and (iii) semi-skilled persons.

(3) What action (a) has he taken and (b) does he intend to take to rectify each incidence of labour shortage.

Mr Clyde Cameron—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

The honourable member, having preceded me in the Ministry, should be aware that my Department’s published Monthly Reviews of the Employment Situation provide detailed information on the numbers of registered unemployed and vacancies in each State and in each non-metropolitan district office. This information is also provided in respect of broad occupational categories for each State. The published data throw considerable light on the extent of labour shortages or surpluses in particular States and areas. I accept, however, that additional analysis of CES information is required for detailed manpower and regional policies—2 areas which were neglected by the previous Government. As the honourable member knows, my Department has set up an advisory committee to examine, inter alia, the statistical requirements for a comprehensive manpower policy so that Government action could be taken where necessary to offset a situation of labour shortage or surplus in particular areas and occupations.

Australia-United Kingdom Trade
(Question No. 157)

Mr Garland asked the Minister for Overseas Trade, upon notice:

(1) Have estimates been made of the drop in trade between the United Kingdom and Australia as a result of the United Kingdom Government placing import levies on a range of Australian products.

(2) What is the total value of import levies placed on Australian products by the United Kingdom Government to date.

(3) What are the matching levies that have been placed by the Australian Government on United Kingdom imports to offset the unilateral action of the United Kingdom Government.

Dr J. F. Cairns—The following is provided in answer to the honourable member’s question:

(1) The import levy arrangements operated by the British Government in recent years on eggs and egg products, cereals, beef and veal, poultry meat and milk products, other than butter or cheese, were terminated on 31st January 1973. These arrangements provided for the imposition of levies on imports into Britain under certain conditions. In the case of Australia, levies, as far as I am aware, were applied only to some cereals. Fluctuations in British imports of cereal products could be caused by a variety of factors and it is not possible to isolate the effect of the levies.

As from 1st February 1973 Britain adopted the European Economic Community’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which provides for the application of variable general levies to most agricultural commodities in certain circumstances. No estimate has been made of the drop in trade between Britain and Australia which might occur as a result of the imposition of these levies which will be a consequence of the application of the CAP. Table 1 shows the value of principal Australian exports to Britain in 1971-72 liable to variable import levies.

(2) Information on the total value of import levies placed on Australian products under the British levy arrangements has not been published by British authorities in respect of imports either before or after the adoption of the CAP.

(3) It is my understanding that the previous Australian Government held consultations with the British Government concerning the implications of the pre-CAP levy schemes for Australian trade from the time that they were initially proposed and that no compensating action was taken.

In respect of Britain’s adoption of the EEC’s CAP, the EEC has recognised that problems could arise for exports to Britain of agricultural commodities from third countries, including Australia, in Protocol No. 16 to the Treaty of Accession, the ‘Safeguards Clause’, which provides for steps to deal with such problems. Australia has used the ‘Safeguards Clause’ as a basis for a series of detailed discussions with Britain and other EEC Members. In these discussions Australia has been seeking to identify the nature of the problems which might arise for particular commodities and to suggest possible solutions. The next round of discussions is programmed to take place in about May this year.

**TABLE 1**

Principal Australian exports to Britain liable to variable import levies under the EEC Common Agricultural Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>1971-72</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef and Veal (a)</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other dairy products</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs (not in shell)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar (b)</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice (milled)</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gluten and Gluten Flour</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of above</strong></td>
<td><strong>135.2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) EEC levies on frozen beef and veal have not applied since January 1972.

(b) In the case of sugar, Britain will maintain her commitments under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement until 28 February 1975.
Ministerial Salaries and Allowances  
(Question No. 128)

Mr Garland asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) What salaries and allowances have been paid to him and each of his Ministers since they were sworn in.

(2) Is it a fact that all Ministers receive the same salary and allowances.

(3) If senior Ministers receive the same as junior Ministers, what legal authority or device was used to effect this.

(4) Will gift duty be payable by any Minister.

(5) How is their liability under the income tax law to be resolved.

Mr Whitlam—I refer the honourable member to the Second Reading Speech on the Remuneration and Allowances Bill 1973 (Hansard, 28th March 1973, pages 809-812).

Australian Industry Development Corporation:  
Financial Activities  
(Question No. 160)

Mr Garland asked the Minister for Secondary Industry, upon notice:

What are the details of the sum that has been loaned to or invested by the Australian Industry Development Corporation to 31st December 1972.

Dr J. F. Cairns—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

The most recent figures available on the financial activities of the AIDC are contained in the latest Annual Report of the Corporation and relate to the financial year 1st July 1971 to 30th June 1972.

This report showed that at 30th June 1972 $16.8m was on loan to AIDC. Since that time the Corporation has made publicly announced issues of securities, in Australia and overseas, totalling approximately $25m.

Investment by AIDC at 30th June 1972 stood at approximately $55m. Of this, $44m represented the value at cost of general investments, comprising principally investment of capital funds, while investments in industry projects were valued at $11m.

Education: Handicapped Children  
(Question No. 162)

Mr Garland asked the Minister for Social Security, upon notice:

(1) What arrangements has he made for special schools for handicapped children to receive assistance under Commonwealth education programs.

(2) What sum has been made available and spent in each year for special schools for handicapped children in (a) each State and (b) the Commonwealth.

Mr Hayden—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

(1) Under the Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act voluntary organisations and other non-profit bodies may receive grants of $2 for $1 towards the capital cost of training centres and residential accommodation units. Subsidy is also available towards the cost of training equipment. Other forms of assistance are provided through the Department of Education, details of which could be obtained from the Minister for Education.

(2) The grants that have been approved under the Act, and the expenditure incurred, each year in (a) each State and (b) the Commonwealth is shown in the attached table.

Further, under the existing provisions of the National Health Act a handicapped children’s benefit of $1.50 a day is payable to eligible non-profit organisations conducting approved handicapped persons homes in respect of each handicapped child under 16 years who is accommodated and cared for in the home.

HANDICAPED CHILDREN (ASSISTANCE) ACT  
GRANTS APPROVED AND PAYMENTS MADE IN EACH STATE AND THE COMMONWEALTH SINCE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ACT (JUNE 1970) UNTIL 31 JANUARY 1973

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>1,006,395</td>
<td>532,686</td>
<td>722,374</td>
<td>890,470</td>
<td>493,700</td>
<td>735,799</td>
<td>2,272,469</td>
<td>2,158,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>224,046</td>
<td>159,735</td>
<td>127,158</td>
<td>106,298</td>
<td>95,975</td>
<td>97,987</td>
<td>447,179</td>
<td>364,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>38,530</td>
<td>13,987</td>
<td>509,229</td>
<td>243,307</td>
<td>111,263</td>
<td>225,174</td>
<td>483,248</td>
<td>483,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>258,634</td>
<td>239,376</td>
<td>60,975</td>
<td>53,333</td>
<td>55,470</td>
<td>49,439</td>
<td>375,081</td>
<td>342,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>80,071</td>
<td>6,603</td>
<td>80,071</td>
<td>6,603</td>
<td>4,676</td>
<td>4,582</td>
<td>91,350</td>
<td>84,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>52,275</td>
<td>49,055</td>
<td>11,110</td>
<td>7,984</td>
<td>9,035</td>
<td>9,548</td>
<td>72,438</td>
<td>66,587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth</td>
<td>1,659,753</td>
<td>994,839</td>
<td>1,572,449</td>
<td>1,381,463</td>
<td>770,137</td>
<td>1,122,529</td>
<td>4,002,339</td>
<td>3,498,831</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Education: Handicapped Children
(Question No. 206)
Mr Garland asked the Minister for Social Security, upon notice:

(1) Has he carried out any examination into the provision of special schools for handicapped children and granting of assistance under Commonwealth education programs.

(2) If so, what are the details, including the basis on which the assistance is available in each case.

Mr Hayden—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

(1) Under the Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act grants of $2 for $1 are available to eligible non-profit organisations towards the capital cost of premises for use as training centres for handicapped children or to accommodate such children who are receiving training. Grants are also available towards the cost of training equipment. Each claim for assistance is examined having regard to the need of the handicapped children concerned. There has been no general examination, for the purpose of this Act, into the provision of special schools.

(2) See above. The overall assessment of the need for special educational facilities is more a matter for the Department of Education and relevant information could no doubt be obtained from the Minister of Education.

Further, under the existing provisions of the National Health Act, a handicapped child’s benefit of $1.50 a day is payable to eligible non-profit organisations conducting approved handicapped persons homes in respect of each handicapped child under 16 years who is accommodated and cared for in the home.

Australian Trade with Far East
(Question No. 224)
Mr Graham asked the Minister for Overseas Trade, upon notice:

(1) What figures are available to demonstrate a comparison of Australian Trade with the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of China in Taiwan.

(2) What comparative figures are available with respect to Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and India.

Dr J. F. Cairns—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

(1) and (2) In 1971-72 total Australian imports from, and total Australian exports to the countries specified were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Imports from</th>
<th>Exports to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$000</td>
<td>$000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>41,318</td>
<td>37,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>35,147</td>
<td>35,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>14,312</td>
<td>57,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>31,030</td>
<td>70,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>38,437</td>
<td>118,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>35,215</td>
<td>36,394</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Detailed statistics of Australia’s trade with overseas countries are published by the Commonwealth Statistician in his bulletin ‘Overseas Trade’.

Ministerial Staffs: Replies to Correspondence
(Question No. 374)
Mr Garland asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) Did he state in answer to my question No. 134 (Hansard, 1st March 1973, page 196) that he signed substantive replies to letters which honourable members sent.

(2) Did he also state in reply to part (2) of my question No. 227 (Hansard, 13th March 1973, page 535) that a communication was signed by Dr Wilenski or Dr Wilenski’s secretary.

(3) If so, is there an inconsistency in his 2 replies.

(4) Will he give an assurance that he will sign all substantive replies sent by him to members and senators.

(5) Will he, as Leader of his Government, ensure that his Ministers do the same as part of the proper conduct of Parliamentary affairs.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

(1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) I refer the honourable member to the previous answers I gave on this matter. I see no need to add to those answers except to say that the practice adopted by this Government in relation to this matter in general accords with the practice of previous Governments.

Newspapers and Periodicals: Commonwealth Purchases
(Question No. 377)
Mr Garland asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:


Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

Information in the form requested by the honourable member relating to purchases by his Government and by the previous Government is not readily available and I am reluctant, as was the former Prime Minister in relation to similar questions involving the assembly of detailed answers, to authorise the time and expense which would be involved in obtaining this particular dissection of cost. The overall expenditure is of course allocated in the Estimates of Expenditure authorised by Parliament.

First Whitlam Ministry: Decisions
(Question No. 5)
Mr Lynch asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) Will he list the decisions made by the First Whitlam Ministry.
(2) What are the estimated costs of each decision for the years 1972-73 and 1973-74.

(3) Were estimates of the cost of each decision received by the Government before each decision was announced.

(4) If so, what were the cost estimates received and which of these were not prepared by Government Departments.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

(1) Decisions of the First Whitlam Ministry were announced at my Press conferences on 5th, 12th and 19th December 1972 and through Press releases which are available to the honourable member.

(2) The then estimated costs in 1972-73 and 1973-74 of those decisions of the First Whitlam Ministry having financial implications for the Government, and indeed of all such decisions taken by the Government up till the end of January, were set out in detail in a special article devoted to these matters in the January 1973 issue of the Treasury Information Bulletin.

(3) and (4) In reaching the decisions due consideration was given to financial implications.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Committee
(Question No. 202)

Mr Berinson asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

Which of the 43 recommendations of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Pharmaceutical Benefits (a) have been accepted, (b) have been rejected and (c) are still under active consideration.

Dr Everingham—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

The Report of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Pharmaceutical Benefits is currently under review by my Department. However, decisions have already been made relating to the following recommendations:

'Recommendation 39: (that) the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee consider the listing of oral contraceptives where required for certain specific medical reasons.'

The Government has announced that it has decided to place certain oral contraceptives on the list of prescribed drugs for pharmaceutical benefits purposes.

'Recommendation 40: (that) the Commonwealth provide substantial subsidies for the expansion of Family Planning Clinics.'

The Government has announced that it will give financial support to family planning services. It will provide $200,000 a year to the Family Planning Association of Australia and $100,000 a year to a national body representing Catholic family planning centres.

In addition, the Government will ask these organisations to develop services for the provision of family planning advice for Aboriginals, including training of suitable personnel to provide for an expansion of such services.

Additional grants, up to a total of $50,000, will be available to other voluntary organisations actively involved in the provision of family planning services.

Houses: Purchases
(Question No. 209)

Mr Garland asked the Minister for Housing, upon notice:

(1) How many houses were purchased throughout Australia during the last 2 years.

(2) How many of these houses were purchased through Government finance.

(3) How many home buyers were (a) under and (b) over 35 years of age.

Mr Les Johnson—The answer to the honourable member’s question is the same as that given by the previous Minister for Housing in reply to a similar question. I refer the honourable member to the answer to question No. 5621 (Hansard, 12th October 1972, pages 2615-2616).

Ministerial Press Releases: Dispatch to Members
(Question No. 375)

Mr Garland asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) Is it a fact that the similar matters he referred to as an oversight in answer to my question No. 131 and the matters I referred to in question No. 132 are continuing (Hansard, 6th March 1973, page 276).

(2) If so, will he ensure that all material circulated by him or his Ministers is properly headed and identified and that all duplications and omissions are eliminated.

(3) Will he also ensure that all press releases are received by members within a few days of issue to the media, on the grounds that Members of Parliament are entitled to no less favourable treatment.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

(1), (2) and (3). I refer the honourable member to my answers to previous questions on this matter (Hansard, 6th March 1973, page 276). I should be prepared, however, to investigate any specific instance which the honourable member may wish to bring to my attention.