House of Representatives

Official Hansard

No. 44, 1974
Thursday, 31 October 1974

TWENTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AUSTRALIA

TWENTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION: FIRST PERIOD

Governor-General

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

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

Second Whitlam Ministry
(From 12 June 1974)

Prime Minister
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Overseas Trade
Minister for Minerals and Energy
Minister for Social Security
Leader of the Government in the Senate, Attorney-General and Minister for Customs and Excise
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Treasurer
Minister for Services and Property and Leader of the House
Minister for the Media and Manager of Government Business in the Senate
Minister for Defence
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory
Minister for Labor and Immigration
Minister for Education
Special Minister of State and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister in Matters Relating to the Public Service
Minister for Repatriation and Compensation
Minister for Urban and Regional Development
Postmaster-General
Minister for Housing and Construction
Minister for Transport
Minister for Health
Minister for Manufacturing Industry
Minister for the Capital Territory
Minister for the Environment and Conservation
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Minister for Science, Minister Assisting the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Matters Relating to Papua New Guinea and Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence
Minister for Tourism and Recreation, Vice-President of the Executive Council and Minister Assisting the Treasurer

The Honourable Edward Gough Whitlam, Q.C.
The Honourable James Ford Cairns
The Honourable Reginald Francis Xavier Connor
The Honourable William George Hayden
Senator the Honourable Lionel Keith Murphy, Q.C.
Senator the Honourable Donald Robert Willsee
The Honourable Frank Crean
The Honourable Frederick Michael Daly
Senator the Honourable Douglas McClelland
The Honourable Lance Herbert Barnard
Senator the Honourable Kenneth Shaw Wriedt
The Honourable Rex Alan Patterson
The Honourable Clyde Robert Cameron
The Honourable Kim Edward Beazley
The Honourable Lionel Frost Bowen
Senator the Honourable John Murray Wheldoon
The Honourable Thomas Uren
Senator the Honourable Reginald Bishop
The Honourable Leslie Royston Johnson
The Honourable Charles Keith Jones
The Honourable Douglas Nixon Everingham
The Honourable Keppel Earl Enderby, Q.C.
The Honourable Gordon Munro Bryant, E.D.
The Honourable Moses Henry Cass
Senator the Honourable James Luke Cavanagh
The Honourable William Lawrence Morrison

The Honourable Francis Eugene Stewart
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TWENTY NINTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION: FIRST PERIOD

Speaker—The Honourable James Francis Cope
Leader of the House—The Honourable Frederick Michael Daly
Chairman of Committees—Gordon Glen Denton Scholes

Leader of the Opposition—The Right Honourable Billy Mackie Snedden, Q.C.
Deputy Leader of the Opposition—The Honourable Phillip Reginald Lynch

Leader of the Australian Country Party—The Right Honourable John Douglas Anthony
Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party—The Honourable Ian McCabon Sinclair

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THE COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD)

STANDING COMMITTEES

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

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

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

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

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

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

ROAD SAFETY—Mr Cohen (Chairman), Mr Erwin, Mr Hodges, Mr Lamb, Mr Mathews, Mr Oldmeadow.

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

JOINT STATUTORY COMMITTEES

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

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

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

JOINT COMMITTEES

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

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

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

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

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

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

SELECT COMMITTEES

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

SENATE

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTING STAFF

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

LIBRARY

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

JOINT HOUSE

Secretary—R. W. Hillyer
THE ACTS OF THE SESSION

(First Session: First Period)

Aboriginal Land Fund Act 1974 (Act No. 159 of 1974)—
An Act to assist Aboriginal Communities to acquire Land outside Aboriginal Reserves.

Aboriginal Loans Commission Act 1974 (Act No. 103 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Provision of Financial Assistance for certain Purposes conducive to the Advance-
ment of the Aboriginal People of Australia.

Adelaide to Crystal Brook Railway Act 1974 (Act No. 85 of 1974)—
An Act to approve an Agreement between the Australian Government and the Government of South
Australia relating to the Construction of a Railway from Adelaide to Crystal Brook, and for other
purposes.

Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act 1974 (Act No. 115 of 1974)—

Aged Persons Hostels Act 1974 (Act No. 131 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Aged Persons Hostels Act 1972.


An Act relating to the Provision of certain Equipment for a Domestic Airline.

Appropriation Act (No. 1) 1974–75 (Act No. 94 of 1974)—
An Act to appropriate certain sums out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year
ending on 30 June 1975.

Appropriation Act (No. 2) 1974–75 (Act No. 95 of 1974)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for certain expenditure in respect
of the year ending on 30 June 1975.

An Act to appropriate Moneys out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of Urban
Public Transport.

Arbitration (Foreign Awards and Agreements) Act 1974 (Act No. 136 of 1974)—
An Act to approve Accession by Australia to a Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of
Foreign Arbitral Awards, to give effect to that Convention, and for related purposes.

Asian Development Fund Act 1974 (Act No. 54 of 1974)—
An Act to Authorise certain Contributions by Australia to the Asian Development Bank for the pur-
poses of an Asian Development Fund.

Australian Development Assistance Agency Act 1974 (Act No. 137 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Provision by Australia of Aid for Developing Countries.

Australian Shipping Commission Act 1974 (Act No. 83 of 1974)—

Australian Tourist Commission Act 1974 (Act No. 82 of 1974)—

Banking Act 1974 (Act No. 132 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Banking Act 1959–1973, and for purposes connected therewith.

Banks (Housing Loans) Act 1974 (Act No. 143 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Funds to enable Banks to make additional Loans for Housing, and for purposes
connected therewith.

Broadcasting and Television Act 1974 (Act No. 55 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Broadcasting and Television Act 1942–1973 in relation to certain Licences, and for
related purposes.

Canberra Water Supply (Googong Dam) Act 1974 (Act No. 34 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Construction of a Dam on the Queanbeyan River in New South Wales and the
Supply of Water from that Dam for use in the Australian Capital Territory, and for purposes connected
therewith.

Commonwealth Banks Act 1974 (Act No. 81 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Commonwealth Banks Act 1959–1973 with respect to the Functions of the Develop-
ment Bank and to the Remuneration of the Holders of Certain Offices.

Commonwealth Electoral Act (No. 2) 1973 (Act No. 38 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Distribution of the States into Electoral Divisions.

Companies (Foreign Take-overs) Act 1974 (Act No. 141 of 1974)—

Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act 1974 (Act No. 92 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act 1971–1973, and for other
purposes.
Conciliation and Arbitration (Organizations) Act 1974 (Act No. 89 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Law relating to Conciliation and Arbitration.

Customs Act 1974 (Act No. 28 of 1974)—

Customs Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 120 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Customs Act 1901–1973, as amended by the Customs Act 1974.

Customs Tariff 1974 (Act No. 117 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Duties of Customs.

Customs Tariff (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 118 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Duties of Customs.

Customs Tariff Validation Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 119 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for the Validation of certain Collections of Duties of Customs in accordance with Customs Tariff Proposals, and for related purposes.

Customs Tariff Validation Act (No. 3) 1974 (Act No. 163 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for the Validation of Collections of Duties of Customs under Customs Tariff Proposals.

Dairy Adjustment Act 1974 (Act No. 166 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Financial Assistance in connexion with Dairy Adjustment Programs.

An Act to provide for Increases in certain Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit Pensions.

Defence Service Homes Act 1974 (Act No. 125 of 1974)—

Delivered Meals Subsidy Act 1974 (Act No. 108 of 1974)—

Election Candidates (Public Service and Defence Force) Act 1974 (Act No. 59 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Members of the Public Service and the Defence Force who become Candidates for election to the Legislative Assembly for the Northern Territory and similar Bodies for other Territories, and for related Purposes.

An Act to make provision for Protection of the Environment in relation to Projects and Decisions of, or under the control of, the Australian Government, and for related purposes.

Estate Duty Assessment Act 1974 (Act No. 130 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Law Relating to Estate Duty.

Evidence Act 1974 (Act No. 31 of 1974)—

Excise Act 1974 (Act No. 29 of 1974)—

Excise Tariff Act 1974 (Act No. 121 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Duties of Excise.

Export Finance and Insurance Corporation Act 1974 (Act No. 122 of 1974)—
An Act to establish an Export Finance and Insurance Corporation.

An Act relating to Grants for the purpose of providing Incentives for the Development of Export Markets.

Extradition (Foreign States) Act 1974 (Act No. 21 of 1974)—

Financial Corporations Act 1974 (Act No. 36 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Corporations engaged in certain Financial Operations.

Glebe Lands (Appropriation) Act 1974 (Act No. 35 of 1974)—
An Act to appropriate the Consolidated Revenue Fund for purposes connected with the Purchase by Australia of certain Lands at Glebe in the State of New South Wales.

Handicapped Persons Assistance Act 1974 (Act No. 134 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for Assistance by Australia towards the Provision of Facilities for Handicapped Children, Disabled Persons and certain other Persons.

Health Insurance Act 1973 (Act No. 42 of 1974)—
An Act providing for Payments by way of Medical Benefits and payments for Hospital Services and for other purposes.

Health Insurance Commission Act 1973 (Act No. 41 of 1974)—
An Act to constitute a Health Insurance Commission and for purposes connected therewith.

An Act to provide Payments by Australia in respect of the Provision of Assistance for Homeless Persons and for certain other Persons.
The Acts of the Session

Housing Agreement Act 1974 (Act No. 102 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Financial Assistance to the States for the purpose of Housing.

An Act to impose a Tax upon Incomes.

An Act to amend the Law relating to Income Tax.

Income Tax Assessment Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 126 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Law relating to Income Tax.

Income Tax (Bearer Debentures) Act 1974 (Act No. 128 of 1974)—

Income Tax (Dividends and Interest Withholding Tax) Act 1974 (Act No. 27 of 1974)—
An Act to impose Income Tax upon certain Dividends and Interest derived by Non-residents and by certain other Persons.

Income Tax (International Agreements) Act 1974 (Act No. 129 of 1974)—

International Development Association (Further Payment) Act 1974 (No. 142 of 1974)—
An Act to approve the making by Australia of a further Payment to the International Development Association.

International Monetary Agreements Act 1974 (Act No. 22 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize Australia to Subscribe for Additional Shares of the Capital Stock of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Judges' Pensions Act 1974 (Act No. 162 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Judges' Pensions Act 1968–1973 in relation to certain Persons who are or have been Judges of the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea.

Julius Dam Agreement Act 1974 (Act No. 72 of 1974)—
An Act relating to an Agreement between Australia and the State of Queensland in respect of the Construction of a Dam, to be known as the Julius Dam, on the Leichhardt River.

King Island Shipping Service Agreement Act 1974 (Act No. 149 of 1974)—
An Act relating to an Agreement between Australia and Tasmania in respect of Financial Assistance to Tasmania in connexion with a Shipping Service to King Island.

Liquefied Gas (Road Vehicle Use) Tax Act 1974 (Act No. 76 of 1974)—
An Act to impose a Tax on the use, for the purpose of propelling Road Vehicles, of Liquefied Gas.

Liquefied Gas (Road Vehicle Use) Tax Collection Act 1974 (Act No. 77 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Taxation imposed on the use, for the purpose of propelling Road Vehicles, of Liquefied Gas.

Live-stock Slaughter Levy Act 1974 (Act No. 111 of 1974)—

Live-stock Slaughter Levy Collection Act 1974 (Act No. 112 of 1974)—

Loan Act 1974 (Act No. 144 of 1974)—
An Act to Authorize the Raising and Expenditure of Moneys for Defence Purposes.

An Act to authorize the Raising of a certain sum of Money and to authorize Australia to make certain Moneys available to the Australian Industry Development Corporation, and for purposes connected therewith.

An Act to authorize the Raising of a certain sum of Money and to authorize Australia to make certain moneys available to the Australian National Airlines Commission, and for purposes connected therewith.

Loans (Qantas Airways Limited) Act 1974 (Act No. 98 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize the Raising of a certain sum of Money and to authorize Australia to make certain Moneys available to Qantas Airways Limited, and for purposes connected therewith.

Local Government Grants Act 1974 (Act No. 100 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance in relation to Local Governing Bodies.

Marginal Dairy Farms Agreements Act 1974 (Act No. 49 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Marginal Dairy Farms Agreements Act 1970.

National Health Act 1974 (Act No. 37 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the National Health Act 1953–1973 in relation to Registered Organizations.

National Roads Act 1974 (Act No. 52 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to the Construction and Maintenance of National Roads.

Nitrogenous Fertilizers Subsidy Act 1974 (Act No. 78 of 1974)—
The Acts of the Session


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


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


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


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

Seamen's War Pensions and Allowances Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 25 of 1974)—

Senate (Representation of Territories) Act 1973 (Act No. 39 of 1974)—
An Act to provide for the Representation in the Senate of the Australian Capital Territory, the Jervis Bay Territory and the Northern Territory of Australia.

Service and Execution of Process Act 1974 (Act No. 96 of 1974)—

Sewerage Agreements Act 1974 (Act No. 73 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Agreements between Australia and the States of Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia in respect of the Provision of further Financial Assistance for Sewerage Works in those States.

Social Services Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 23 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Social Services.

Social Services Act (No. 3) 1974 (Act No. 91 of 1974)—
An Act relating to Social Services.

An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to the Aboriginal People of Australia.

States Grants Act 1974 (Act No. 84 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the States Grants Act 1973 to grant additional Financial Assistance to the State of Tasmania.

States Grants (Advanced Education) Act 1974 (Act No. 140 of 1974)—

States Grants (Beef Cattle Roads) Act 1974 (Act No. 74 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the States Grants (Beef Cattle Roads) Act 1968.

States Grants (Capital Assistance) Act 1974 (Act No. 106 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in connexion with Expenditure of a Capital Nature and to Authorize the Borrowing of Certain Moneys by the Australian Government.

States Grants (Dwellings for Pensioners) Act 1974 (Act No. 160 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in connexion with the Provision of Self-contained Dwellings for certain Pensioners.

States Grants (Fruit-growing Reconstruction) Act 1974 (Act No. 157 of 1974)—
An Act relating to an Agreement between Australia and the States with respect to the Provision of further Assistance to Persons engaged in Fruit-growing.

States Grants (Housing Assistance) Act 1974 (Act No. 101 of 1974)—
An Act to Authorize Advances to the States of Financial Assistance in connexion with Housing and to Authorize the Borrowing of Certain Moneys by the Treasurer.

An Act to provide Financial Assistance to the States for Purposes connected with Nature Conservation.

States Grants (Schools) Act 1974 (Act No. 110 of 1974)—
An Act to Increase the Financial Assistance payable to the States in relation to Schools.

States Grants (Soil Conservation) Act 1974 (Act No. 150 of 1974)—
An Act to provide Financial Assistance to the States for Purposes connected with Soil Conservation.

States Grants (Special Assistance) Act 1974 (Act No. 107 of 1974)—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to Queensland and South Australia.

An Act relating to the Grant of Financial Assistance to the States in Connection with Technical and Further Education.

States Grants (Universities) Act 1974 (Act No. 75 of 1974)—
An Act relating to the Grant of Financial Assistance in Connexion with Universities.

States Grants (Universities) Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 139 of 1974)—

An Act relating to Financial Assistance to the States for the purpose of Urban Public Transport.


Statute Law Revision Act 1974 (Act No. 20 of 1974)—
An Act for the purposes of Statute Law Revision.

An Act relating to the Stevedoring Industry.
The Acts of the Session

Structural Adjustment (Loan Guarantees) Act 1974 (Act No. 155 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize the giving of Guarantees on behalf of Australia in respect of Loans made for the purposes of Structural Adjustment in Industry.

Tarcoola to Alice Springs Railway Act 1974 (Act No. 86 of 1974)—
An Act to Approve an Agreement between the Australian Government and the Government of South Australia relating to the Construction of a Railway from Tarcoola to Alice Springs, and for other purposes.

Taxation Administration Act 1974 (Act No. 133 of 1974)—

Trade Practices Act 1974 (Act No. 51 of 1974)—
An Act relating to certain Trade Practices.

Transport (Planning and Research) Act 1974 (Act No. 50 of 1974)—
An Act to make Provision with respect to Planning and Research in connexion with Transport.

Universities Commission Act 1974 (Act No. 79 of 1974)—

An Act to provide Financial Assistance to the States for Purposes connected with Urban and Regional Development.

Urban Public Transport (Research and Planning) Act 1974 (Act No. 46 of 1974)—
An Act to make Provision with respect to Research and Planning in connexion with Urban Public Transport.

Wheat Export Charge Act 1974 (Act No. 64 of 1974)—
An Act to impose a Charge in respect of Wheat and Wheat Products exported from Australia.


Wheat Products Export Adjustment Act 1974 (Act No. 63 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize the Australian Wheat Board to require the making of certain Payments in respect of the Export of Wheat Products.

Wool Industry Act 1974 (Act No. 65 of 1974)—

Wool Industry Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 152 of 1974)—

Wool Marketing (Loan) Act 1974 (Act No. 58 of 1974)—
An Act to authorize certain Advances to the Australian Wool Corporation and to authorize the Borrowing of certain Moneys by the Treasurer.

Wool Marketing (Loan) Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 153 of 1974)—
An Act to amend the Wool Marketing (Loan) Act 1974.

Wool Tax Act (No. 1) 1974 (Act No. 66 of 1974)—

Wool Tax Act (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 67 of 1974)—

Wool Tax Act (No. 3) 1974 (Act No. 68 of 1974)—

Wool Tax Act (No. 4) 1974 (Act No. 69 of 1974)—

Wool Tax Act (No. 5) 1974 (Act No. 70 of 1974)—

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THE BILLS OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD)

Audit Bill 1974—
Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Australia Council Bill 1974—
Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Australian Industry Development Corporation Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Book Bounty Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Australian Film Commission Bill 1974—
Initiated in the Senate. Passed by the House of Representatives. Returned to the Senate.

Broadcasting and Television Bill (No. 2) 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Broadcasting Stations Licence Fees Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Conciliation and Arbitration Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Conciliation and Arbitration Bill (No. 2) 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Electoral Bill 1974—
Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading

Electoral Laws Amendment Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Health Insurance Levy Bill (No. 2) 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Health Insurance Levy Assessment Bill (No. 2) 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Income Tax (International Agreements) Bill (No. 3) 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Industries Assistance Commission Bill 1974—
Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

National Compensation Bill 1974—
Initiated in the House of Representatives.

National Investment Fund Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Northern Territory (Stabilization of Land Prices) Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Phosphate Fertilizers Bounty Bill 1974—
Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Refrigeration Compressors Bounty Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Stevedoring Industry Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Superior Court of Australia Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Television Stations Licence Fees Bill 1974—
Passed by the House of Representatives. Transmitted to the Senate.

Remuneration and Allowances Bill 1974—
Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.
THE PARLIAMENT CONVENED
TWENTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION

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

PROCLAMATION

Australia
PAUL HASLUCK
Governor-General

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

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

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


By His Excellency's Command,

E. G. WHITLAM
Prime Minister
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Thursday, 31 October 1974

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

THE PARLIAMENT

Mr McMahon—Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order. I again draw attention to the Government front bench. Neither the Prime Minister, nor the Deputy Prime Minister, nor any other person is sitting on the front bench.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The right honourable gentleman is quite entitled to draw my attention to this. I think the Ministers should be in the chamber every day before prayers are read, and so also should the Opposition front bench.

PETITIONS

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

Uranium

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

That whereas uranium found in vast quantities in Australia is the raw material for the nuclear fission reaction,

And whereas presently assured reserves of uranium in Australia represent a potential production of over 540,000 kilograms of Plutonium 239 if utilized in Light Water Reactors overseas,

And whereas the Maximum Permissible Inhalation of Plutonium 239 is 0.00000025 gram,

And whereas Plutonium 239 is one of the most dangerous substances human society has ever created, causing mutations and cancer,

And whereas there are no methods of safely and absolutely containing Plutonium from the biosphere for the requisite quarter of a million years,

And whereas Plutonium coming in contact with the air forms an aerosol cloud of micron-sized particles, its most dangerous form,

And whereas the export of uranium may return to us an import of Plutonium particles dispersed in the global environment via the circulation of the atmosphere,

And whereas there are no sure safeguards against the military use of nuclear fission, and the nuclear proliferation represents a prime environmental threat to all forms of life on the only earth available to us,

And that it is therefore an act of self-preservation to demand a halt to all exports of uranium except for bio-medical uses,

Your petitioners humbly pray that the members, in the House assembled, will take the most urgent steps to ensure:

(1) That further mining and export of uranium from Australia except for bio-medical purposes be banned.

(2) That the Australian Atomic Energy Commission be transformed by the rewriting of its charter into an Australian Energy Commission to further the understanding of energy flows through our society and to promote national economic independence and self-sufficiency.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Clayton, Mr Coates and Mr Dawkins.

Petitions received.

Education

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled. The Petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully sheweth:

(1) Your petitioners believe in the principle that every Australian child, irrespective of the school he attends, is entitled to economic support for his basic educational needs from the funds placed at the disposal of the Australian Government through taxation. Further, they believe that this economic support should be in the form of per pupil grants which are directly related to the cost of educating an Australian child in a government school.

(2) Your petitioners believe that in addition to this basic per pupil grant additional assistance should be provided in cases of educational disadvantage, but they believe that the appropriate instruments for reducing economic inequalities are taxation and social welfare systems which deal with individuals and families and not with schools.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that, as an interim measure, the Government will immediately increase the current grants being made to children in non-government schools to at least 50 per cent of the cost of educating children in government schools, thus enabling the non-government schools to continue to exist and fulfil their function of educating Australian children.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Bourcher and Mr Oldmeadow.

Petitions received.

Taxation: Education Expenses

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

That the reduction of the allowable deduction of education expenses under Section 82J of the Income Tax Assessment Act from $400 to $150 is $30.00 below the 1956/57 figure.

That this reduction will impose hardships on many parents who have children attending school, whether non-government or government; and particularly on parents with more than one child at school.

That this reduction will further restrict the freedom available to parents to make a choice of school for their children.

That some parents who have chosen to send their children to a non-government school will have to withdraw their children and send them to government schools already overcrowded and understaffed.

That the parents to benefit most relatively from educational income tax deductions, in the past and even more in the future, are the parents of children in government schools and this has a divisive effect in the Australian community.

That parents should be encouraged by the Australian government to exercise freedom of choice of the type of school they wish for their children. The proposed reduction means an additional financial penalty is imposed on parents who try to exercise this choice and discourages them from making an important financial contribution to Australian
education over and above what they contribute through tax-

ation.

That an alternative system, a tax rebate system, could be adopted as being more equitable for all parents with chil-
dren at school.

To compensate for the losses that will follow from the proposed reduction and to help meet escalating educational costs faced by all families your petitioners most humbly pray that the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled should take immediate steps to restore educational benefits to parents, at least at the 1973/1974 level either by increasing taxation deductions or through taxation rebates.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Scholes and Mr Staley.

Petitions received.

National Health Scheme

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

That the proposed 'free' national health scheme is not free at all and will cost four out of five Australians more than the present scheme.

That the proposed scheme is discriminatory and a further erosion of the civil liberties of Australian citizens, particularly working wives and single persons.

That the proposed scheme is in fact a plan for nationalised medicine which will lead to gross waste and inefficiencies in medical services and will ultimately remove an individual's right to choose his/her own doctor.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Government will take no measures to interfere with the basic principle of the existing health scheme which functions efficiently and economically.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr McLeay and Mr Staley.

Petitions received.

Hallett's Cove, South Australia

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

The humble petition, of the undersigned citizens of Australia, respectfully showeth that they are gravely concerned about proposed housing development at Hallett's Cove.

In 1974 the Committee of Enquiry into the National Estate included in its definition of the National Estate areas of archaeological and scientific interest, urging the Federal Government to ensure that funds be available for the preservation of such areas. In accordance with these recommendations your petitioners humbly pray that the Honourable Members of the House of Representatives will ensure:

(1) That the Federal Government provide funds for the unique area of Hallett's Cove to be preserved with a sufficient buffer zone for effective protection against the dangers of housing development. We consider the present buffer zone inadequate.

(2) That the buffer zone cover the area first recommended by conservation groups, science teachers and citizens of this State in 1971. This area is that enclosed by the present shoreline, The Hallett Cove Model Estate, the Port Stanvac Railway, Grand Central Drive and a Line extending from the end of this road to the shoreline.

(3) That once this area is acquired the bulldozed section be topsoiled and replanted with its natural vegetation in order that the detrimental effects of unnatural run-off and soil movement on the beach be stopped.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Dr Cass.

Petition received.

Superannuation

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled. The humble Petition of undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully showeth that:

(1) The present superannuation scheme for Australian Government employees frequently causes undue financial hardship during the latter years of employees' service;

(2) further hardship is involved when an Arbitrator's decision is handed down and superannuation deductions are increased, and

(3) Actuaries appointed by the Government have recommended the introduction of a new superannuation scheme proposed by the Treasurer, under which scheme employees would be required to contribute 5 per cent only of their salaries.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that the House urge the Government to implement the new superannuation scheme proposed by the Treasurer at the earliest possible opportunity.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Cadman.

Petition received.

Petroleum Products: Taxes and Excise

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled. The Humble Petition of undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully showeth:

1. That the need for the Government of New South Wales to raise additional revenue by way of the Business Franchise Licences Petroleum Act will impose an unwarranted additional burden on New South Wales residents.

2. That the Premier of New South Wales has given a solemn undertaking that his Government will withdraw its harsh Petrol Tax immediately he can be assured of an equivalent additional revenue from Commonwealth Funds raised from New South Wales residents.

3. That such additional revenue can be provided by the Australian Government if it returns to the New South Wales Government all moneys raised by way of taxes and excise on petroleum products consumed in New South Wales.

4. That the New South Wales Government has available to it sufficient skilled personnel and equipment to undertake a continuing intensive programme of highway construction but is unable to fully use these resources through a lack of adequate funds.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Australian Government will forthwith do all things necessary to return to the States of the Commonwealth all moneys raised by way of taxes and excise on petroleum products.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Connolly.

Petition received.
Taxation: Education Expenses
To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled. The humble Petition of citizens of Australia respectfully showeth:

That the claim in the "Budget Speech, 1974-75" delivered on the 17th September, 1974, that there is no longer a case for providing substantial indirect assistance through the taxation system because the Australian Government's programs involve substantial increases in direct expenditures on education, is disputed.

That the reduction from $400 to $150 of the maximum amount deductible against 1974-75 income for education or self-education expenses will not be offset by the increases in direct expenditures on education, as such increases are not likely to reduce the direct costs to parents and guardians of educating their children.

That the effect of the reduction to $150 will be to force, for financial reasons, many persons wishing to educate their children at non-government schools, to send their children to government schools.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray the Government will take measures to restore to $400 the amount deductible against 1974-75 income for education and self-education expenses.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Dr Edwards.

Petition received.

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

(1) That the whole principle of the Family Law Bill 1974 is aimed at destroying the entire concept of marriage as traditionally recognized in Australia, with its special obligations between husband and wife and between parents and children.

(2) That the Bill fails to recognise or provide for the equal rights and responsibilities of both parties to a marriage, such as are provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the rights of parents to choose the type of education they desire for their children.

(3) That this Bill appears to express the desires of only a minority of Australians.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled should not admit into the law of this land the principle that marriage is only temporary and the family no longer the fundamental unit of society.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Hodges.

Petition received.

Metric System
To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled. The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia respectfully showeth that many Australians:

(1) have been unaware of the preparations over many years for the conversion of weights and measures to the metric system and

(2) neither approve of the conversion nor will recognise the metric system of weights and measures.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the House urge the Government not to proceed with the conversion of weights and measures to the metric system.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Oldmeadow.

Petition received.

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

(1) That the recent increases in tariffs at Commonwealth Hostels in the Australian Capital Territory are causing hardship amongst the lower paid junior ranks of the Public Service whose only choice of accommodation in Canberra is these hostels.

(2) That since these increases there has been a dramatic reduction in the quality and quantity of both food and services in the hostels.

(3) That any further increases in tariff coupled with the general shortage of single person accommodation in the Australian Capital Territory are unjustified and will cause people employed in the Public Service in Canberra to resign and leave Canberra to seek better conditions elsewhere.

Therefore, your petitioners humbly pray that the Government will hasten to amend such laws as would compel Commonwealth Hostels to come within the jurisdiction of the Australian Capital Territory Prices Controller to prohibit unjustified rises in tariff.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Street.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CHILD CARE CENTRES

Mr CADMAN—I direct to the Special Minister of State a question regarding child care. Is the Minister aware that a number of the 750 community pre-school centres in New South Wales is facing financial difficulties at the moment? Does he recognise any Federal Government responsibility for continuing assistance through the States, which has been a practice for the last 5 to 6 years, or does he intend to cut off funds until a new government scheme is imposed? Is the Minister allowing the exhaustion of interim finance which terminated at the beginning of this month with no funds available until January under the Government's new scheme? Does he expect centres for young children to continue to operate without funds during this period, despite the Prime Minister's undertaking in August that States would receive recurrent grants similar to those under the existing program?
Mr LIONEL BOWEN—The most interesting thing about the honourable member’s comment was that in New South Wales there had been support for the last 5 or 6 years. Of course, that was never the case. In fact, the New South Wales Government contributed virtually nothing to child care. I am amazed to hear that the honourable member now thinks that it ever made a contribution. It is only because of the attitude of the Australian Government that the New South Wales Government for the first time is showing some commendable interest. We intend to cooperate with it. It is true that a number of centres is facing financial problems because of increases in teachers salaries. In the past the deficiency always had to be met by contributions from parents. We have been able to assist under the existing provisions of the Child Care Act. The interim commission on child care standards has been announced and is meeting today for the first time. One of the primary matters for its consideration is what can be done to assist existing schools which are in financial need. We know full well the efforts that have been made in the past by parents and teachers to establish these schools without the help in New South Wales of any State government. I can assure the honourable member that all, these matters are being dealt with as expeditiously as possible.

It would be feasible perhaps, to enable recurrent expenditure to be taken into consideration now on a basis that will enable centres at least to continue. It would be wrong to think that any existing school should have to close down. That would be the last thing we would want to see happen. But it must be recognised that the program is an extensive one. We can see every good reason why existing child care centres should be maintained. We are seeking the co-operation not only of State and local government but also of community groups. We are very anxious to ensure that those centres that exist continue to thrive. This will require the co-operation of the parents, financial co-operation and the co-operation of governments at both the Australian and State level. I think the commission which has been announced is indicative of the interest that we have taken in this matter because its administration in both the education and welfare fields will be undertaken by representatives of all the States. The meeting today should give some indication of what they feel should be the priorities. I can assure the honourable member that as a result of their determinations and their deliberations the child care scheme should get away to an excellent start and the problems that he is so pessimistic about should not arise at all.

WIVENHOE DAM

Mr KEOGH—My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. I refer to the disastrous floods in Queensland and their effects particularly in Brisbane earlier this year. Following these floods it was widely claimed that the construction of the Wivenhoe Dam would play a vital role in future flood mitigation in the area concerned. I ask: Has the Australian Government received any request from the Queensland Government for financial assistance for this project? If so, why has there been such a delay in making an announcement about the assistance that the Australian Government will give? Will the Minister give us an explanation of that? In addition, will he give some indication of when he expects the Australian Government to be able to announce the role that it intends to play in the construction of the dam?

Dr CASS—The Wivenhoe Dam primarily was designed for water supply but it has been thought that perhaps by modifying the design it may also be capable of being used for flood mitigation. In March this year the Prime Minister wrote to the Queensland Premier asking for his views on modification of the dam because if the Australian Government is going to assist the State Government it needs to know what will be involved and what financial contribution, if any, the Australian Government will make. We received a reply from the Queensland Premier in September indicating that it is not possible at this stage to give a definite answer before the conclusion of a survey being conducted by the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation into the effects of the floods earlier this year. Of course, the results of this survey will help in the design of the dam and the assessment of whether it will serve a useful purpose. We are now awaiting the results of that survey.

The Premier also indicated that the water from the dam would be required by 1981-82 which means that a decision needs to be made by February next year. If the survey by the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation, the preliminary design assessment and the environmental impact study can be completed by February next year it should be possible to make a decision and start the final detailed design in March. Construction should be able to start in March 1976. The project has been screened by the screening committee we set up under our national water policy program and the detailed assessment of the final proposal will be under the control or supervision of my colleague the Minister for Urban and Regional Development.
COMPANY TAX: QUARTERLY PAYMENTS

Mr MACPHEE—My question is directed to the Treasurer. In the event of the Treasurer receiving submissions from small businesses asking that the timetable for quarterly payments of company tax be deferred, will he have regard to the grave liquidity problems now being experienced by business and the fact that 4 weeks’ annual leave must be paid for by most employers by Christmas? Will the Treasurer then consider deferring such tax payments either on a general basis, thereby allowing $200m to remain in the private sector during the next few months, or on a selective basis?

Mr CREAN—In the first place the introduction of quarterly payment of company tax is primarily a matter of equity in relation to all taxpayers rather than a question of liquidity. As the honourable gentleman knows a profit has actually been earned 9 months or more before the assessment is issued. Therefore this requirement will put companies on the same footing as individuals who come under the pay-as-you-earn system of taxation. The week they receive income is the week that tax is taken out. This practice has been extended to the payment of provisional tax on other than corporate incomes for many years now.

It was thought equitable to require company or corporate tax to be paid in advance quarterly. I submit it is a matter of equity and not liquidity. Nevertheless, if there are cases where hardship is involved I am prepared to look at each case on its merits.

TRACTOR TYRES

Mr DAWKINS—Is the Minister for Manufacturing Industry aware that certain tyres for agricultural machinery, specifically the 10 x 28 size, are impossible to obtain in certain parts of Western Australia? Is this indicative of a nationwide shortage? In view of the fact that such a shortage would be inconsistent with the alleged surplus capacity of the industry, will the Minister investigate the real position of the industry to ascertain whether its current complaints are entirely justified?

Mr ENDERBY—I thank the honourable member for the question. I am aware that there has been and still is a very considerable shortage of tractor tyres in Australia and, indeed, throughout the world. This shortage has been caused largely by an unprecedented growth in demand for tractor tyres and an inability of manufacturers to install additional capacity quickly. One major Australian manufacturer of tyres is now in the process of installing additional capacity and expects to double his existing production early in 1975. But that does not help the present situation. The tyre mentioned by the honourable member, that is, the 10 x 28, is a small profile, rear wheel tyre which is now not in general use and is not made by most local manufacturers. It has been replaced by an 11 x 28 size tyre, which is readily available in Western Australia and elsewhere. However, if the 10 x 28 size is particularly required, I understand it can be supplied still from overseas sources with about six or seven weeks delay.

URANIUM POLICY

Mr ANTHONY—I ask the Prime Minister: Has the Government been able to resolve its position on uranium policy, and will he tell the Parliament what this policy is? Does he agree that it is proper that the Parliament of this country should be advised of the Government’s policy before that of other governments? If Parliament is to be informed, will he allow some debate on this question?

Mr WHITLAM—I certainly believe the Parliament is entitled to know what the Government has achieved in this field. The Minister for Minerals and Energy will table a statement immediately after question time.

Mr Snedden—Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Standing Orders provide for the Minister to make a statement, not to table a statement. He should make the statement so that the matter can be debated. He should not use the cowardly approach of tabling the document instead of making a statement.

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

CYPRUS

Mr HURFORD—My question which is directed to the Prime Minister, concerns the tragic Cyprus situation. The Prime Minister will be aware of the bad conditions still prevailing in Cyprus—the suffering, the loss of production, and the disruption to the normally pleasant way of life on that island. He will also be aware of the sad hiatus that seems to exist—the apparent lack of action in finding a solution, the existence of foreign troops on that independent soil, and so on. As the Prime Minister and his Government have given a new respect to the Australian position in the world—a new authority for our country—and as we currently have a seat on the United Nations Security Council, will the Prime Minister please outline to the House the action
that Australia is taking and will take to improve this tragic situation?

Mr WHITLAM—The Government is very conscious of the humanitarian problems of displaced people on Cyprus, and the damage that the recent fighting has caused to the economy of the island. There are some 225,000 people in need on Cyprus, of whom about 180,000 have been displaced from their homes. The International Committee of the Red Cross, with help from the International Community, has been working to bring relief and to help resettle these people back in their homes. The Australian Government is also most concerned about the plight of these people and has already joined with other countries in making a special monetary contribution—$50,000—to assist them. Further assistance is under consideration. Emergency relief supplies collected by the Cypriot community in Australia are being flown to Athens free of charge by Qantas. About 5 tons a week have been carried over the last 4 weeks under this arrangement by the Australian international airline to the nearest point it serves.

Dr Forbes—Why do you not table the paper from which you are reading, you coward?

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Barker will withdraw that remark.

Dr Forbes—He is, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Barker will withdraw that remark, or I will name him.

Dr Forbes—I withdraw.

Mr WHITLAM—However, the real answer to the problem of displaced people lies in a political situation which will allow these people to return to their homes and businesses to begin the task of economic and social reconstruction. We hope that current negotiations taking place in Nicosia between Mr Clerides, the Acting President and the leader of the Greek community, and Mr Dentkash, the leader of the Turkish community, will pave the way to a longer term political settlement. A debate on Cyprus has just started at the United Nations. I do not have details at this stage, but the Australian delegation has been instructed to make quite clear our continuing sympathy for the people of Cyprus and the need for the United Nations to be active in seeking a solution acceptable to the people of Cyprus.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Interjections from the Opposition front bench will cease.

Mr Sinclair—Mr Speaker, a point of order. Are you suggesting that the Prime Minister is not making a policy statement, and is it not true that Standing Orders provide that questions should not ask Ministers to state Government policy?

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Deputy Leader of the Country Party will resume his seat. No point of order is involved. I have told the House on numerous occasions that the Chair has no jurisdiction over the length of answers given by Ministers.

Mr Sinclair—That has got nothing to do with it. It is a complete abuse of our Standing Orders.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Deputy Leader of the Country Party will remain silent.

Mr WHITLAM—As the Minister for Foreign Affairs said in his address to the General Assembly on 7 October, the Government supports the continued independence of Cyprus and believes that the solution to its problems must be reached without outside force. An Australian consular officer has been on Cyprus since 2 August tracing and checking on the welfare of Australian citizens there. The International Committee of the Red Cross has established a central tracing agency on Cyprus—

Mr Snedden—A point of order, Mr Speaker. The Prime Minister is persisting in making policy statements in order that he cannot be challenged on them. Any other man would be ashamed of that—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! There is no point of order involved. I said a moment ago that the Chair has no jurisdiction over the length of an answer. I ask the Prime Minister to make his answer as brief as possible.

Mr WHITLAM—There are tens of thousands of Australians who are interested in the Cypriot position—

Mr Snedden—The Opposition is interested, and it wants to debate it.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat and I am warning him not to jump up and make speeches unless he gets the call from the Chair.

Mr Peacock—A point of order, Mr Speaker. The Opposition is so interested in debating this matter that it refers you to standing order No. 144, second sub-section (b), which says that questions should not ask Ministers to announce Government policy. This question not only asks the Prime Minister to announce Government policy. The Prime Minister is in fact elaborating on that policy, so I suggest that he give us the opportunity to debate the matter.
Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Chair is not in a position to determine what is Government policy in this matter.

Mr Peacock—A point of order, Mr Speaker. That therefore means that you are not in a position to interpret that standing order, and I do not accept that.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member may not challenge a ruling of the Chair, as he knows. He should not say such things. He is always quoting the Standing Orders, but apparently he does not understand the Standing Orders himself.

Mr WHITLAM—The Opposition spokesman on foreign affairs spoke twice yesterday and never mentioned Cyprus.

(Opposition members interjecting)—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! If the honourable member for Barker challenges my rulings, as he does with interjections, I shall name him.

Mr WHITLAM—The Opposition is so interested in the position of Cypriots in Cyprus and in Australia that in the debate on the estimates yesterday, and on the motion to suspend Standing Orders—

Mr Donald Cameron—You people gagged the debate after 1½ hours.

Mr Peacock—I attended the rally on Saturday and you did not.

Mr WHITLAM—You never mentioned Cyprus in your 2 speeches yesterday.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The House will come to order. I ask the honourable member for Griffith to contain himself and not to scream out across the chamber. If he continues to do so I will take the appropriate action. I have warned him consistently since I became Speaker. If he continues to adopt that attitude I will name him. I also ask the honourable member for Kooyong to contain himself, instead of arguing across—

Mr Nixon—Ask the Prime Minister, too.

Mr Sinclair—The Prime Minister is the biggest offender of them all.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Prime Minister is entitled to answer the question without being subjected to interjections, as he has been. I have given rulings on this matter previously.

Mr Nixon—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Prime Minister is not entitled to—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! No point of order is involved. The honourable member for Gippsland will resume his seat.

Mr WHITLAM—The Australian Red Cross has passed on to the International Committee over 2,000 inquiries from the Cypriot community in Australia about the welfare of relatives in Cyprus. This week a migrant selection team from our Embassy in Athens is arriving in Cyprus to begin the processing of sponsored migrants from among those dispossessed.

AMALGAMATED METAL WORKERS UNION

Mr WENTWORTH—My question is directed to the Prime Minister. It refers to 3 incidents: First, to his visit on 2 June 1972 to the preliminary meeting of what was to become the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union council in order to solicit funds for the Australian Labor Party; secondly, to a list of 33 key members of the AMWU organisation who are known communists, as shown in the House on 16 October—

Mr Martin—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. My point of order is that this is not a matter which is pertinent to the Prime Minister’s portfolio.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Wait until we hear the question. I call the honourable member for Mackellar.

Mr WENTWORTH—Thank you, Sir. I have with me, to refresh the Prime Minister’s memory, the names of those 33 people. My question refers, thirdly, to the answer which he gave in this House on 19 September of this year and in which he said that Communist Party influence in the unions was politically insignificant and, I quote him exactly: ‘. . . we believe that the trade union movement has never been in better hands’. I ask the Prime Minister precisely: When he made this answer in the House on 19 September was he aware at that time, was he still ignorant at that time, of the communist penetration into the AMWU, or did he say what was false in order deliberately to deceive the House? Which is it?

Mr SPEAKER—Order!

Mr WENTWORTH—Was he ignorant or was he a liar?

(Honourable members interjecting)—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I call the Prime Minister.

Mr WHITLAM—The honourable gentleman can put questions on the notice paper on this matter, because then at least he has to comply with the Standing Orders.
Mr Donald Cameron—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. That was a reflection on you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Wentworth—that answer is not relevant to the question.

Mr Snedden—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker—Order! The right honourable gentleman will resume his seat. No more business will be conducted until the House comes to order. I ask honourable members to resume their seats. Honourable members are wasting their question time.

Mr Ian Robinson—Well, the Prime Minister does not give any answers anyway.

Mr Speaker—Order! The honourable member for Cowper will remain silent. I call the Leader of the Opposition, who wishes to raise a point of order.

Mr Snedden—Mr Speaker, I ask the Prime Minister to withdraw the reflection on your ruling. By way of a point of order, you were challenged by the honourable member for Banks to rule that the question was out of order. You ruled that the question was in order. The Prime Minister, as a method of avoiding answering the question, reflected on your ruling by saying that the question should be put on the notice paper and then the honourable member for Mackellar would have to comply with the Standing Orders. The clear implication was that you were wrong in ruling the question in order.

Mr Speaker—Order!

Mr Snedden—Mr Speaker, allow me to finish—

Mr Speaker—Order! I can interrupt the right honourable gentleman this time. It was in the early part of the question that I said I would wait to hear what the question was all about and then I gave the ruling. There is no reflection, as I consider it, by the Prime Minister on my ruling, as I had to wait until I heard what the question was all about.

Mr Wentworth—May I uphold your ruling, Sir? The Prime Minister is quite entitled to refuse to defend himself from the charge of being a liar.

Mr Speaker—Order! The honourable gentleman will resume his seat.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Speaking to that point of order, if having heard all—

Mr Speaker—Order! There can be no debate on the point of order. The honourable gentleman will resume his seat.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—But Mr Speaker—

Mr Speaker—Order! I call further questions without notice.

Mr Sherry—a point of order!

Opposition members—Oh, go on!

Mr Speaker—Order!

Mr Sherry—I can wait until the rabble come to order.

Mr Sinclair—Are those on your side going to behave themselves?

Mr Speaker—Order!

Mr Sherry—My point of order is this: The honourable member for Mackellar has just reflected on the Prime Minister and called him a liar. I ask under the Standing Orders that he withdraw that remark.

Opposition supporters—It is true.

Mr Speaker—I did not hear that remark. If I had, I certainly would have asked the honourable gentleman to withdraw it. Did the honourable gentleman make that remark?

Mr Wentworth—Certainly not, Sir. I asked the Prime Minister whether he was a liar. I did not say he was. I would not say that, of course.

Mr Snedden—Mr Speaker—

Mr Speaker—Order! The right honourable gentleman will resume his seat. I have had enough of this. I will not accept any more points of order from you at all. I call the honourable member for Burke.

AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION

Mr Keith Johnson—Has the attention of the Minister representing the Attorney-General been drawn to a statement in the Victorian Parliament by the Victorian Attorney-General that the Australian Government had refused even to recognise the relevance of the Constitution where it conflicted with its own policies? Because the Victorian Attorney-General has claimed that the activities of the Australian Government contravened the law, will the Minister tell this House in what areas the Australian Government’s initiatives are contrary to the Constitution and whether he expects a High Court challenge by the Victorian Government to Australian Government policies relating to education, health, welfare, legal aid and/or financial assistance for municipalities?

Mr Enderby—One would need to be here for a week to give a complete answer to the honourable member’s question. Suffice to say
this: My attention has been drawn to the reported remarks of the Victorian Attorney-General. If he is correctly reported, his remarks show a degree of conservatism and a degree of irresponsibility that are hard to comprehend. The remarks, as I understand, were to the effect of seeking to have the Constitution interpreted as if it was a social compact between people, now dead, who lived in the nineteenth century.

The simple and short answer to the honourable member’s question is that there have been no breaches of the Constitution as the Victorian Attorney-General alleges. What should be appreciated by all honourable members, and will be appreciated by lawyers on the opposite side as well as on the Government side, is that the Constitution is a living thing. It is not a rigid, never changing document. It is interpreted by the courts. The interpretation given to it by the courts over the years has changed it enormously from the way in which it was conceived to operate back in the early years of this century.

It is true also that the other way of changing it—by referendum—has been largely unsuccessful. But the way in which it is used constructively and properly is very important also because, I repeat, it is a living document and it can be interpreted and administered as such. This Government seeks to give effect to its policies of greater social justice, more expenditure of money on education and increased spending on welfare and social services, within the constitutional framework. It uses the power under section 96 and it uses the appropriation power of section 81 in that way.

We should never forget also, I would suggest, that behind the written form of the Constitution lies a kind of power relationship that existed in the nineteenth century but which changes. When people like the Victorian Attorney-General—a Liberal Minister in the Victorian Parliament—speak as though they want it to go back, they speak of advocates for the existence of this power relationship in a community that existed then and which was based essentially on privilege and elitism; something which this Government rejects out of hand.

CHEVRON HOTEL, MELBOURNE

Mr LLOYD—I address my question to the Minister for Health. Are representatives of the Hospital and Health Services Commission and the Australian Council of Trade Unions negotiating with the management of the Chevron Hotel in Melbourne for the purchase of that hotel as a trade union centre and a Commonwealth health centre? Is the Minister aware that the Alfred Hospital is also negotiating for this site which is valued at between $3m and $4m? Will the Minister assure the House that the Hospital and Health Services Commission will not interfere with the Alfred Hospital negotiations by offering an exorbitant price and will be guaranteed that if the hotel is purchased by the Commonwealth it will not be a vehicle for transferring several million dollars to the ACTU?

Dr EVERINGHAM—The Hospital and Health Services Commission and the Australian Council of Trade Unions are in close and cordial co-operation in discussions with the Alfred Hospital on this matter. If any decision is made, it will be announced.

AUSTRALIAN ASSISTANCE PLAN

Mr COATES—I direct a question to the Minister for Social Security. In spite of the increased interest being shown in the Australian assistance plan, are there yet enough people involved in each region? Can the Minister inform the House what measures have been taken to stimulate the expansion of the Australian assistance plan so that more people have the chance to be involved in developing welfare facilities in their own community?

Mr HAYDEN—At this stage the Australian assistance plan is still in a pilot study phase. It will be on the basis of the experience we gain from the monitoring and evaluation of the program through a number of pilot studies that legislation for the program will be later introduced into the Parliament. Nonetheless a great deal has been done in this field already. We have increased from $1m last year to $6.1m the total expenditure associated with this program. So far we have funded 6 regions in Adelaide, Melbourne, southern Tasmania—I commend the active role of the honourable member for Denison in support of the program in southern Tasmania because I know it is appreciated by the people of that area—south-west Sydney, the southern region of Western Australia and at Gladstone in Queensland. Another six will be funded this year.

Last month’s Budget increased administrative grants from $20,000 to $40,000 maximum, including $30,000 staff subsidies and $10,000 other administration subsidies. The $10,000 allowance for each community development officer was increased in the Budget to $12,000. We have introduced a new grant of $2,000, called an initiating grant, designed to encourage the formation of new regional councils. In short, we are giving as much encouragement as we can
to the rapid development of this program consistent with the pilot stage which the plan presently is at. There is widespread support for this program except from members of the Opposition. It is rather curious that the spokesman for the Opposition on welfare matters, the honourable member for Hotham, seems to have been selected for this role not because of what he can contribute constructively on welfare matters but for what he can do for the Opposition in either containing commitments in the welfare field or destroying worthwhile programs. He is on record as saying that the Australian assistance plan, and indeed the programs of my colleague the Minister for Tourism and Recreation, are political pork barrelling. Only this week I received a letter from a person who is a constituent of the honourable member for Hotham, and is involved in the welfare field, bemoaning the fact that, as he put it, ‘Don Chipp has changed from being a reasonable small ’i’ liberal to becoming a quite reactionary and repressive person where the issues of social welfare are concerned’. Frankly, I sincerely regret that the policy of the Opposition as articulated by the Opposition spokesman on welfare matters, seems to be one of destruction where community development is concerned in welfare services.

**HOME MORTGAGE INTEREST**

Mr **Snedden**—My question is addressed to the Treasurer. Is it not true that very great problems are associated with the introduction of a home interest tax rebate scheme on a pay-as-you-earn basis as demanded by the Caucus yesterday? What are the reasons for the Treasurer’s opposition to the decision? What will be the cost in 1974-75 of introducing the scheme? Has the amount of the cost been included in the Budget Estimates? Is it a fact that all home owners would benefit by $100m for each 1 per cent reduction in home interest rates, and that if home interest rates were reduced to the level at which they were in 1972 there would be a saving to the community of something of the order of $400m, but not out of the taxpayers’ pockets? Is it not a fact that the introduction of this scheme simply means that tax rates have to be kept higher than otherwise would be necessary? Why will the Government and the Treasurer not put more liquidity into the system to ease the credit squeeze and reduce interest rates overall?

Mr **Crean**—More than one question was asked by the right honourable member. The first one asked was in relation to the tax deductibility of mortgage interest payments on a PAYE basis. I do not think anybody should deny that some technical problems are involved in such a scheme. Nevertheless, if it is at all feasible to make the provision on a weekly basis in some cases, I have instructed my officers to prepare the necessary mechanisms. When that is done I will make a full statement on the situation. It is not as easy as it is in some other cases. The only deductions really made on the PAYE basis are for dependants and a sort of arbitrary allowance of $60 or $70 over and above that. Basically, they are amounts that are the same for all taxpayers and there is no difficulty in incorporating them in a schedule. But there is some difficulty about a deduction that varies according to the income and may, in some cases, be shared over 2 incomes. Acknowledging all those details, at least I am endeavouring to have the proposal incorporated if at all possible.

Mr **Snedden**—What about the rest of the question? Why do you not reduce interest rates?

Mr **Crean**—If the right honourable gentleman can make a sensible suggestion about reducing interest rates, I will be willing to listen to him.

Mr **Snedden**—Mr Speaker, as—

Mr **Speaker**—Order! The right honourable gentleman will resume his seat. If he wants to get the call from the Chair he has to address the Chair and say what he wants to talk about. He cannot get up and break into a speech whenever he so desires. He should ask for the call properly.

Mr **Snedden**—Mr Speaker, will you please call me?

(Honourable members interjecting)—

Mr **Speaker**—Order! The right honourable gentleman will resume his seat.

Mr **Snedden**—Mr Speaker—

Mr **Speaker**—Is this a point of order?

Mr **Snedden**—This is a point of order.

Mr **Speaker**—Well, why do you not say so?

Mr **Snedden**—I say so.

Mr **Speaker**—You do not. I will not recognise you unless you address the Chair properly and speak according to the Standing Orders.

Mr **Snedden**—Mr Speaker, a point of order—

Mr **Speaker**—That is better.

Mr **Snedden**—The point of order is this: There is provision under Standing Orders for a statement to be made by the Treasurer. In the last sentence of his answer he said that if I had a suggestion to make about reducing interest rates he would be glad to hear it. My point of order is:
Would you permit me to respond to the invitation given by the Treasurer?

Mr SPEAKER—That is not a matter for the Chair.

INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

Mr THORBURN—Is the Minister for Manufacturing Industry aware that some Australian manufacturers are apprehensive about the activities of the Industries Assistance Commission? Does the annual report of the IAC have any implications for Australian industry? Will the Minister take steps to ensure that the operation and activities of the IAC are better known and understood by manufacturers and the community generally.

Mr ENDERBY—I agree with the honourable member that there is apprehension. Some degree of concern is occasionally expressed by businessmen about the reports of the Industries Assistance Commission. It is a pity because there can be little doubt that the IAC performs a very valuable role in Australia. There can be equally little doubt that over the years of all the subjects of great importance to Australia, to Australian manufacturing industry, to the management side, to the employees' side and to the consumers—because in the long run we are all consumers—there has been a lack of understanding of the relevance and the importance of this thing called protection, its advantages to Australians and also the costs and disadvantages that it presents to Australians. Behind that, of course, there is the other concept that these days is called structural change, which again is a matter on which there is very little informed debate. There is a lot of misunderstanding and a lot of prejudice about it.

One understands the feelings of a businessman who suddenly appreciates that it may not be in the interests of all Australians in the long run for his particular business to continue. We can understand his concern. Since this Government came to office it has taken great steps to lift that debate to higher levels, to encourage it and to encourage discussions, through the industry panels, of the question of protection and what it means, the question of the tariff and the level of the exchange rate. As is also known on the Government side—it is to be regretted that it does not exist on the Opposition side in the Liberal and Country Parties—there is a degree of involvement by the back benchers of this Party through the Caucus system that involves an active participation in the decision making process. The most recent example, of course, is the discussion in the Caucus Economics Committee dealing with the IAC report on motor vehicles. As I say, it is a great pity that the Liberal and Country Parties have no equivalent form of involvement for their back benchers.

I took it upon myself this morning, as part of this emphasis that we give to these matters to contact Mr Rattigan, who is the Chairman of the Industries Assistance Commission, and inquire whether he would be interested in attending and discussing with the Economics Committee of Caucus the overall philosophy and approach of the IAC on these matters. I am happy to tell the House and my own colleagues that he has accepted the invitation. I also took it upon myself first to seek the concurrence of the Prime Minister because he carries the direct ministerial responsibility for the IAC. I have also discussed it with the Chairman of the Caucus Economics Committee. Contained in that recent annual report of the IAC is a set of principles that is worthy of study by all members of this House. One can only with great difficulty challenge their logic. One, of course, has to accept the difficult political problems that they often present for political parties, particularly when they are in government. But putting aside the politics of it, one has great difficulty in faulting the logic of the statements of principle contained in that annual report. I will conclude on this note. At least the Economics Committee of our parliamentary party and our back benchers will have the advantage of close intimate discussion with the man who propounds those principles and who has such a great influence on the discussion of protection in Australia. It is to be regretted—and I look at the Liberal people opposite—that you do not do the same sort of thing.

NORTHERN TERRITORY URANIUM

Mr CONNOR—(Cunningham—Minister for Minerals and Energy)—I present for the information of honourable members a statement entitled 'Northern Territory Uranium'.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr SNEDDEN—(Bruce—Leader of the Opposition) (10.51)—I move:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent me moving the following motion:

The House is of the opinion that the Minister for Minerals and Energy should make a statement orally so that the House, instead of merely having presented to it a paper on the matter of Northern Territory uranium, should be able to debate it.

Mr Connor—There is no need to debate the matter. I am quite prepared—
Mr SPEAKER—Order! I have a motion before the Chair. Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to make an arrangement with the Minister?

Mr SNEDDEN—Mr Speaker, you have asked me do I wish to make an accommodation with the Minister.

Mr SPEAKER—It might save the suspension of the Standing Orders.

Mr SNEDDEN—If I may reply to your suggestion, with your permission let me answer the Minister publicly rather than privately. The purpose of the motion to suspend the Standing Orders—

Mr Whitlam—Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order. Time can be saved if leave is sought. If leave is sought and granted the Minister will make the statement.

Mr SNEDDEN—Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER—I call the Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

Mr SNEDDEN—Mr Speaker, I am not taking a point of order. With respect, I am responding to the question you put to me as to whether I wanted to make an accommodation with the Minister. In responding to that question I want to say that we will always give leave to a Minister to make a policy statement. The purpose of moving the suspension of Standing Orders is to prevent the tabling of papers. The Government is circumventing the practice of the House of a Minister making a policy statement and giving the Opposition 2 hours notice so that it can reply. I will very readily give leave to the Minister 2 hours from the time that I received this statement which now has been put on my table. In 2 hours time we will give leave to the Minister to make a statement.

Mr SPEAKER—in the meantime I have a motion before the Chair for the suspension of the Standing Orders. The arrangement has nothing to do with the Chair. That was only a suggestion I made. At present there is a motion before the Chair to suspend Standing Orders.

Mr SNEDDEN—My proposal is that I will seek leave to withdraw the motion to suspend Standing Orders and I will grant leave in 2 hours time, which of course will be immediately after lunch. We will grant leave then and we would expect that the honour of the Parliament would be served by both sides if leave is sought and granted.

Mr SPEAKER—I suggest that the Acting Leader of the House and the leader of business on the Opposition side make arrangements in regard to this matter as quickly as possible. Is it the position that the motion is not proceeded with?

Mr SNEDDEN—I will not proceed with it.

Mr SPEAKER—I suggest that the Deputy Leader of the Country Party have a talk with the Acting Leader of the House in regard to this matter to ascertain whether some arrangements can be made.

Mr Lionel Bowen—I seek leave for the Minister to make a statement forthwith.

Mr SPEAKER—is leave granted?

Mr Snedden—No.

Mr SPEAKER—Leave is not granted.

Mr Snedden—I rise on a point of order. Briefly, the reason leave has been refused is, as I said earlier, that the customary practice—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! If leave is refused there can be no debate.

INCIDENT AT SCHOOL OF ARTILLERY AT NORTH HEAD

Mr BARNARD—(Bass—Minister for Defence)—I present for the information of honourable members a statement on the investigation into the incident at the School of Artillery at North Head, Sydney, on the evening of Friday, 30 August 1974. Due to the limited numbers of this statement available at this time I have arranged for reference copies to be placed in the Parliamentary Library.

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION COUNCIL

Mr BARNARD (Bass—Minister for Defence)—For the information of honourable members I present a report on the meeting of the Australian Education Council on 4 October, 1974. Due to the limited number available at this time I have arranged for reference copies of the report to be placed in the Parliamentary Library.

WAGES, SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF THE STAFF OF PARLIAMENT

Mr SPEAKER—On 22 October 1974 the honourable member for Ballarat (Mr Erwin) asked me a question regarding wages, salaries and conditions of the staff of the Parliament. I do not think it would be possible to provide an early answer within the terms of the question. Obviouisly it will be necessary for me to have discussions with the President of the Senate regarding the matters raised. It is possible that we may be assisted in our discussions if information is obtained with respect to the relevant staffing arrangements of the United Kingdom House of
Commons, where an inquiry was recently undertaken, and the Canadian House of Commons. I intend to pursue this course. I will provide the honourable member with a further answer when I am able to do so.

**RE Muneration Tribunal**

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—(Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State)—Pursuant to section 7 (7) of the Remuneration Tribunals Act 1973–1974 I table the Remuneration Tribunal’s determination of remuneration to be paid to members of the interim committee for the Children’s Commission. Following the Parliament’s disapproval in July of this year of the Remuneration Tribunal’s 1974 review the rates contained in this determination are in the context of the existing salary structure for statutory officers.

**Personal Explanations**

Dr FORBES (Barker)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Dr FORBES—Yes. Yesterday the Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard), in answer to a Dorothy Dix question from the honourable member for Bonython (Mr Nicholls), stated that I had made a statement or issued a statement that anti-riot operations should be the priority task of the Australian armed forces in the late 1970s. He went on to say that he found this incredible. I believe this is a deliberate and gross distortion of what I said. What I said was that for the later 1970s defence policy must be framed in terms of a range of tasks. Operations in aid of the civil power was one of no fewer than 6 tasks I mentioned. Anti-riot operations is one of the many tasks which came under this heading. The Minister’s distortion and over-reaction on this issue confirms my belief that he has specific instructions that Australian forces are not to be trained in anti-riot techniques because of his fear of repercussions from Labor’s left wing. This is gross irresponsibility because nothing is more certain than that at some time, somewhere, perhaps in the performance of the United Nations peace keeping task, Australian forces will have to perform this role.

Mr PEACOCK (Kooyong)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Mr PEACOCK—Yes. Earlier today the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), in answer to a question during which he read from a lengthy document relating to Cyprus, alleged that the Opposition was not interested in the problems of Cyprus. I point out that I attended a rally with thousands of members of the various Greek communities at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne. I was honoured, proud and pleased to be there and to address that rally. Not one member of the Labor Ministry was in attendance at that rally.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Who attended the meeting is not important. The honourable member has made his point.

**Special Adjournment**

Motion (by Mr Lionel Bowen) agreed to:

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, 12 November, at 10.30 a.m. or such time thereafter as Mr Speaker may take the chair, unless Mr Speaker shall by telegram addressed to each member of the House fix an earlier day of meeting.

**Rural Program**

Mr HUNT (Gwydir) (11.1)—I move:

That this House requests the Government to urgently present a program to stimulate rural production and to restore confidence in the rural sector of the economy in Australia as a proper basis for any positive plan the Government may sponsor or support at the forthcoming World Food Conference organised by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation in Rome during November.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Is the motion seconded?

Mr Fairbairn—I second the motion.

Mr HUNT—I move the motion because I hope that the Government will attempt to restore confidence in industry generally and in the rural industries in particular. There is not a sector of the Australian community that can claim much comfort from the incredibly bad performance of the Whitlam Government. However, the rural sector capped the bucket early in the piece. It was seen in the early days of the Whitlam administration that the rural industries were clearly in for some brutal and bloody surgery. Last year’s budgetary measures which have since been followed by other measures have represented a withdrawal of approximately $350m worth of resources from the rural areas of Australia. But the worst aspect of the Government’s socialist policy has been the withdrawal of taxation incentives and investment incentives from rural producers.

Rural producers are disillusioned and distrustful and have lost complete faith in this Government and in their own prospects and indeed their ability to produce goods profitably under the Labor Party’s economy strategy. There will of course be a heavy drop in capital investment in the rural sector at a time when farmers should be encouraged to become more capital intensive.
and more efficient to help offset the shattering rise of inflation and the escalating costs of production.

- Hardly a week goes by without a demonstration by farmers against prices, their falling incomes, inflation, industrial disorder, fuel shortages and the anti-rural policies of the Whitlam Government. In New South Wales we have witnessed such demonstrations, the most notable being earlier this month in my home town of Moree where 5,000 people turned out to give vent to their disillusion and anger. It would be an inept, insensitive and hopeless government that failed to appreciate the depth of anger among some of the hardest working people in Australia.

It is no accident or act of ad hoctery that the Government has embarked upon its anti-rural program. Indeed it set up the Coombs task force to examine all the policies of the former Government with a view to dismantling them so that Labor could implement its own socialist program. The whole thrust of the economic policy has been to shift resources from the private sector, from those on the farms, from those in small businesses, and from those who are self-employed to the public or government sector. The Coombs report has become the blueprint of the economic policy of this Government. Since its publication we have seen one decision after another in spite of the establishment of the Australian Industries Assistance Commission to which references should have been made prior to the arbitrary decisions taken by the Government.

The Green Paper on rural policy has come after the rural industries have been torn limb from limb. The whole exercise has been a facade; it has the appearance of being a fraud of the worst type. Now we have another reference to Australian Industries Assistance Commission on income for stabilisation for farmers. How long will it take for this examination to take place? How long do the farmers have to wait for some form of compensation for the value of the measures that have been taken from them?

The loss of the superphosphate bounty at the end of this year when superphosphate prices look like rising to at least $50 a tonne is nothing short of disastrous. From 1 January, farmers will be paying 3 times as much, excluding freight, as they are paying for superphosphate now. The price will have risen from $15.50 a tonne to $50 a tonne. The average sheep farmer uses about 150 tonnes a year and this increase will therefore cost farmers an additional $3,000 per annum. The removal of the petrol equalisation scheme cost farmers an additional $26m. There was also an effective 50 per cent reduction in Australian Government funds for local roads. What a humane, charitable Government the rural people have experienced since 1972. On top of higher postal charges, telephone costs and the highest interest rates on record, the farmers are now being slugged with the prospect of a capital gains tax. Such a measure will further rob the people of rural Australia of their incentive and reduce their capacity to produce goods. The capital gains tax—some of the principles of which are yet unanswered in spite of the probing questions of the honourable member for Fisher (Mr Adermann)—on top of the loss of $37m of taxation incentives in the former Budget has come at a time when the rural industry should be growing more capital intensive.

Where is the sense in these policies—policies that militate against capital investment? Where is the incentive? How many young farmers will want to stay in the industry? Indeed, how many will be driven from it? I am told that the average age of farmers today is 52 years. Presumably these decisions were taken because of a mistaken belief of the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) who made that memorable, that historic statement, that the farmers have never had it so good. Now of course in more recent times the Prime Minister laments that the farmers just will not listen to the Government. I believe that they have heard enough of his rantings and of his insensitive outbursts. In an address to the New South Wales Country Press Association only last week he said:

- It is very difficult to have a dialogue with those who are just determined not to listen.

Be that as it may, the Australian Government is determined to continue its efforts to achieve meaningful, constructive dialogue with the rural community, not only those who live on farms but the far larger section of country dwellers who live in country towns.

He is reported to have said that it was always unpopular to be seen taking something away, however illusory the presumed benefit in fact may be. I think that sort of statement indicates that he still has not understood the real problem facing these people. It is against this deplorable background that the Prime Minister on his recent visit to New York in an obvious effort to court favour with the Afro-Asian nations with populations facing famine proclaimed that we need a world food policy and that Australia has the capacity to help feed the peoples of the world. It has been said that he has been courting favour and trying to win support among these nations and their delegates in the hope that, should he become any more unpopular within his own ranks, there will be a position for him within the United Nations. Be that as it may, it is against this background also that Cabinet has had to formulate a policy
for Australia at the World Food Conference in Rome in November. The unfortunate Senator Wriedt goes to Rome hoping to give leadership at this conference, but the Australian Government with its short-sighted anti-rural policies has destroyed its chances of giving leadership at the conference. Whatever high-sounding policy the Government adopts for international scrutiny, the fact remains that the Australian Government's encouragement to the farmers has been non-existent. The Rome conference will be held in an atmosphere of crisis. The impending food crisis has renewed the call to establish an international stock of basic foodstuffs, principally cereals, to cover seasonal fluctuations in world production. For some time now the Food and Agricultural Organisation has been sounding warnings to the world and these warnings have been largely unheeded by most nations.

It is an international disgrace in this so-called enlightened age that 1,000 million people face hunger next year. They face not just degradation but starvation. Millions of humans face death in the next 12 months. This will happen notwithstanding the fact that the world has the capacity to provide abundant food. Clearly there is an urgent need to develop an emergency world food stockpile consisting mostly of grain and, in the longer term, to develop a policy to lower world tariff barriers to enable the developing nations to earn foreign exchange and to generate their own capital resources in order to increase their own food production. Clearly, foreign aid to the developing countries should aim at helping them become more self-sufficient in meeting their basic food needs, but it will take some years for these countries to reach anywhere near self-sufficiency.

If the agricultural nations are to keep pace with the world food demand, which is growing at 2.5 per cent per annum, a great deal more resources will have to be devoted to agriculture. For instance, it is the developing countries that have rapidly growing populations, and the zero population growth concept will not be readily accepted or indeed implemented in many of these nations. These countries will be importing 85 million tons of cereals by 1985, which is three times more than their present capacity to import food. While new long term policies to save human lives from ultimate starvation are essential, there remains an enormously grave immediate problem of providing more grain and food in the Western agricultural nations.

One of the paradoxes of the current situation is that while we appear to have mountains of beef—in fact, it has been said that we have too much meat and not enough grain in the world—we have a world shortage of protein that will be felt within the next 12 months. Such demands to try to increase the availability of grain and other essential food will fall heavily upon the shoulders of the United States, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, indeed upon the European Economic Community countries and upon the Australian people. There is a need for a world food stocks policy based on the principle of price stabilisation designed to ensure profitable production to farmers. Those consumer countries desirous of providing low cost food to the consumers will have to apply consumer subsidies to achieve their goal. The simple fact remains—and the world needs to know it, and the people of this country need to know it—that unless returns are profitable to the farmers they will not invest the capital necessary to increase their production. In other words, any world food stocks policy based on unremunerative returns to farmers will fail. In assisting the developing countries which are facing famine the oil-rich nations must be called upon to make their financial contribution.

But surely the great lesson to emerge from this shocking human tragedy facing one-quarter of the world's population is that agricultural nations such as Australia must encourage capital investment in agriculture to give an incentive to the farmers. It is no longer a matter of charity to the farmers, it is a matter of national and international priority. The Prime Minister this week has belatedly tried to reassure farmers that they are in for a better deal. He is reported in the 'Australian' dated 30 October to have said:

We did not expect to be popular.

After having removed income taxation concessions and so on—

I simply ask you to remember that these concessions and subsidies were not really helping you.

We have replaced them with much more valuable benefits. Your long-term prospects are stronger in consequence.

I hope that is not the view of all those Labor men who represent rural constituencies. I hope that the rural rump of the Australian Labor Party can persuade the Prime Minister that that is a foolish statement, that it does not get to the root of the problem in this country or indeed in the world. It will be the Western countries, the free enterprise countries, the so-called capitalist countries, that will be called upon to provide the exportable surplus food in this time of crisis, indeed in the immediate future. It is the developing countries, the socialist countries, the countries with planned economies, which cannot meet their own demands. Socialist countries like the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have failed dismally with their agricultural plans. Their farmers do not have the incentive to work long hours, to care, to increase their production of foodstuffs. Indeed, it is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which is to a certain degree the villain of the piece at the present time. Since 1972 the Soviet Union has been involved in a great grain grab to meet its own deficit. It is virtually taking the grain from the mouths of the starving millions.

Mr Lloyd—The failure of communist agriculture.

Mr HUNT—Exactly. I wish to obtain leave to incorporate statistical evidence which shows that it is the free enterprise countries like Australia that are being called upon, and will be called upon, to supply the surplus to feed the starving peoples in the underdeveloped socialist countries. I seek leave to incorporate these documents. I have shown them to the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen).

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

(The documents read as follows)—

### WHEAT

Main producing countries and main exporting countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country, etc.</th>
<th>Amount—million tons</th>
<th>Proportion—Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>318.6</td>
<td>353.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed countries</td>
<td>103.7</td>
<td>126.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.E.C. (9 members)</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Western Europe</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally planned countries</td>
<td>150.3</td>
<td>156.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.S.R.</td>
<td>99.7</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EXPORTS

<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>World</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed countries</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>89.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Rural Program

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.C.</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally planned countries</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.S.R.</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Preliminary

Compiled at request by the Statistics Group of the Legislative Research Service from information contained in FAO Commodity Review and Outlook, 1973-74 published by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

### WHEAT

#### A. Production, trade and apparent consumption in the Developed, Developing and Centrally Planned Countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1971 Season and Year</th>
<th>1972 Season and Year</th>
<th>1973 Season and Year</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Less Exports</th>
<th>Plus Imports</th>
<th>Apparent Consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+126.2</td>
<td>-48.1</td>
<td>+17.8</td>
<td>156.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening Stocks</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>175.6</td>
<td>-65.8</td>
<td>127.5</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>170.5</td>
<td>-65.2</td>
<td>104.7</td>
<td>162.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Exports</td>
<td>-12.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>162.6</td>
<td>-20.1</td>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>183.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus Imports</td>
<td>+133.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>145.3</td>
<td>+20.3</td>
<td>124.8</td>
<td>172.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>117.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Closing Stocks</td>
<td>-48.3</td>
<td>-28.9</td>
<td>-20.6</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparent Consumption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>162.5</td>
<td>+12.1</td>
<td>+25.0</td>
<td>169.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Preliminary.

#### B. Apparent Consumption as a proportion of Production in the Developed, Developing and Centrally Planned Countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1971 Season and Year</th>
<th>1972 Season and Year</th>
<th>1973 Season and Year</th>
<th>(per cent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>78.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Exports</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>72.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus Imports</td>
<td>+25.6</td>
<td>+34.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>104.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Closing Stocks</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparent Consumption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Preliminary.

Compiled at request by the Statistics Group of the Legislative Research Service from information contained in FAO Commodity Review and Outlook, 1973-74 published by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.
## MEAT
Production and exports—Developed, Developing and Centrally Planned Countries

### 1. PRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount—‘000 metric tons (a)</th>
<th>Proportion—Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All meats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>102,236</td>
<td>105,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>50,434</td>
<td>52,693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>18,631</td>
<td>18,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally Planned</td>
<td>33,171</td>
<td>34,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef and Veal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>40,225</td>
<td>40,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>20,080</td>
<td>20,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>10,889</td>
<td>10,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally planned</td>
<td>9,256</td>
<td>9,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutton and Lamb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>7,079</td>
<td>7,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>2,621</td>
<td>2,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>2,531</td>
<td>2,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally planned</td>
<td>1,927</td>
<td>1,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigmeat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>37,138</td>
<td>39,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>16,741</td>
<td>18,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>3,025</td>
<td>3,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally planned</td>
<td>17,372</td>
<td>18,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry meat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>17,794</td>
<td>18,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>10,992</td>
<td>11,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>2,186</td>
<td>2,302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally planned</td>
<td>4,616</td>
<td>4,892</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) In terms of carcass weight  (b) Preliminary

### 2. EXPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount—‘000 metric tons (c)</th>
<th>Proportion—Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>5,878</td>
<td>6,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh, chilled, frozen</td>
<td>4,610</td>
<td>4,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef and veal</td>
<td>2,082</td>
<td>1,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutton and lamb</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigmeat</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game, offals and other meat</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned and prepared</td>
<td>1,268</td>
<td>1,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon, ham and salted pork</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned meat</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (including sausages)</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>3,983</td>
<td>4,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>1,223</td>
<td>977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally planned</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Preliminary  (c) In terms of product weight
MEAT
Production and Exports—Developed, Developing and Centrally Planned Countries

3. EXPORTS OF BEEF AND VEAL (FRESH, CHILLED, FROZEN)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount—'000 metric tons (a)</th>
<th>Proportion—Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>2,081.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>1,181.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>782.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally planned countries</td>
<td>117.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developed Countries

Australia (Oceania) | 334.7 | 366.8 | 505.0 | 600.0 | 16.1 | 18.6 | 20.8 | 23.3 |
| EEC (Six) | 302.7 | 332.7 | 313.5 | 354.2 | 14.5 | 16.8 | 12.9 | 13.7 |
| EEC (Nine) | 523.1 | 573.1 | 565.2 | 644.3 | 25.1 | 29.0 | 23.3 | 25.0 |
| (Western Europe) | (614.4) | (658.4) | (641.0) | (731.4) | (29.5) | (33.3) | (26.4) | (28.3) |
| North America | 47.7 | 52.4 | 47.6 | 47.3 | 2.3 | 2.7 | 2.0 | 1.8 |

Developing Countries

Argentina | 351.5 | 230.7 | 384.1 | 312.0 | 16.9 | 11.7 | 15.8 | 12.1 |
| Brazil | 98.3 | 88.7 | 155.6 | 150.3 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 6.4 | 5.8 |
| Uruguay | 120.8 | 80.3 | 97.0 | 99.1 | 6.2 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 3.8 |
| (Latin America) | (707.9) | (545.7) | (828.7) | (785.4) | (34.0) | (27.6) | (34.1) | (30.4) |
| Africa | 72.6 | 89.2 | 108.9 | 108.9 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.2 |
| Asia | 1.5 | 1.9 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 |

Centrally Planned Countries

Eastern Europe | 84.1 | 70.6 | 68.7 | 70.8 | 4.0 | 3.6 | 2.8 | 2.7 |
| U.S.S.R. | 33.7 | 10.9 | 37.0 | 37.0 | 1.6 | 0.6 | 1.5 | 1.4 |

(a) Preliminary

Compiled at request by the Statistics Group of the Legislative Research Service from information contained in FAO Commodity Review and Outlook, 1973-74 published by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

AVAILABLE FOOD SUPPLIES
SUPPLIES OF WHEAT AND MEAT—SELECTED COUNTRIES

Domestic Production as per cent of food supply available to the populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Meat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1963-65</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany, Federal Republic</td>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NET FOOD SUPPLIES—PER CAPITA—SELECTED COUNTRIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Grams per day</th>
<th>Calories per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cereals (as Potatoes Flour)</td>
<td>Sugar and Sweets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1963-65</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mr HUNT—I thank the House. My plea to the Australian Government and to the Australian people is to lay aside the unsuccessful theories of socialism—a system that robs the people of their incentive—and to encourage the initiative of the farming community before it is too late. Indeed, the socialist creep in the Western world is undoubtedly robbing the people, the farmers, of their will to work and produce. If the Western world resorts to socialism it could well be at the expense of half the world’s population. This is a dramatic statement, but I believe it to be very true. Australian farmers have the technical skill; they are among the world’s most efficient farmers. They have the capacity to work hard under the most rugged conditions, but they need the capital, the resources, and above all they need encouragement and incentive. Without those ingredients our agricultural and pastoral performance will decline. We will then make our contribution to the forecast human disaster. My plea to the Government is to stimulate rural production, particularly cereals and grains, to restore confidence to the rural sector by dropping the crazy plan to divert resources from the private sector to the public sector. Those policies will only spell disaster for this country and add to the misery of people around the world. There have been enough examples throughout the world to show that the socialist system and socialist agricultural policies have failed. The statistics which have been incorporated in Hansard undoubtedly will prove that point. I hope that every student of economics studies them and learns the lesson before it is too late. That, of course, is essential to the future of this country. I make my plea in the hope that we will be able to make our contribution in a sensible, practical way and that the Australian community and the farming community in particular will be given the necessary incentive to produce the foodstuffs which will be so necessary for a hungry world.

Mr FAIRBAIRN (Farrer) (11.21)—I strongly support the motion which has been moved so ably by the honourable member for Gwydir (Mr Hunt). Let me just read it out again so that the House will understand it fully. The motion reads:

That this House requests the Government to urgently present a program to stimulate rural production and to restore confidence in the rural sector of the economy in Australia as a proper basis for any positive plan the Government may sponsor or support at the forthcoming World Food Conference organised by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation in Rome during November.

I intend to speak in particular about the beef situation because the beef industry in Australia is in a state of absolute crisis, as is the wool industry to a certain extent. Of course, those 2 industries are Australia’s greatest farming industries. The situation in the beef industry at the moment is absolutely desperate. One frequently sees steers which were bought 12 months ago for between $150 and $250 each, depending on their age and size, and which have since been fattened, now worth $50 to $100 each. I heard recently of a person who purchased a property and stocked it with 1,000 steers and who would lose $100,000 if he realised on those steers today. The situation is desperate. It is even more desperate because many of the people engaged in the industry who borrowed short term money at high interest rates to enable them to purchase cattle and fatten them, expecting to make a profit, are now having...
to put them on the market in any case because they are being asked to repay their short term loans and they are all losing very heavily. That is the situation in the beef industry.

As I have said, the situation in the wool industry is scarcely any better. The returns coming in now are showing that the wool cheques this year will be less than half what they were last year. They are at that level only because of the support that is being given by the Australian Wool Commission, which is buying in up to 40 per cent, and sometimes even more, of the offering. We all know that this sort of thing cannot go on indefinitely. But, of course, the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) has said that the primary producers have never had it so good, has told them that the worst is over and has gone to the United Nations posturing and saying that Australia is in a great position to produce more food. Of course it can produce more food if it is given the incentive to do so, but it must be given the incentive by way of returns and by way of assistance.

What are the causes of the present situation? It is partly self-inflicted and it is partly due to world-wide causes. Undoubtedly, so far as the beef situation is concerned, there has been overproduction in certain areas and very large amounts are being held in storage. From December 1973 the meat exports from Australia have been only 51 per cent of the performance a year earlier. That has been brought about by a number of factors. I understand that there has been a severe drought in the United States of America, which has led to a number of cattle which normally would have been kept for breeding purposes being put on to the market and that therefore at the present moment there is an oversupply and over-killing. We expect the situation to be restored to normal in the not too distant future, but it will be probably a year or so before the United States commences once again to take large quantities of Australian meat.

There has been a very big drop in exports from Australia to Japan, which are only 62 per cent of what they were a year earlier. Large stocks have been built up. Now a beef quota exists and Australia has to get in for its small share of a small quota. The European Economic Community again is causing considerable trouble. In May 1974 it suspended import licences because of the size of the intervention stocks, which in beef alone were, I believe, some 100,000 tons. The incredible situation with respect to the EEC is that by paying high prices it encourages local production and the local production is then far larger than can possibly be stored and the EEC dumps it on world markets at any price, thereby completely upsetting the world markets in many areas. That is one of the causes of the present situation, but only one.

The reduction in government assistance undoubtedly has been of major importance to the Australian producer. The honourable member for Gwydir said that some $350m less is going either to primary producers or to non-metropolitan producers. The subsidies, taxation concessions and the like which the previous Liberal-Country Party Government built over many years to help the primary producer have been abolished by the present Government. We used to hear the Australian Labor Party say that it had a great Minister for Agriculture in Senator Wriedt and that he was the greatest. It was almost like hearing Cassius Clay.

Mr Calder—What has he done for the farming community?

Mr FAIRBAIRN—That is a good question. What has he done? He loses every fight.

Mr Kerin—Rubbish!

Mr FAIRBAIRN—I would like to hear of one that he has won. We seem to find that whenever a decision is made by the Caucus or by the Cabinet it is made against the best interests of the Australian farmer. I hope that the Minister will put on a better performance in Rome than he has put on in Australia. Another reason for the present situation on the land has been the enormous increase in costs that has occurred under the present Government. I do not want to return once again to the subject of inflation, but it is having an enormous effect on the cost of everything which the farmer has to buy. Steel posts, drenches, dips and all those sorts of things have gone up enormously in cost. Wages have gone up. The cost of shearing has gone up enormously. I recall that in my last years as a farmer something like one-third of the total value of the wool clip would go in shearing and crutching costs. Today the percentage is probably even larger than that.

The honourable member for Gwydir mentioned the increase in the cost of superphosphate. I have always said that it would be to the advantage of a government to give superphosphate to a farmer for nothing because of the greater returns and greater tax revenue that would result. The present Government has been responsible for the price of superphosphate increasing to 3 times what it was at the beginning of 1973—from about $17 per tonne to about $50 per tonne. We know that a small amount of that increase has been due to the increase in the price of rock phosphate, but quite a lot of it has been due to
the withdrawal of the subsidy. It is ludicrous for the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor) to say, as he did in the House yesterday, that there has been a new discovery of phosphate. Does he not know that it was found in 1966 and that it was found only as a result of Liberal-Country Party policies which have since been abolished by the present Government? Had it not been for the payment of a subsidy in relation to oil drilling and the return of the cores as a result of that, we never would have discovered the enormous amount of phosphate rock in the north which we hope will be brought into production and manage to keep some of these excess costs down.

I have been asked by the Whip to limit my speaking time. Therefore I shall conclude by saying what we can do to improve the situation, which I believe is catastrophic at the present moment. Firstly, of course, we have to continue negotiations overseas and search for every possible market. I do not mind Ministers going overseas when they are going for some useful purpose, such as trying to open up new markets; but I do object to the great sallies overseas by the Prime Minister, with an entourage of some 50 people and some 200 gallons of champagne, because they achieve nothing. So we have to continue negotiations overseas. We have to make finance available at reasonable rates and on reasonable terms. This, I think, is the most important action which should be taken for the farmer.

I mentioned the fact that many farmers are now in difficulties because they have had to borrow money for the purchase of stock. That money has been borrowed short term and at high rates of interest. No one can afford to be paying 15 per cent interest on a loan over a long period and to hold stock whose value is continuing to drop. I have heard of cases of people who have borrowed money and stock agents have then said: ‘We must recall that money’. These people have had to sell their stock on the market for whatever they can get. Not only do they have to sell the stock which they purchased as a result of their loans but also they usually have to sell in addition a great deal of their original stock in order to repay those funds.

Before the last election, the Liberal Party put forward its rural policy which included the establishment of a national rural bank. I believe that enormous benefits could be derived from such a scheme. We said that there should be an institution of combined trading banks and other lenders in the rural sector to provide for the rural sector. This new institution also would finance plant, stock and equipment on a medium term loan basis at bank interest rates rather than through hire purchase firms. The terms that were suggested for lending purposes were appropriate to the purpose of the loan—for example, 5 years to 10 years duration for a loan on plant, equipment and breeding stock and 15 to 30 years duration for a loan to purchase land.

We also put forward the proposal that there should be a reserve fund. Farm incomes in Australia fluctuate so widely through droughts. We said that there should be a reserve fund into which farmers in a good year could deposit money without paying tax on that money. When it was necessary for them to withdraw all or part of those funds, tax would be paid on the amount withdrawn. That would tend to equalise the scheme. We know that there is an averaging system provided in relation to taxation. But I think that the scheme we proposed would have been of increased advantage to primary producers.

The Liberal Party believes that many subsidies and concessions should be restored. Again, on taxation, we have said that Australia is one of the most drought-prone countries anywhere in the world with wide seasonal fluctuations. We believe that Government policies through appropriate taxation concessions for water and soil conservation and fodder conservation should encourage farmers to drought-proof themselves in the national interest. We believe also that this new capital gains tax should not be hanging over the heads of people who urgently need capital. We do not know a great deal at the present time about that proposed tax.

Finally I suggest to the Government that it should consider the use of beef as part of its overseas aid program. We remember that in the early post war years wheat was used to feed starving countries. At that time a wheat surplus existed in the world and a great deal of wheat from Australia was used by some of the starving countries. I believe that it could be possible for the same thing to be done with respect to our beef. It could be used for that purpose. Countries in need, of course, would have to agree to that proposal. Many of them prefer capital equipment to consumable goods. I think that there is a case for this action. I hope that the Government will look into the matter. In order to maintain my agreement with the Whip, I shall now conclude. I support most strongly the motion that has been moved.

Mr WHAN (Eden-Monaro) (11.34)—I wish to draw to the attention of the House some of the
contradictions inherent in the Opposition’s position, as reflected in its motion. Implicit in the motion is the idea that there will be a consistent rural policy—something that holds together. I recall to the House the plea by the honourable member for Gwydir (Mr Hunt), who led for the Opposition, for lower world tariff barriers. I wonder how the honourable member for Indi (Mr Holten) feels about that proposal? Great conflict on the question of tariff barriers is present in the Opposition—whether those barriers should be lowered. It should be quite clear that, in order to lower tariff barriers, we should behave in a like manner. The difficulty that this creates, I am told from the Country Party benches, is the differences between a tariff and an embargo. Well, that may be so but the exporting country sees the matter differently. Obvious problems exist with respect to the export of beef. Here we see breaches of international agreements. If we are to achieve some satisfaction in respect of these breaches, our own behaviour in respect of tariffs must be immaculate.

Another area in which we find contradictions is the Coombs report. I quote from the transcript of the Australian Broadcasting Commission television program ‘Monday Conference’ which was attended by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr Lynch). He said:

‘...I support the bringing down of the Coombs Report—it was a very useful and productive report because it provided far more information about many subsidies than has been available during years gone by. It was a major initiative and I welcome it.’

That was said by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. In regard to this consistent policy, which seems to underlie the plea contained in the present motion, let me again refer to this interview with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

He was asked:

What steps would you take to alleviate the present crisis in the beef industry?

He answered:

That’s a tough question. There aren’t many answers at the present time either in the mind of the Government nor in my mind.

He had no specific answer. He elaborated, by saying:

‘I’ll just come back, look, the position about beef is extraordinarily difficult. It derives, as the questioner would well know, from the position in relation to export markets and in particular world commodity prices. There has, of course, been a downturn; of course in the short and long run it’s a question of finding new markets, it’s a question also, quite apart from the particular problem of beef, of seeking to provide some form of equity to those persons who need it.

That is exactly the position that the Government has adopted on this question. Again, referring to the beef problem, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said:

‘...It is a very tough question... Insofar as world commodity markets are concerned, that’s really a question of getting out and seeking to beat up new orders and that’s difficult having regard to the world scene at the present time...’

We see in the Opposition’s own comments a conflicting set of recommendations for the agricultural sector. Not only that, but because of a lack of policy, contradictions are creeping into Opposition statements.

In the ‘Western Australian Farmers Weekly’ on 17 October 1974 the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party, the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair) was challenged to give the source of a claim that he made. The letter reads in part:

Mr Sinclair has claimed (‘Farmers Weekly’, October 3) that government spokesmen have stated that because of devaluation farm incomes this year could be lifted by $300m.

The writer of this letter, Mr F. P. Hutchinson of Beacon, challenges the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party to name the Government spokesman who made that statement. That challenge has not been accepted for a perfectly good reason. His authority is mythical. Again to underline the contradictions which come from an Opposition without a policy, I refer to a media release dated 8 May 1974 by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party. It is printed in the journal ‘The Federal Reporter’—not a bad journal—and it reads:

The Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party, Mr Ian Sinclair speaking in Mackay today said that the Labor Government was deliberately holding back on the publication of a top secret report which would detail further courses of discrimination and vandalism the Labor Government would take against rural Australia.

The report was the Green Paper. In this House only a few weeks ago the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party was claiming that the Government was not moving fast enough in implementing the recommendations in the Green Paper. He gave it his full support on that occasion.

The contradictory position between the Country Party and the Liberal Party which is emerging is simply the direct result of the fact that they would not have a policy, if they were going to this World Food Conference, which would seem credible in the eyes of overseas nations. The fact is that only yesterday the Government announced that it would raise the first advance on wheat and suspend quotas in order to stimulate the production of wheat. Clearly that sort of action at the moment is not called for in regard to the beef
industry. In the longer term the beef industry is well-founded. For the beef industry we need to have these short term buffer mechanisms which will overcome problems of short term falls in international prices. This is not an international problem; it is a domestic problem. In the longer term, for beef and wool and most animal products, we find that the production decision does not pay off for 2 years, 3 years or 4 years.

It is important to maintain an overall policy for the long term and, at the same time, develop short term policies to cushion the producers from fluctuating world market prices. This, in fact, is what the Government is doing. Taxation concessions do not help in this respect. In terms of averaging incomes, the taxation concessions come when incomes are high and they have least effect when incomes are low. Clearly they are not the answer to this particular problem. For the first time in history we have provided a floor price for wool. We are emphasising the importance of negotiating long term contracts for beef and other agricultural products to give some protection to the Australian producers of agricultural products. These areas have attracted the attention of the Government. We have also taken the lead in developing more markets overseas. In the Bureau of Agricultural Economics a specialised agricultural marketing section will be created. It is ironic that restraints on this particular activity, so important now in this particular crisis, have the complete consensus of the Opposition. In fact, implicitly its policy is to curtail the expansion of the Public Service.

Having worked in the BAE there is no doubt in my mind that the future development of this market section in the BAE will be inhibited by the ceiling placed on Public Service recruitment. This is the stupidity of these generalised comments and the image that is created in the minds of the electorate by the Opposition—that all public servants are parasites. The Opposition places considerable emphasis on the contention that the only productive sector is the private sector. What possible difference can there be between the production of a barmaid employed by the public sector and a barmaid employed by the private sector? They do the same job. In this case we see the chickens coming home to roost. By having this generalised condemnation of the Public Service, one of the instruments that we need to give us a more sensitive appreciation of overseas marketing—the market section in the BAE—will have its progress slowed. This is where the generalised attack and general approach of the Opposition in creating an image in the mind of the electorate do not pay off. We all depend on the public sector as well as the private sector and the balance between the two should always be maintained.

Australia will be able to go to the world food conference with a clean sheet behind it—clean so far as our trading relationships are concerned. Our future prospects as world food producers have never been better and we are in a better position to go to that conference with this recent announcement by the Government to encourage the production of wheat, a commodity currently in short supply. The overall future for agriculture in Australia is extremely bright. This morning we heard from the Opposition comments about how many people throughout the world who are starving can be fed. One proposition needs to be clear when this argument is developed. No sector of the community can afford to pay fully for whatever food aid we might provide to overseas countries needing food. It is a community responsibility. There is a tendency to assume that we can give food away, but who gives it away? Does the farmer give it away? Is he being asked to give food away? Surely that is not the proposition. Surely this is a responsibility that can be accepted only by the electorate as a whole and be paid for by the electorate as a whole. What will this do to our income tax structure? Will this be yet another charge on the taxpayer? Of course it will be. The reality of these propositions should be faced.

If we are to provide food—I certainly would be a strong supporter of this sort of action—we must accept the fact that the taxpayer will pay and that this will be a charge on the taxpayer. We cannot have the falsity of the position the Opposition sketches out when it makes these sort of claims and then say it will lower taxes because the charge the Government makes on the community is too high. If that is a practical solution to our problems, the consequences must be accepted. Our position at the world food conference and in the eyes of those countries which are starving would seem credible if we accepted the consequences that will flow from this recommendation.

We have seen another attack today in regard to the domestic economy so far as the rural sector is concerned, but these bland attacks do not bear examination. I take as an example the country roads grant. Under this Government the allocation is being increased by 39 per cent to $1,120m for Australian roads in the next 3 years. Of this money 58 per cent will be spent on rural roads whereas only 49 per cent of the previous Government’s allocation was spent on such roads. We see the payoff on the Hume Highway.
I wonder how the honourable member for Hume (Mr Lusher) feels about the idea that money that would have been spent on that road will be deviated to some other area. Our main road transport links are falling apart because of the lack of a systematic approach to the transport system in Australia. In the Goulburn by-election held recently Sir Charles Cutler claimed that the State Government had spent $50m on the Hume Highway in 2 years. Now he tells us it did not do so. When we say to the local government authorities that this money that we are devoting to national roads replaces money the State Government spent on national roads he says that it is not—that it is money that the Federal Government gave the State in the first place. He never said that during the Goulburn by-election. Then he said it was money from the State. It is a pity for Sir Charles Cutler and many others in the Opposition parties that these things come in such close conjunction. The people in my electorate remember what was said during that by-election. They remember that Sir Charles Cutler claimed that the State had spent $50m on the Hume Highway in 2 years and that he projected large expenditures in the future. Now that he tells the local councils that they cannot spend money because it all came from the Federal Government in the first place his duplicity is revealed.

On the question of government expenditure we remember the proposal put by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition during the ‘Monday Conference’ to which I have already referred. If the Opposition had been thinking of an election before that ‘Monday Conference’ it must have put such ideas behind it now. The proposal was for an 8 per cent reduction right across the board. How would the Australian Government find money for rural shires for State roads then?

Mr Kerin—Would they spend money on the farmers?

Mr WHAN—That would be an interesting proposition. We see contradictions emerging from the Opposition’s case. This motion highlights these contradictions. We are being asked to go to a world organisation where we will be judged by world terms. The biases and prejudices of the local scene will be dismissed and contradictions emerge. It will be only the consistent argument that wins the day in such a world forum.

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory) (11.49)—The theme of the motion moved by the honourable member for Gwydir (Mr Hunt) is that this House requests the Government urgently to present a program to stimulate rural production. I will not enter into the arguments that have raged in this House over the last year or so about the rights and wrongs of various depreciation allowances, taxation allowances, the price of superphosphate, subsidies on nitrogen and other matters. I am concerned with the principle that lies behind this motion. The basis of the motion is to stimulate production through measures of confidence, whatever form they may take. The principal theme is to increase the production of primary products in Australia. This is an admirable concept. I do not disagree with it. But, as the honourable member for Gwydir (Mr Hunt) well knows, almost every additional ton of produce that we produce must sell at prices profitable to the Australian producer or, if we give it away, it obviously has to be financed by the Australian Government through the taxpayer.

Let us have a look at some of these industries. Let us take wool, for example. I know that there is criticism of the level of the floor price, but let us be quite serious about this. If it were not for the Australian Government’s policy, the wool industry today would be in a very serious financial position; in fact I would say that it would be in a state of chaos or a state of utter collapse. I do not know whether honourable members opposite are aware of the latest figures, but if my memory is right the Australian Wool Commission’s stocks in hand up to this week total more than $150m worth of wool. The Commission is buying at the rate of 40 per cent to 50 per cent of the offering. Who could possibly advocate a policy of expansion of the wool industry under these conditions? Every extra ounce of wool we produce has to be exported to countries, some of which have policies of resistance to present purchases of Australian wool. The Government itself is doing everything possible to stimulate markets overseas. The honourable member for Gwydir did not tell us what he would do in terms of expansion of the wool industry. It is no good expanding the wool industry unless we can sell our product at a price which is satisfactory to the producer and unless we can get markets; otherwise we have in fact—

Mr Hunt—People do not eat wool, but they eat grain.

Dr PATTERSON—Wait a minute. I will deal with grain soon. The Opposition selects the commodities to be dealt with in this debate. People want to have wool and people want to wear clothes. Apparently under the policy of the Opposition they would not be allowed to wear clothes.
We have debated the beef industry time and time again in the House in recent weeks. It has been mentioned at length by the honourable member for Farrer (Mr Fairbairn). The policies of the European Economic Community are opposed to us. It is extremely difficult despite the efforts that the beef industry and the Australian Government are making, to regain entry into that market. The whole question is being looked at in the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The policies of Japan and the United States of America at present are such that they are not buying our beef in the quantities they bought before. The question of foreign aid was raised. It may be that this is a solution to this problem. After the next wet season thousands and thousands of fat cattle—they are fat now—must come on to the market. It would be against every Government policy to allow those cattle, for example, to die in the paddocks in the event of drought or simply to wither away with old age. Obviously the cattle will have to be killed. Obviously there will have to be a policy to use the beef in tinned, frozen or chilled form.

As regards grain, with respect to the forthcoming World Food Conference let me say that the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt) and the Minister for Foreign Affairs (Senator Willessee) will be attending that conference. The delegation will be led by the Minister for Agriculture. The World Food Conference, of course, is held under the auspices of the United Nations primarily in response to the world grain shortage and the rising prices. The Ministers have proposed an approach which, I believe, is flexible. It is in line, of course, with the Australian Government policy of having a positive and constructive plan to reduce the food gap in developing countries, in particular with a view to supporting, where possible, proposals which have the support of the majority of the developing countries and of course have the support of the developed countries. The Australian delegation, within the framework again of the Australian policy, in Rome will support programs for expanding agricultural production and increasing technical aid to developing countries. It will favour the establishment of a system of world food security and the establishment of world grain stocks to be negotiated in the appropriate trade forums of the world. We will support also, as a matter of policy, proposals to develop food information and early warning systems throughout the world. All these are admirable proposals and motions which will be considered in full by the developing and developed nations at the Rome conference.

No mention has been made of one of the serious world shortages at the present time—that of sugar. Australia is one of the few countries in the world that have the capacity to greatly expand production, but the same argument again applies. If production is expanded every ton of the increase must be sold at a reasonable price. Eighty per cent of our production of sugar at present has, in fact, to be exported. We have the capacity to expand. But the sugar farmers of Australia have bitter memories of when they expanded very heavily some 12 years ago when the world price was high and just after they expanded the world price dropped to £Stg12 a ton. It has taken years and years to recover. We have to guard against a repetition of the downturn in prices in the sugar industry as we have seen in the beef and wool industries. I am doing everything possible within my jurisdiction, in association with CSR Ltd, the Sugar Board and the Queensland Government, to ensure that we have secure markets, and in particular long term markets. When we have those markets we will expand. Our policy is to provide the world with sugar at a price that is fair and reasonable both to the producer and to the consumer.

I wanted to deal with the principles of this proposal. I have no quarrel with the actual concept behind what the honourable member for Gwydir mentioned. It is a concept, I believe, to supply the world with food. It is a concept which will develop Australia and Australian resources which in some respects, in terms of being able to increase production of food, are unparalleled throughout the world. I cannot stress too much that in a country such as Australia, where everything in the primary producing field and in the major industries has to be exported, it would be sheer folly to embark on policies to increase the production of wool, beef or any other commodity, unless we have secure markets. The policies of the Australian Government are to have security of markets and security of prices with respect to quantity; and, in the other respect to help developing countries as much as we can and to explore the possibilities of providing food for foreign aid, particularly those types of food that are high in protein such as beef. I believe that they are admirable principles.

Question resolved in the negative.

**SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES**

**Proposed Select Committee**

Mr SNEDDEN (Bruce—Leader of the Opposition) (11.59)—I move:

(1) That a select Committee be appointed:
Specific Learning Difficulties

(a) to inquire into the incidence of all forms of specific learning difficulties among Australian children and adults;

(b) to examine measures that are being taken at the present time to overcome such difficulties;

(c) to report on the success that present measures are having in alleviating specific learning difficulties;

(d) to examine the awareness of specific learning difficulties among the community generally and among the medical, health, teaching and social welfare professions in particular;

(e) to examine the extent to which problems associated with the incidence of specific learning difficulties are being researched in Australia at the present time;

(f) to examine the social, emotional and other handicaps that individuals with specific learning difficulties suffer;

(g) to recommend measures that can be taken to heighten community awareness of specific learning difficulties, and

(h) to recommend action that can be taken by the Federal Government or by the Federal Government in co-operation with State and local governments as well as voluntary organisations to alleviate the difficulties and in particular to examine the need for wide-spread screenings of young children to detect the existence of specific learning symptoms so that adequate remedial programs can be recommended from an early age.

(2) That the committee recognise the responsibility of the States in these matters and seek their co-operation in all relevant aspects.

(3) That the committee consist of six Members, three to be nominated by the Prime Minister, two to be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition and one to be nominated by the Leader of the Australian Country Party.

(4) That the members of the committee hold office as a committee until the House of Representatives expires by dissolution or effusion of time.

(5) That the committee have power to appoint sub-committees consisting of three or more of its members, and refer to any such sub-committee any matters which the committee is empowered to examine.

(6) That four members of the committee constitute a quorum of the committee, and a majority of the members of a sub-committee constitute a quorum of that sub-committee.

(7) That the committee or any sub-committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to move from place to place, and to sit during any recess.

(8) That the committee or any sub-committee have power to authorise publication of any evidence given before it and any document presented to it.

(9) That the committee be provided with all necessary staff, facilities and resources and have power, with the approval of the Speaker, to appoint persons with specialist knowledge for the purposes of the committee.

(10) That the committee report as soon as possible and that any member of the committee have power to add a protest or dissent to any report.

(11) That the foregoing provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.

What we are looking for is a joint committee of members from both sides of the House to look into this extremely important matter. I have been concerned about this problem for very many years. It is a hidden problem. It is a problem which impacts very seriously on individuals and reduces their capacity to be happy, to be successful and to contribute to the community. Not only that, it has a very serious impact on social relationships of the individual with his family, brothers and sisters or parents, and with those people with whom he associates. It can have a very serious impact upon an individual in his dealings with others in the community.

Thinking of the matter, I came to the conclusion that it should be, in a very real sense, the subject for a national purpose effort and that that national purpose would not be assisted if the inquiry were to be conducted on a political base. If it were to be conducted on a political base all that was likely to happen was that attitudes may get frozen in and there would not be the freedom to move.

The problem concerns a large number of Australians who have been described as the last large group of neglected and misunderstood handicapped children and adults. I make the point that a child who is handicapped in the way that I am speaking of and who emerges from the school system does not suddenly have a magic wand waved over him so that the problem is cured, and you have an adult without the problem. If the problem exists in childhood it will exist in adulthood.

The consequences for the individuals who are afflicted with specific learning difficulties are very great. This is one manifestation of a general disorder which is grouped under the title of minimal brain dysfunction.

Minimal brain dysfunction is the term used in relation to children or adults of near average, average or above average intelligence—some with an extremely high intelligence rating—who have certain learning and/or behavioural disabilities ranging from mild to severe, which are associated with deviations of function of the central nervous system. These deviations can manifest themselves by various combinations of impairment in perception, language, memory, control of attention, conceptualisation, impulse or motor function. The most commonly affected academic skills are reading, arithmetic, spelling and writing. It is some of these difficulties that the motion before the House specifically refers to.

I want to emphasise 2 points in speaking of an impairment that may be due to minimal brain dysfunction. It is absolutely necessary to recognise the variation in the extent of brain dysfunction. There are many people in the community who have very high intelligence, who attain high academic qualifications and who are accepted in
the community on any other ground as being totally normal, but when they are assessed on communication and their ability to use language it is said of them that they lack judgment. The absence of so-called judgment is only an absence of the handling of language, of the conceptualisation of their thoughts. Having said that of them, we then regard them as being inferior because they lack judgment. The motion addresses itself to what many of us regard as totally normal people in the community. There are some who, because of the extent of their problem, are not regarded as normal; but a very great number of people are so regarded.

The other point I want to emphasise is that I have purposely cast the terms of reference of the proposed committee wide enough to encompass those students at school who have worked hard, attended good schools—I am not using the word 'good' in any sense of difference between the system of private or public schools or anything of that kind—and have had good teachers but who, when they have reached the end of their education at 16, 17 or even older, are still in need of basic remedial teaching so that they can read and write properly. Notwithstanding that the education system is good or that the teachers are good there are still children emerging from the system with an incapacity in language, in reading or writing or expressing. In school they have been ashamed of their disability. They have hidden it and the system has been unable to detect it. What I am really asking in this motion is how it is that our education system is able to operate and let so many people pass through its complete system without achieving the very basic skills in language. We must address ourselves specifically to this dilemma as a national and social purpose.

The result of this tragic situation is that we have thousands of individuals in the community who, despite their most desperate attempts and despite above average intelligence, do not achieve the progress that their potential would indicate they should. The consequence for the nation is that as a society we under-achieve. We have human resources available that are not being used. Specific learning difficulties are widespread.

It has been estimated that 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the Australian school population suffer from them. Despite their widespread nature, the community awareness of them in Australia is minimal. The overriding purpose of this motion and the consequent establishment of a select committee is to heighten community awareness of dyslexia and specific learning difficulties among the community generally.

The community understands blindness and deafness. We recognise the difficulties physically and mentally handicapped children face. Polio, tetanus, diphtheria are common household words; parents recognise these disabilities and ensure that their children are immunised against them. We all accept colourblindness as a common condition which has no stigma attached to it. How many in the community know the term 'dyslexia'? Do we understand the significance and consequence of word-blindness? How many are able to recognise it in their children? How many know how to seek attention for it, even if they are aware of it?

I shall mention some recent surveys which have been undertaken in Australia which emphasise the magnitude of the problem we have in Australia. The Boronia High School Advisory Centre in Victoria surveyed more than 2,600 students in first and second forms in 12 eastern suburbs high schools in Victoria. The result showed that 45.7 per cent of those tested needed remedial specialist teaching in reading if they were to profit from high school work, and 25 per cent were found to read so badly as to be classified as functionally illiterate. A survey by Macquarie University in New South Wales suggests that 112,000 adults over the age of 16 years in the Sydney metropolitan area alone are functionally illiterate; that is, when tested they are unable to read even simple directions from a telephone directory.

The consequences of this situation are evident. We are allowing a significant number of children to progress right through the education system without learning to use what is a solely human perquisite—our language. They have suffered years at school being branded as lazy, stupid, emotionally disturbed or unintelligent. The intelligent ones have been called lazy. The less intelligent ones have been called mentally handicapped and all sorts of things. In many cases the parents have not understood them. This has created social problems that need not have occurred and ought not to have occurred. Others have hidden their problem and because of high IQ remain undetected right throughout adulthood. Their ability to learn any subject at school has been greatly impaired. The learning process has been a nightmare for them. Many will have suffered as a consequence severe emotional distress. They see themselves as misfits.

They often do not know what their problem is and are not given any assistance in overcoming it. Many of them see society as hostile to them. Because of their language barrier and their communication problem they face a restricted life.
Opportunities for them are curtailed in the same way as a physical or mental handicap curtails the achievements of others in the community. But in most of the cases involving the people that I am speaking about there is no sympathy from the community or those who are associated with them and very frequently there is hostility towards them. They are ordinary Australians. They often have no physical disability and ironically, because their disability is not evident, it remains undetected and uncorrected. They can never achieve their true potential. It is my very real wish that all people emerging from the education system should have an education that matches their intellectual capacity.

I have much to say on this subject but there is a short time in which to say it so I will therefore tend to skip some things. The success of these people in obtaining employment initially can be marred by an inability to carry out successfully the completion of an application form. They make mistakes in filling out the application form and the potential employer prefers somebody else. But this may be due just to word blindness—an incapacity to write the words properly. Their ability to drive a car with safety is impaired because a very frequent disability in a person with specific learning difficulties is a confusion between 'right' and 'left'. Many of them will be unable to read road signs. Many of them will find public transport difficult because they cannot understand the destination signs. Many will suffer accidents in factories because they cannot read the warning notices. Many will be among the juvenile delinquents committed to institutions or among criminals sentenced to prison, destined to serve their terms without anyone recognising that the major cause of their behaviour is the affliction of a specific learning disability which develops an emotional disturbance which is exaggerated and multiplied as time goes on.

Overseas studies repeatedly demonstrate the very high correlation between juvenile delinquency and specific learning difficulties. For example, Dr. Chester Foremba of the Colorado Children's Hospital has found in his studies that 90.4 per cent of children who had become delinquents had suffered learning fatigue and learning failure. The millions of dollars that have been poured into the rehabilitation of young people who have become anti-social has been largely wasted. Similarly, there is a high correlation between disturbed behaviour and specific learning disability. As an instance, 50 per cent of children referred for psychiatric treatment to the Victorian School Medical Service have had diagnosed a specific learning disability as the main cause of their problem. A great deal of investigation of this problem has been undertaken in the United States and other overseas countries, but in Australia we have failed sufficiently to tackle the problem. In Government we funded an Australian-wide workshop organised by the Specific Learning Difficulties Associations in Australia, which are known as SPELD. The present Minister for Education, Mr Beazley, provided funds for members of SPELD to attend the 11th International Conference on Learning Difficulties in Texas in 1974. I know that many Ministers are currently examining proposals that have been referred to them by SPELD.

The history of this motion is that it is the result of an agreement between myself and the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) that we should combine in a co-operative effort to begin a major national program to attack the problem. As I said at the outset, I have been concerned for a long time about this matter. I approached the Prime Minister and said: 'Let us not make this a political issue on which our attitudes can become frozen. Let us make it a national purpose which we can all join in and tackle through a joint committee of the House.' I want to say that I was very grateful that when I raised the matter with the Prime Minister he, without any hesitation at all, immediately accepted the need for such a proposal and that it should be regarded as a national purpose in no way influenced by politics. If I may say so, this necessarily means that none of us will try to make political capital out of it. If we pursue this in the right way it will be understood on both sides of the House to be with a total commitment. I notice the honourable member for Casey smiling.

Mr Mathews—It is just a cop-out to try to forget the past.

Mr SNEDDEN—What has been said by the honourable member for Casey disappoints me very greatly. I am not going to respond further to it. I am going to continue with my purpose which is that there should be no political advantage taken by anybody. I would hope that if the honourable gentleman should serve on this committee he will come to it without that attitude of mind. I would prefer to forget that the comment was made. I ask leave to incorporate in Hansard the letter which was written to the Prime Minister arising out of the discussion which I had with him.

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

(The document read as follows)—
My dear Prime Minister,

This letter is written pursuant to the arrangement I proposed to you at our meeting on Wednesday, 23 October.

It has been a personal concern of mine for some time that there is no adequate attack on the problem of children and adults with a specific learning difficulty.

The term ‘specific learning difficulty’ covers a variety of categories including minimal cerebral misfunction, minor brain damage, neurological handicap and dyslexia. The underlying manifestation of these disorders is a difficulty using language; an inability to read and spell and consequently write, despite intelligence and socio-economic standard. In short, word-blindness.

The result of this disorder, which is relatively widespread in the community, is a failure by a significant number of people to achieve the standard of education that their intelligence, self-determination and efforts should make possible.

The consequences for society are significant, because it under-achieves. The consequences for the individual can be traumatic due to the stigma that is attached to an inability to communicate adequately. For example, there is a clear link between the occurrence of juvenile delinquency and learning difficulties.

The incidence of specific learning disabilities has not been accurately determined. Nevertheless, surveys have indicated that at least 15% per cent to 20% per cent of Australian children and adults are affected. Unfortunately, despite the fact that it is so widespread, community awareness of it is minimal.

I told you during our discussion that I believe we should adopt, as a national purpose, the alleviation of this social problem. It is my wish that this issue should be totally non-political. Accordingly, I approached you as I did so that we could avoid it becoming political. You agreed with this approach.

We agreed that every means should be taken to bring this to the forefront of public discussion.

I know you are aware of the work that has been undertaken over the past 6 or 7 years by the SPELD Associations in Australia; the many people working with these associations have performed a remarkable service, attempting to spread awareness of the problem. They feel their efforts are making headway but very slowly. I have no doubt that unless attention is focussed on the problem in human terms, then it will remain ignored by the community—to its own disadvantage and the continuing social handicap of those afflicted.

We agreed that the most suitable immediate approach would be the appointment of a committee of members of the House to examine the problem, assess its nature and extent, its impact on the community and the individual and report on the most appropriate ways of overcoming it.

We arranged that I would ask you a question stating that I was raising the matter as a national purpose and non-political issue. You would answer in like vein mentioning our discussion and our agreement to the formation of a parliamentary committee.

We also discussed the composition of your Government’s proposed Children’s Commission in this context. I indicated the importance in my view of appointing to it a person who has a sound knowledge and close interest in the specific learning disorder field. You kindly volunteered that if I recommended a suitable person, you would appoint that person to the Commission. I appreciate that assurance. I will write in the near future.

I look forward to joining in a co-operative program of action to tackle this ‘hidden’ problem. The need for action is very pressing.

Yours Sincerely,

B. M. SNEEDEN

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

Mr SNEEDEN—That letter makes it clear that this proposal should be solely on the basis of a non-political approach. The final point I want to make is to mention the work that has been undertaken in Australia by the Specific Learning Difficulties Associations in Australia. All honourable members are aware of the remarkable work that they have been undertaking. I should like to place on record my personal gratitude, as an Australian, to SPELD for its magnificent work and its untiring and regretfully largely unrewarded efforts over the last 6 or 7 years. It has undertaken a most difficult task and one that governments generally have failed to do but should have done. Whether it was the Government of which I was a member or whether it be the present Government, the job should have been done. Now is the time for it to be done and to express ourselves as members of the Parliament to be committed to this national purpose. I express my personal regret that we have not followed more swiftly and more positively the lead that has been given by people associated with SPELD. I am confident that the passing of this motion will represent a commitment by each member of the House to SPELD, but more particularly a commitment by each member of this House to all Australian children and adults who have suffered from a specific learning difficulty, that we will not cease in our efforts until there is a marked improvement in the alarming and, I must confess, depressing picture of which I have been speaking today.

Last Wednesday I met Mrs Stewart, the Secretary of the Australian Associations of SPELD, and Mrs Dibden, the South Australian Secretary. (Extension of time granted.)

I thank the House. I will detain honourable members for less than a minute. I indicated to them that as a first step I would examine the possibility of having a select committee established. I had a discussion with the Prime Minister that very afternoon. He agreed with me—and I emphasise he totally and willingly did so without any hesitation—that this matter was of significant national importance and that the establishment of a committee along the lines referred to in the motion I have moved today would be an appropriate immediate course of action. I express now my appreciation of the Prime Minister’s cooperation. As a result of that meeting I wrote to
the Prime Minister a letter which I was given leave earlier in my speech to incorporate in Hansard. I understand that for reasons of duty the Prime Minister is unable to speak in this debate and his place will be taken by the honourable member for Casey (Mr Mathews). I ask the honourable member to direct the Prime Minister's attention to what I have had to say today and also to express to him my appreciation for his co-operation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Luchetti)—Is the motion seconded?

Mr Street—I second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

Mr MATHEWS (Casey) (12.22)—Honourable members on this side of the House support this motion with considerable enthusiasm. Our enthusiasm is in no way reduced by a mild sense of incredulity about the source from which it comes. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) in opening his remarks today said that he had been concerned about this problem for very many years. Honourable members on this side of the House have also been concerned about this problem for very many years. Where the difference lies is in the fact that throughout those very many years honourable members on this side of the House hammered away at the Government which was then in office and at the Leader of the Opposition as one of its more prominent members to get something done about the problem, to get some action. We were aware of the nature of this problem, of the distress it inflicts on many families and the very many careers which were being blighted by it at a time when we could get neither interest nor sympathy from honourable members opposite and indeed could not get them to acknowledge that the problem existed at all.

The Leader of the Opposition said that for 6 or 7 years there had been public awareness of public concern over this problem. I guess he was dating that period back to the establishment of the Specific Learning Difficulties Association, known as the SPELD organisation, to which I pay tribute as a magnificently successful body of spokespeople for a significantly disadvantaged group in our community. But, of course, awareness of and concern for the problem in educational circles went back much further. As early as 1963 the International Reading Association came up with the disclosure that whereas 82 per cent of children with specific learning difficulties who had received assistance in the form of remedial assistance by the end of their second school year were able to overcome their difficulties, only 8 per cent of those who had to wait till their sixth school year were able to overcome those difficulties.

Of course over the 10 or 11 years which have elapsed since those survey results were published the overwhelming majority of children in this sort of need have been obliged to wait until grade 6, and in many instances even longer to receive help. This is very well reflected in the figures that were quoted by the Leader of the Opposition. Surely these are figures which should create a sense of alarm in any modern nation. Surely we should be alarmed that a survey conducted in the affluent eastern suburbs of Melbourne could come up with the revelation that 45 per cent of children in forms 1 and 2 of government secondary schools needed remedial teaching if they were to gain any benefit whatsoever from their secondary education and that 25 per cent—one in every four—of those children were functionally illiterate. There has been a remarkable complacency about these figures, figures which the Leader of the Opposition himself quoted. Does the Leader of the Opposition regard this as a new development? This is a development which has been taking place in the education systems of this country over a great many years. It reflects the total neglect on the part of our national Government, and our State governments of all the special services which are involved in this problem. I have in mind particularly the ludicrously staffed psychology and guidance branches associated with State departments of education; the pitifully understaffed speech therapy branches of State departments of education—there are 32 speech therapists in the Victorian speech therapy branch although the committee of inquiry into special education recommended that there should have been 108—the pitiful lack of remedial teachers on the ground in classrooms; and the almost complete absence of higher medical specialties associated with this problem such as psychiatry. 

Mr Giles—And the need for public awareness.

Mr MATHEWS—And, as the honourable member for Angas very properly says, the need for public awareness.

Honourable members on this side of the House support the motion not least because of the job of public education which has been carried to a certain point by the SPELD organisation but which now must be taken over by the National Parliament and rivetted onto the consciousness of the people of this country. That is the only way in which effective action will be
brought into existence. The House should not suppose that the Government has been uncon- 
scious of this problem in the 2 years that it has 
had to make good the enormous deficiencies of 
our education system which have accumulated 
over so many years. The Interim Committee for 
the Australian Schools Commission, known as 
the Karmel Committee, freely acknowledged 
that it could not do full justice to all the ramifica-
tions of the problem of special education in the 5 
months it had available for the preparation of its 
report and recommendations for 1974-75. But it 
did make a start. All honourable members will 
be familiar with the proposals that it put forward 
in its report and the fact that the Government has 
accepted those proposals.

I mention only a few of them. The Committee 
recommended that $1.13m should be made 
available for the conduct of full time in-service 
teacher education courses mounted by the 
education departments in the education of handi-
capped children; $8.25m for the replacement of 
teachers in government schools engaged in training 
courses for teachers of the handicapped; 
$10.25m for recurrent expenditure in special 
schools and classes additional to that provided to 
the States in general recurrent expenditure for 
schools; $3.91m to enable State education depart-
ments to assume responsibility for the recurrent 
operations of those non-government schools  
for handicapped people which elect to become 
part of State systems and to make increased sub-
sidies available to those which elect to remain 
outside those systems; and $20m to enable State 
education departments to provide additional 
facilities for the education of handicapped chil-
dren and to replace and upgrade existing facil-
ities. While the parameters of that program are 
much wider than the specific learning difficulty 
children alone, they include that 10 to 15 per 
cent of our school population which falls into the 
specific learning difficulties category. On the side 
of research, to which the Leader of the Oppo-
sition referred in his motion, I could read out to 
the House—perhaps if I sought leave to have it 
incorporated in Hansard this would suit the con-
venience of the House better—a list of research 
projects specifically involving the interests of 
specific learning difficulty children with which 
the Acting Minister for Education (Mr Barnard) 
has provided me.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Luchetti)—Is the 
honourable member asking for leave to incorpo-
rate it in Hansard?

Mr MATTHEWS—Yes.

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

(The document read as follows)—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Grant</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Chief Investigator</th>
<th>Funds Provided</th>
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</table>
| 1975          | 'A program to develop the cognitive skills of visually handi-
               capped children' | Mr P. J. Doherty—Queensland Education Department | $9,750 |
| 1971-75       | 'The part played by visuo-motor skills and movement in the 
               development of readiness for formal education' | Dr C. Reye and Miss B. Le Gay—Bromerton Spastic Centre of New South Wales | $23,664 |
| 1973-74       | 'Identification and measurement of components of reading com-
               prehension.' The study will provide other researchers with a 
               basis for improved diagnosis and treatment of comprehension 
               difficulties among school children | Professor D. Spearritt—University of Sydney | $11,210 |
| 1974          | 'The WIMS project'. (The project is concerned with the iden-
               tification of specific learning disabilities and the development 
               of remediation through a structured learning environment 
               consistent with the interests, needs and ability of the ado-
               lescent) | Mr J. P. Le Maistre—Windsor High School | $9,660 |
| 1971          | 'Longitudinal reading study 1970-1974'. (Examines reading 
               success and failure at the primary school to develop more 
               effective and economic procedures in diagnosing specific reading 
               difficulties and to develop suitable treatment programs) | Mr R. C. G. Lea—Education Department, Victoria | $5,000 |
| 1971-73       | 'Predictive studies of learning disabilities'. (To develop objec-
               tive tests for detecting incipient learning disabilities in other-
               wise capable children, before they develop into serious handi-
               caps) | Professor M. D. Neale—Monash University | $12,821 |
Mr MATHEWS—As the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission recognised the limitations of its original inquiry as far as they impinged on special education, so the permanent Schools Commission now established by statute has had this matter very much in the forefront of its attention. The Commission is reviewing the whole area of special education with a view to making recommendations in this area in its 1975 report. Basically that review will encompass the following areas: Bibliography of the field of special education; a survey of administrative and legal patterns, a survey of the provision which is made for all forms of special education including education of specific learning difficulty children; practices adopted for integration from special schools into normal ones both in this country and overseas; services needed for the introduction of integrated practices; implications for teacher attitudes in education, implications for employment opportunities and the problems of illiteracy. The Commission will be obtaining information regarding the survey of administrative and legal patterns and the survey of provisions and the implications for teacher attitudes in education. It will be drawing those threads together in a very comprehensive set of recommendations which the Government will consider in the context of the 1975 report.

This is a subject to which the House could address itself at very great length and one to which I would like to address myself at great length, but in fact I have a little more than 3 minutes remaining to me. I was concerned by the remark made by the Leader of the Opposition in his speech—I think in fact he was quoting an authority—when he described children with specific learning difficulties as the last large group of handicapped children and adults for whom special provision has not been made. I think that is a very gross and grave oversimplification of the situation, because if the right honourable gentleman will address his mind to the broader educational scene he will see a great number of groups which are no less disadvantaged than those who have specific learning difficulties. In a moment's thought he will conjure up the many children hitherto regarded by State Departments of Education as being ineducable and therefore left to the care of minding centres which had to be organised on a voluntary basis, and very largely financed on a voluntary basis, by groups made up of the parents of the children concerned. He will remember the migrant children from countries where a language other than English is spoken and who still overwhelmingly are deprived of the instruction in English as a second language or the opportunity to receive their education in the languages of the countries of their origin. He will be aware too of the children from the low income groups in the community who are the victims of educational deprivation on a massive scale.

Mr Reynolds—Aborigines.

Mr MATHEWS—The honourable member for Barton reminds me too of the children of the Aborigines of Australia. The specific learning difficulty children have been fortunate in having so splendid and articulate an organisation as SPELD working in their interests. It is easy for groups like SPELD to get the attention of members of this Parliament. It would be a sad reflection on this Parliament if such well organised groups were to gain a monopoly of our attention. I hope that in ventilating and exploring and articulating this matter and in educating the community upon the needs of children with specific learning difficulties we will recognise our obligation to do no less for our Aboriginal children, for our low income children, for our migrant children and for children with mental and physical handicaps in their severest forms.

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

Mr SNEDDEN (Bruce—Leader of the Opposition)—Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! Does the right honourable member claim to have been misrepresented.
Mr SNEDDEN—Yes. The honourable member for Casey (Mr Mathews) misrepresented me. I think he did it unwittingly, but I would like to make the point clear. I am very conscious of the problems of migrant children, Aboriginal children, children from poor families, etc. What needs to be understood is that all those children who have problems because of the disadvantage which the honourable member identified can nevertheless have a double disadvantage by having a specific learning difficulty. If a migrant child from Yugoslavia, Italy, Greece or wherever it might be, is trying to comprehend lessons in English has added to his problems a specific learning difficulty the additional disadvantage is immense. It was an unwitting misrepresentation but I want to make it clear that I am totally conscious of the point that the honourable member made, but the incidence of specific training difficulties transcend them all.

Mr Mathews—Which problem does the Leader of the Opposition see as more significant to the migrant child—lack of English or his specific learning disability?

Mr SNEDDEN—Lack of English.

Mr STREET (Corangamite) (12.37)—I am delighted to second the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden). I personally have had quite a long association with the Specific Learning Difficulties Association. A branch was formed some years ago in my electorate. I attended several of its early meetings and I have been kept informed of developments since then. The formation of this branch has been a good example of what can be done by a dedicated group of citizens who identify a problem in their community and then set about correcting it. I am delighted to say that this group has had considerable success in its efforts, including the appointment of a teacher with special qualifications to a school in their area.

I would like to refer to the Karmel report in relation to this problem. The Opposition has previously indicated its support for the principle recommendations of the Karmel Committee and the funds that it provided for education. But how much of the Karmel Committee funds went towards correcting the problems of children with special learning difficulties? My recollection is that the Karmel report contained one paragraph only on this problem. My recollection is that there was no mention of capital funds, merely some recurrent grants. I would have thought that the honourable member for Casey (Mr Mathews), with his interest in this subject, would have ensured that adequate provision had been made through the Karmel Committee funds for the purposes we are discussing this morning. I must admit that I have been surprised and somewhat disappointed with the tone of some of the honourable member’s remarks in the course of this debate.

As long ago as 1972 the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser), the then Minister for Education and Science, appointed a committee part of whose terms of reference contained the specific requirement to report on teacher training for remedial work in this field. My memory is that this Committee had to report early in 1973. So the Opposition’s interest in this field goes back some years. The aspect of the committee of the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser) dealing with remedial teacher training is of course extremely important, because it is a vital requirement. The committee established by the honourable member points up the vital requirement to identify early those children with special learning difficulties and the need to train teachers who can adequately deal with the problem.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I understand that the business of the House requires that I curtail my remarks. I do so in deference to agreements which have been reached, not because of lack of interest in this most important subject.

Dr EVERINGHAM (Capricornia—Minister for Health) (12.41)—The question of special education facilities for exceptional children, whether they be handicapped or specially gifted children, exercised the mind of the Australian Labor Party for some years before it came into office. The Government Members Education Committee commissioned me to prepare a discussion paper for it, which I did on 9 May 1972, at a time when the Labor Party was in opposition. I pointed out then the need for at least double the output of teachers for slow learners, who comprise about 3 children in every 100—quite a small group when compared with the group we are discussing today. I also pointed out the need for generalists in special education, the need for specialists in education for the various categories of handicapped learners and gifted children, including slow learners, disturbed, maladjusted and autistic children, physically handicapped children in various categories, gifted children and specific learning defect sufferers and the culturally deprived, including migrants and Aboriginals. The committee of the parliamentary Labor Party in September 1972—again before the Labor Party was in government—made certain proposals on schools commissions, for which we had agitated.
Specific Learning Difficulties

for some years, to provide equality of opportunity, to investigate inequalities, to recommend programs, to advise the Government, to be the organ of intelligence and insight, to sponsor and conduct research into all aspects of education, and indeed into all aspects of child care and welfare, including the economic, mental and moral well being of children, to sponsor experimental schools and programs, to educate teachers, assist student teachers, foster in-service and continuing education, to consult pre-school authorities, town planners, pediatricians, child psychiatrists, to provide for child minding and pre-school centres and so on. I have no time to go into all the moves the Labor Party has made.

It is well known that the Department of Education has made a $1m grant for handicapped children’s training and other grants for teaching in this area. There are many fields of activity that the Government has sponsored. I seek leave to incorporate in Hansard a Press statement dealing with a study of communication disorders in children which has been approved by my Department.

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

(The document read as follows)—

Press Statement by the Minister for Health, Dr D. N. Everingham

STUDY OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS IN CHILDREN

A Health Department officer has been awarded an Australian Government Postgraduate Scholarship to study communication disorders in children.

He is Mr Phillip Dermody, a research psychologist with the Audiology Section of the National Acoustic Laboratories in Sydney.

Mr Dermody has commenced studies at North Western University in Evanston, Illinois, United States of America. He plans to spend 18 months with the Department of Speech studying for a Master of Arts degree. He already has a Bachelor of Arts degree with first-class honours in psychology from the University of Sydney.

The Minister for Health, Dr D. N. Everingham, said Mr Dermody’s study would be directly connected with the work of a new scientific group being established at the National Acoustic Laboratories, which will develop more detailed auditory testing procedures to detect children who have a learning difficulty.

The particular children in whom Mr Dermody is interested generally have normal hearing sensitivity, but are unable to correctly recognise, distinguish or process sound in the usual way.

Testing procedures will be aimed at early detection and diagnosis of these problems so that remedial treatment can be offered sooner, and to a greater number of children, than is possible at present.

It is also anticipated that at least some of the testing procedures, when applied to deaf children seeking assistance

under the Australian Government’s hearing aid scheme, will provide additional information for hearing aid selection and use.

Canberra, 27 August 1974.

Dr EVERINGHAM—I thank the House. There are several excellent developments in this field that are relevant.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE TO PENSIONERS

Mr WENTWORTH (Mackellar) (12.44)—I move:

That, in the opinion of this House, restrictions upon the granting of supplementary assistance to pensioners are too severe.

There are not more than a few moments available to me and I hope to continue this at a later time. The House is probably aware of the position in regard to supplementary assistance. Recently the Government raised the rate of supplementary assistance to $3 a week but left unchanged the means test upon it. The means test at present is—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Luchetti)—Order! The time allotted for precedence to general business has expired. The honourable member for Mackellar will have leave to continue his speech when the debate is resumed. The resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day under General Business for the next day of sitting.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Mr MALCOM FRASER (Wannon) (12.45)—I ask for the indulgence of the House to clarify a matter in which I believe, on all the information available to me, I have misrepresented the position of the Waterside Workers Federation.

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

Mr MALCOM FRASER—As recorded at page 1456 of Hansard of 18 September I made a statement during a debate on the suspension of Standing Orders in relation to a matter of public importance concerning a royal commission that had been appointed. To make my point, it will be necessary for me to read one paragraph of that statement so that the House may understand the point I need to make. I said, inter alia:

The Waterside Workers Federation of Australia is not included. The statement made by the Prime Minister mentioned the maritime unions alone; it did not mention the Waterside Workers Federation. One of the Press reports states that the Minister for Transport had given a guarantee that the Waterside Workers Federation and Mr Fitzgibbon would not suffer any action against them as a result of
indemnity payments made to Mr Fitzgibbon or the Waterside Workers Federation. Therefore it is utterly critical that there be specific mention of the Waterside Workers Federation in the terms of reference of the royal commission.

Failing that, the only thing that could meet this case, which the suspension of Standing Orders would give an opportunity to the Government to provide, would be a clear statement by the Government that the Government agrees with your ruling that the Waterside Workers Federation is involved, that the indemnity payments—almost $400,000—is mentioned in the newspapers in connection with the Waterside Workers Federation—will also be the subject of this inquiry.

That was the statement, which I believe, was made on the basis of published reports in newspapers. I believe also that that statement now misrepresents the position of the Waterside Workers Federation in this matter. It is necessary to have a clear distinction between single permit ships around the Australian coast, which have largely been the subject of alleged Seamen’s Union activities, and the campaign of the International Transport Federation against the flags of convenience ships whose rates of pay for seamen are at unreasonably low levels. The campaign of the International Transport Federation goes back to an International Labor Organisation Convention which was ratified by Australia some considerable time ago. I should like to table a copy of that Convention, which is ILO Convention No. 109.

Mr Hayden—It is an authentic copy?

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—It came from the Parliamentary Library; I presume it is an authentic copy. The campaign of the International Transport Federation against flags of convenience ships flows, as I understand it, out of that ILO Convention No. 109. I understand also that any payments collected in accordance with that convention and the ITF campaign are collected as a result of agreements signed with the shipowners concerned and that there is clear accounting and receipting. Indeed, a good deal of evidence of this is given in a special issue of the waterside workers’ journal, the ‘Maritime Worker’. The issue that I will be referring to is Volume No. 58 dated 22 October. That and other evidence that I have been able to get supports the position that is revealed in the ‘Maritime Worker’. So that there can be further clarification on this matter for members of the House, I should like to have incorporated in Hansard 2 letters from Mr Fitzgibbon to me and one short letter from me to Mr Fitzgibbon. The letters have already been published in the ‘Maritime Worker’. The Minister for Health (Dr Everingham) was the Minister at the table and I showed them to him. He agreed that the Minister for Transport (Mr Charles Jones) is more directly involved. The Minister for Transport might like to see them.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Luchetti)—Order! Before I ascertain whether leave is granted perhaps the Minister for Transport should be allowed to inspect them.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—He has the letters. The letters have already been published in the ‘Maritime Worker’. I will hand the Minister for Transport a copy of it in case he wants to verify that.

Mr Charles Jones—Leave is granted.

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

(The documents read as follows)—

20 September 1974

Mr Malcolm Fraser, M.H.R.,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

Dear Sir,

The Federation has read newspaper reports of statements alleged to have been made by you in the House of Representatives re ‘the indemnity payments admitted to have been made to the Waterside Workers’ Federation’.

I am at this point of time attempting to obtain copies of the exact statement made by yourself in the House of Representatives but in the meantime in order to ensure that no incorrect impression exists in your mind or is allowed to continue without challenge by this Union, I wish to unequivocally advise that no indemnity payment of any character has been sought by the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia in respect of its operations.

I also wish to make it clear that on no occasion has this Union or any representative of this Union attempted to receive ‘indemnity payments’ either on its behalf or any other organisation’s behalf, nor has it admitted doing so except in the context that wages or other payments in respect of conditions of employment are ‘indemnities’ or ‘compensation’ in return for services given.

I also wish to clearly indicate to you the resentment of this organisation and its members at any distortions of truth which may be presented by any person anywhere in respect of our operations.

Yours faithfully,

C. H. FITZGIBBON
24 September 1974

Dear Mr Fitzgibbon,

Thank you very much for your letter.

However, I would like further amplification of the third paragraph in the light of certain newspaper reports, namely The Sydney Morning Herald of 11 September 1974 and the Financial Review of 10 September 1974.

Yours sincerely,

MALCOLM FRASER

Mr C. H. Fitzgibbon,
General Secretary,
Waterside Workers’ Federation,
P.O. Box 344,
Haymarket, N.S.W. 2000.
Hon. J. M. Fraser, M.H.R.,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

Dear Sir,


I would not think that you, as a practising politician, would take a newspaper report which was not a direct substantiated quote as being a valid reason for ‘clarification’ of anything.

For example, no statement was given to The Sydney Morning Herald. The article was the result of a syndicated article from another newspaper and incidentally appeared in somewhat different form to the original.

Neither article expressed accurately what was said. I suggest anyway that reporters do not always get down exactly over the phone everything said and neither do they get their articles through sub-editors without distortions occurring.

I therefore would not attempt to provide clarification ‘in the light of certain newspaper reports.’

However, if you are not clear as to the meaning of the 3rd par. of my letter I do not mind clarifying that.

The word ‘indemnity’ can apply to a whole range of legitimate activities and commercial and industrial agreements. (See Definition Shorter Oxford Dictionary)

Therefore in saying ‘This Union has not sought nor has received indemnity payments on its behalf or on behalf of any other organisation’ we do so in the following context.

A. We are saying it clearly in the context that we have not asked for nor received a payment in lieu of an Agreement or the conditions we were seeking.

B. We would declare our right to conclude legitimate industrial agreements which compensate workers for the disabilities arising from their particular type of employment.

In respect of monies commented on by the Financial Review and the Sydney Morning Herald articles, you should be aware that the accurate position is—

A. The question of indemnity payments in the context of payments to allow vessels to work without providing the appropriate wages or conditions does not arise in the ITF Flags-of-Convenience campaign.

Each FOC vessel enters into an industrial agreement with the ITF (with the Federation acting as the ITF agent, at the request of the latter) which—

(1) provides for the ITF wage standards for various classifications. (The ITF international policy in this matter is one designed to ensure that seafarers obtain a justified minimum wage standard—varying from the ILO minimum for some vessels and a special rate where vessels are only used in the trade to Asia to in other cases, where the runaway flag vessel is deserting the national flag of a high-cost country, a wage approximating the European average,

(2) provides for minimum standards of leave, compensation, victualling etc.

(3) provides for deduction of Union dues to the International Seafarers Section of the ITF.

(4) provides for a Welfare Fund Payment to the ITF which is used by the ITF to support welfare facilities for seafarers throughout the world and which replaces the contributions made by National Flag carriers either by donation or taxation to maintain such centres.

B. Where reference is made to ‘back wage’ payments to crews it must be understood that this money does not come to the WWF nor to the ITF. It is money paid to the crews where it has been discovered that they have been underpaid.

Trusting this clarifies our position for you.

Yours faithfully,

C. H. Fitzgibbon
General Secretary

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Luchetti)—
Order! I ask the honourable member for Wannon to confine his remarks to where he has been misrepresented and not to become involved in anything argumentative.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—It is not a matter of where I have been misrepresented, Mr Deputy Speaker; it is a matter of where I believe that I have, on all the information available to me, misrepresented the position of the Waterside Workers Federation. Since that was done in this House, I believe that the matter ought to be clarified in this House. I believe it to be an important matter, and the Federation and the General Secretary of the Federation also believe it to be an important matter. The point is that under the flags of convenience campaign conducted by the International Transport Federation, of which the WWF is the agent in Australia, flowing back to ILO Convention No. 109, funds are collected in accordance with agreements, as I have been advised, signed with the respective ship owners who are involved in sailing ships under flags of convenience. That is an action that is quite different in character from the charge that has been alleged against the Seamen’s Union.

I would also like to say that one part of a Press report which had been quoted also misrepresented, and I picked up this misrepresentation, the Minister for Transport himself because the Press report, and consequently myself in the Parliament, gave the impression that the Minister for Transport had given some immunity to the Waterside Workers Federation over an indemnity payments issue. Mr Fitzgibbon has made it perfectly plain that that conversation related to the WWF’s flags of convenience campaign, which again flows back to the ITF’s position and the ILO Convention No. 109, which Australia has ratified. But, as I have been advised, they are payments collected by agreement and they do go to the ships’ crews involved, fully receipted and
fully documented. A good deal of that documentation, if not all of it, appears in a recent publication of the ‘Maritime Worker’. So I believe that the issues are separate and separable and that on all the evidence available to me the Waterside Workers Federation position is quite different and separate from the involvement of the Seamen’s Union in the Royal Commission which is presently sitting. I regret that I picked up the misrepresentation concerning the WWF and repeated it in this Parliament.

Mrs CHILD (Henty)—Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to make a personal explanation to the House concerning an article which appears on page 17 of today’s Melbourne ‘Age’.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Luchetti)—Does the honourable member for Henty claim to have been misrepresented?

Mrs CHILD—I claim that the ‘Joan Child’ who is mentioned in the article is not Joan Child, the member for Henty. The 31st of July was a sitting day. Hansard will have recorded that I was present for all divisions on that day. I would like the House to be quite clear on the fact that I am not the ‘Joan Child’ mentioned in the article.

AGED OR DISABLED PERSONS HOMES BILL 1974

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

Second Reading

Mr HAYDEN (Oxley—Minister for Social Security) (12.54)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to give effect to a number of measures the Government has decided to take to increase the assistance provided for aged persons homes; also to extend the provisions of the Aged Persons Homes Act to handicapped adults. Under the Aged Persons Homes Act, as honourable members will be aware, the Australian Government makes grants to non-profit organisations and local governing bodies towards the cost of providing homes for aged persons. When the Act was originally introduced in 1954 the subsidy was on a $1 for $1 basis. In 1957 the rate of subsidy was increased to $2 for $1 and has remained at that level ever since.

As announced by the Treasurer (Mr Crean) in his Budget Speech, the Government has decided that a further increase in the rate of the subsidy is now appropriate. The first of the measures in this Bill, therefore, is to double the present rate of subsidy, from the present $2 for $1 to $4 for $1. At the time the Budget was being prepared the Treasurer indicated that the increased rate of subsidy would not take effect until 1 January 1975. Because it is being found that the advance announcement of this increase in the rate of subsidy is resulting in organisations delaying the commencement of building projects, it has been decided that the increase should now take effect from the date of royal assent to this Bill, instead of 1 January as announced earlier. The cost of the increased rate of subsidy will be $2.5m in 1974-75 or $5m in a full year.

The second measure contained in this Bill, as I previously mentioned, is to extend the provisions of the Aged Persons Homes Act to handicapped adults. Experience has shown that the definition of ‘aged person’ in the principal Act—namely, men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over—is somewhat arbitrary and that people in younger age groups often suffer from handicaps or disabilities which result in their also needing accommodation of the type provided under the Aged Persons Homes Act. Amendments contained in this Bill will enable such accommodation to be provided for handicapped adults in 2 ways: Firstly, by subsidising the building of homes specifically for people who are permanently incapacitated for work or permanently blind and, secondly, by permitting such people to be accommodated in aged persons homes. As a result of this widening of the scope of the legislation the title of the principal Act is being amended from the Aged Persons Homes Act to the Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act. The cost of this measure is expected to be $500,000 in 1974-75 or $1m in the first full year.

For the information of honourable members I would like to mention at this point that this legislation will in no way supersede the operation of other legislation under which the Australian Government assists the provision of residential accommodation for disabled persons engaged in sheltered employment or for handicapped children receiving training. I refer, of course, to the Sheltered Employment (Assistance) Act and the Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act respectively. The rates of the subsidies payable under those 2 Acts are, in fact, also to be increased from $2 for $1 to $4 for $1. The Bill now before the House will, in effect, help to provide accommodation for those disabled people for whom accommodation cannot be provided under the 2 other Acts I have mentioned.

In his Budget Speech the Treasurer also announced that the personal care subsidy payable under Part III of the Aged Persons Homes
Act to organisations providing personal care services for the aged in approved hostel accommodation would be increased from $12 to $15 a week. That is the third measure contained in this Bill. Hostels play an important role by providing accommodation for elderly people who, whilst no longer able to look after themselves in independent units, do not need the more expensive, medically-oriented care provided by a nursing home. The purpose of the personal care subsidy is to help bridge the gap between the cost per head of maintaining such hostels and the amount that pensioner-residents can afford to pay for such accommodation. When the personal care subsidy was originally introduced in 1969 it was paid on the basis of $5 a week for each resident aged 80 and over. In the 1972 Budget the rate was increased to $10 a week and it was further increased to $12 a week in the 1973 Budget, when eligibility was also extended to cover hostel residents who had not attained the age of 80 years but who required, and were receiving, the prescribed ‘personal care services’.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.15 p.m.

‘Personal care services’ are defined as: The provision of meals, assistance with bathing and dressing, the cleaning of rooms, personal laundry and general oversight of medication. The hostels are also required to have a staff-member available at all times in case of emergency. During the past year the cost of conducting these hostels has continued to rise. According to information received from the Voluntary Geriatric Association of New South Wales the wages of staff employed in hostels went up by 26 per cent in the first six months of 1974. Information from other States indicates that similar increases have occurred. Food costs also rose by about 18 per cent. In order to maintain the effective level of the personal care subsidy this Bill provides for the rate of the subsidy to be increased by 25 per cent from $12 to $15 a week with effect from the first subsidy pay day after the date of royal assent. Needless to say, the Bill provides for personal care subsidy to be paid in respect of disabled persons, for whom accommodation will in future be provided, on the same terms and conditions as aged persons. The cost of this measure will be $800,000 in 1974-75, or $1.4m in a full year.

The fourth measure contained in this Bill relates to the basis upon which grants may be made under the principal Act to local governing bodies. The Act at present provides that moneys which have become available as the result of the borrowing of those moneys or any other moneys by an organisation, or were received by the organisation from the government of the Commonwealth or of a State or from a government authority, cannot attract subsidy. Since local governing bodies became eligible organisations in 1967 such bodies have constructed accommodation for only 602 aged persons, compared with approximately 25,000 accommodated by religious, charitable and other eligible organisations during the same period, despite the fact that local governing bodies would appear to be well-situated to enter the aged persons homes field. There is reason to believe that many more local governing bodies would be interested in providing homes for their aged residents if they could use loan funds to attract the Australian Government subsidy. On several occasions since 1967, the annual conference of the Australian Council of Local Government Associations has carried resolutions pointing out that councils normally use loan funds for capital works, that adverse ratepayer reaction could be expected if revenue was used of this purpose and calling on the Government to amend the Aged Persons Homes Act accordingly. Legislation was passed by the Parliament in last year’s Budget session, enabling local government borrowing to attract subsidy under the Sheltered Employment Assistance Act and the Handicapped Children Assistance Act, which are ‘companion’ Acts to the Aged Persons Homes Act. The cost of this measure should not exceed $500,000 in 1974-75, rising to about $1m in 1975-76.

Finally, Mr Speaker, advantage is being taken of the opportunity provided by this Bill to insert a machinery clause in the principal Act to permit the Director-General of Social Security to delegate his power to approve grants. This will relieve the Director-General of some of the great volume of routine work that has developed since the Act was first introduced in 1954. At present the Director-General has no such power of delegation and as a consequence every grant—and every amendment to a grant—has to be approved personally by him.

Before resuming my seat, Mr Speaker, I would like, with your indulgence, to make an announcement concerning the maximum subsidy limits payable under the Aged Persons Homes Act, or the Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act as it will in future be known, and the Aged Persons Hostels Act. As I have previously informed the House, a working party of officers of the Departments of Social Security and the Treasury has been looking into ways of overcoming the
Representatives 31 October 1974

Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Bill

financial difficulties being experienced by organisations constructing homes for the aged, because of rising building costs. I am pleased to be able to announce that the working party has now submitted its recommendations, which have been approved by the Government. It has been decided:

(i) that the maximum subsidy limits payable under the Aged Persons Homes Act will be increased from $6,000 to $7,800 for a single unit and from $7,000 to $9,100 for a double unit, effective from 1 October 1974;

(ii) that the capital grants payable under the Aged Persons Hostels Act will be increased from $9,000 to $11,700 for each aged person accommodated, also with effect from 1 October 1974;

(iii) that the present maximum subsidy limits, which took effect from 1 April 1974, shall apply to projects which were in the course of construction at that date;

(iv) that cost increases due to the 'rise and fall' clause in building contracts, in respect of work carried out since 1 April 1974, will be subsidised; and

(v) that the introduction of 'zone loadings' for country areas where building costs are abnormally high, should be given further study.

These increases can be implemented by administrative action under the Aged Persons Homes Act and do not require amending legislation. The amendment to the Aged Persons Hostels Act at present before the Parliament will enable the recommendations made in respect of that Act to be implemented administratively also.

I would like to make it clear, Mr Speaker, that in so far as the Aged Persons Homes Act is concerned the increased maximum subsidy limits that I have just announced are payable under the existing Act and will be further increased when the $4-for-$1 subsidy takes effect. As from the date of royal assent of this Bill the maximum subsidy limits payable under the new Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act will automatically become $9,360 for a single unit and $10,920 for a double unit. These increases, together with the extension of the Act to handicapped adults, the extension of subsidy to local government borrowings and the 25 per cent increase in the rate of personal care subsidy, represent a major improvement in the assistance being provided by this Government for aged persons homes. These measures, however, are only an interim step pending receipt of the report of a Committee of Inquiry into Aged Persons Housing, which was set up by the Social Welfare Commission about twelve months ago at my direction. This Committee's deliberations have been prolonged because of the enormous volume of evidence they have received, but I expect to have their report within the next few weeks and to table it before the House rises for Christmas. In the meantime, the measures I am now introducing are necessary and desirable to sustain the programme we inherited from the previous Government. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr Adermann) adjourned.

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 1974-75
In Committee
Consideration resumed from 30 October.
Second Schedule.

Postmaster-General's Department
Proposed expenditure, $18,895,000

Mr Nixon (Gippsland) (2.25)—A whole range of matters should be discussed in our consideration of the estimates for the Postmaster-General's Department but as each speaker has only 10 minutes it is impossible to deal with many matters in depth. Doubtless Opposition speakers will try to debate problems associated with the postal service and telecommunications generally and express their views. One of the troubles of the Post Office is that there has been a steady falling off in services. No longer does there seem to be the will to get the mail through. Some postal workers seem more interested in seeing what they can get through their pay packets than in giving service to the people. This is a pity and I am sure the Australian public would agree that the old code of getting the mail through at all costs was a much appreciated approach taken by postal workers. Many Post Office workers are as anxious as ever to give the sort of service for which the Post Office has been known over the years but many seem to be in the hands of radicals who want to use their power to cause industrial trouble and general difficulty for the Australian community. As a result of the deterioration in service a number of firms have established private courier services for their mail. They find it cheaper to fill a bag with mail at the head office in Melbourne and send it to Sydney with a man who distributes it than to use the resources of the Post Office. They have found the private courier service less costly, more reliable and quicker.
The cost of the Post Office to the Australian taxpayer is enormous. I was staggered to see in
an edition of a postal newspaper a statement by the Postmaster-General (Senator Bishop) claiming
that the Post Office should make a profit so that there could be an extension of the services
provided to the public. I ask the Committee to consider that proposal. What a paradoxical situ-
ation we have. This socialist Government attacks the profit-making private sector and claims that
it does not need to make profits to plough back into business yet the Postmaster-General seeks a
profit to feed back into the Post Office. A moment ago the honourable member for Clare (Mr
England) reminded me that the Government de-
cided to abolish the $25 radio and television li-
ence fee, the Treasurer (Mr Crean) asserting that radio and television provided a service to
people. I do not challenge that television is a ser-
tice to the people but I suggest that a far more
necessary service to all sections of the com-
community—the old, the young, the sick and
business interests—is the provision of Post Office
and telecommunication services. But the charges
for these services are being increased to an exor-
bitant level, particularly those applying in the
postal service.

In an earlier mini-Budget the Government
proposed increasing the normal letter rate from
7c to 9c but this proposal was rejected because
the Opposition regarded the mini-Budget as
inflationary and not attacking the problem of
inflation. A few weeks later in this Budget the
Government proposed that the rate should be
increased to 10c.

Mr Donald Cameron—That is scandalous.

Mr NIXON—That is the best word to use to
describe it. I plead with the Special Minister of
State (Mr Lionel Bowen) who is representing the
Postmaster-General in this chamber to consider
a request that I have received from a number of
councillors to refer it to the Postmaster-
General for his considerations. The Christmas
period is fast approaching and the request is that
the postage rate for sending Christmas cards
should be the former charge of 7c. I ask the Post-
master-General to consider using the many
millions of 7c stamps that are going to waste for
the mailing of Christmas cards. This may be
regarded as subsidising the posting of Christmas
cards but at present the nation is going through a
period of economic stress, unemployment and
unhappiness and it would be a massive psycho-
logical gesture, to say the least, if the Postmaster-
General agreed to allow Christmas cards to be
posted at the old charge of 7c. This would make
a vast difference to a number of people who
would then be able to afford to send Christmas
cards to friends and relatives and it would bring
a great deal of cheer from one side of Australia to
the other. I doubt whether there is one section of
the community that does not send out Christmas
cards. If the Government is genuine in its claim
to have a humane approach to the problems of
the Australian people it should give them a
psychological lift by encouraging the exchange
of Christmas cards. I suggest that if the request
were granted the Post Office might gain because
more people would be encouraged to send
Christmas cards than would be prepared to send
them for the present 10c charge. Many old
friends say to me: "Do not send me a Christmas
card and I will not send you one". That will be
the general approach of many people with
respect to Christmas cards this year.

Mr Keogh—That is because of your Scots
blood.

Mr NIXON—It is not.

Mr Keogh—Do not send me one.

Mr NIXON—There is no risk of the honour-
able member getting a card from me, even if it
cost only 7c to send it. The generosity of my heart
does not reach out that far.

Mr Stewart—What about the spirit of Christ-
mas? It is the season of goodwill.

Mr NIXON—The Minister for Tourism and
Recreation tends to spread goodwill in his area
of responsibility. I wish he could get some of that
goodwill into the usurious Postmaster-General's
Department. That Department is a profit-
making and usurious organisation with no heart.
The only counter to my claim that it has no heart
is for the Postmaster-General to consider my
reasonable proposal which would not cost much
to implement. Let us see whether the Postmaster-
General, the Special Minister of State, the
Government and the Post Office have any heart.
Let them stop raking in the shekels all the time
and make some allowance for the postage of
Christmas cards.

In the short time remaining to me I refer to the
question of the use of walkie-talkie radios, as
they are known, by amateurs. The licence fee
for these radios has been doubled—from $6 to $12.
Many people use these instruments in other than
a commercial sense. They are used, for instance,
by organisers of country shows and by people
who go fishing at sea. The latter leave walkie-
talkies at home for safety reasons so that when at
sea they can communicate with people on shore.
I think it was wrong to impose a licence fee ini-
tially. I refer also to the need of the citizen's radio
movement for there to be in Australia an established band for walkie-talkies and radio operators the same as exists in Canada, Italy, Japan, New Zealand and, I think, the United States of America. The Postmaster-General’s Department seems a bit hidebound in not being prepared to allow a section of the total radio band in Australia to be used by citizens across the nation.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

Mr KEITH JOHNSON (Burke) (2.35)—It is a shame that the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon), who preceded me in this debate, wasted so much of the time available to him—he was limited to only 10 minutes—talking such a lot of hot air and rubbish. It was only in the last minute or two of his speech that he got down to talking about something sensible. He started his speech by having a sideswipe at the unions. That is par for the course for the honourable member for Gippsland. Then he had to have a bit of a square-off, of course; so he said: ‘They are not all that bad; it is only the leaders who are crook’.

Mr Koehn—The wharves’ friend.

Mr KEITH JOHNSON—Yes. Then he got into this silly little argument about Christmas cards. It seems that the honourable member is pretty obsessed by this and believes that communication between people occurs only in that hallowed week of the year known as Christmas. I can tell him—I am sure many people listening would agree with me—that people close to me are very relieved to have a reason for not sending Christmas cards this year. It seems that it is a practice that has grown up. Cards are not necessarily sent to people who are far away; frequently they are sent to people who live across the street.

One person who comes into my street every morning from Monday to Friday—I have spoken to him about the matter—thinks it would be a jolly good idea if people did not send Christmas cards. He is the person who has to deliver them. He staggers up the street with a great bag of mail for about 2 weeks prior to Christmas. He works long hours and is not very happy about it. He does not see his family very much. He knows, as well as I do, that the carriage of many of the articles he is carrying is pretty unnecessary and that they are communications between 2 people who see one another regularly. This silly practice of buying cards, putting them in envelopes, buying heaps of stamps and sticking them on the envelopes and so making extra work for the postal service is starting to become a bit of a chore to many people and they are not very happy about it. I do not think it is altogether true to claim that the community will be upset about having to pay extra to send Christmas cards. What is true is that probably fewer cards will be sent and I do not think anybody, apart from the card manufacturers, will grumble about it.

The honourable member’s speech was pretty remarkable in many ways. The thing that rather amused me—I could not help but smile as he was speaking—was that for the 3 years that I sat in this chamber as a member of the Opposition I heard pretty similar speeches from different members of my own Party who were then sitting in Opposition, and the speeches that members of my Party now make are similar to those that were made by honourable members opposite when they were in government. This matter has been going on year after year. It is inevitable that in an area which is as labour intensive as the Post Office is—I am speaking about mail deliveries—charges will rise as charges in the community generally are rising. Recently I was in Japan and while I was there the mail charges rose by 50 per cent. Ours have not risen by quite 50 per cent. The Japanese people do not have the same problems of delivery as we have in Australia. Japan is a much smaller country and is populated by many more people. Yet Japan found it necessary to raise its postal rates by 50 per cent. We, with all our long distances and sparse population in remote parts, find it necessary to raise mail charges. I believe that to be true around the world.

Even with telecommunications charges rising, the Postmaster-General’s Department is having difficulty in keeping up with the demand for the installation of telephonic equipment. It seems to me that there is some sort of a paradox when members such as the honourable member for Gippsland say that we are pricing everybody out of the market by putting telephone charges up so high that people cannot afford them. If his statement were true, obviously fewer people would apply to have the service installed and the ones who did would find that they could not afford it and would have it removed. But all the evidence points the opposite way. The evidence points to the fact that people are retaining their equipment and are seeking the installation of new equipment at a rate much faster than that with which the Postmaster-General’s Department can cope. I know, from being a member of the Public Works Committee, that there are many references from the Postmaster-General’s Department concerning the building of new telephone exchanges. Obviously the growth of telecommunications in Australia is not being
impaired by the reasonable charges that are levied against the users of the system.

On the question of telecommunications, it is pretty clear that the Post Office will be divided into 2 separate functions as a result of a report by what is known as the Vernon Committee. One of the areas concerned is telecommunications. For a number of years Australia has had an organisation known as the OTC—the Overseas Telecommunications Commission (Australia). It has performed quite a worthwhile function as a separate entity. I put it to the Committee that were that to continue all we would have would be a continued fragmentation of similar functions. The proposal is that that service come under an Australian Telecommunications Authority. Where organisations perform like functions, such as the OTC and the telecommunications side of the PMG, I think it is pretty essential that there be a sensible restructuring of the whole area. This is something that has not been considered by previous governments for a long time; to the best of my knowledge it has not even been investigated.

On Tuesday of the week after next the Caucus committee of which I am the secretary will be meeting with representatives of the unions which have members in the OTC and the telecommunications side of the PMG. The whole purpose of that exercise is to pave the way and to smooth out things, as the Labor Party always does when it deals with industrial matters, for the meshing in of the 2 functions. I have received a document through the mail. I do not know the people who signed it. I do not know who the people are. They claim to be the chairman and vice-chairman of an organisation. It comes from Sydney and it is trying to build a case as to why the OTC should not be included in the ATA. Having read through that document, having spoken about it with other people and now having spoken about it with representatives of the trade unions that are involved in this field, I find that it has many fallacies in it and that it seeks to put forward a point of view that is not altogether acceptable to people who take a responsible view on the matter. I mention that only in passing because it is part of the Post Office function.

Let me get back to the matter about which we are speaking, namely, the appropriation of quite a large sum of money to keep the Post Office going. It is true that the Post Office, if one cares to use this archaic free enterprise expression, does not show a profit. How can it when it provides a service? I thought the honourable member for Gippsland was trying to get round to this and to say that it was necessary for the community to chip in in order to provide this service and that the cost of it should not necessarily be charged to the users of the service and those who get a benefit from it. He then said that the couriers—private enterprise of course—were able to do the job more cheaply, more efficiently and more reliably than the Post Office. He spoke about a paradox. If ever I heard a paradoxical contribution in this chamber, I am afraid it was the 10-minute contribution by the honourable member. He spent the whole 10 minutes contradicting himself. The courier system grew up because of the attitude of the previous Government that these matters, even such important matters as communications, could be safely left in the hands of private enterprise. The point that the honourable member missed altogether is that if there is any excess of income over expenditure by the Post Office it does not go into the pocket of some greedy little capitalist, but in fact goes back into the coffers of the Australian community; it becomes part of the Australian public purse. That is where it belongs. If there is this ephemeral thing called profit from a Post Office exercise, to my mind it is far preferable that it finish up in the government coffers than that it go into the pocket of somebody who sets out to perform a service which the Australian Government can perform just as well. For those reasons I support the proposed expenditure. It is being spent very worthwhile in a good area, and it is being put to good use.

Mr KING (Wimmera) (2.44)—I also wish to make a short contribution on Division 400 in the estimates for the Postmaster-General’s Department. It is almost with monotonous regularity that when we are dealing with PMG estimates we are discussing further increases in charges, lack of development and reducing service. Certainly the 1974 estimates are no exception. Postal, telephone, and other miscellaneous charges are increased. Yet the service, of course, certainly will not be improved. Postal and telephone charges are 2 basic concerns of many people outside this place and also inside this place. The Committee may be interested in a small example of the increases. Last Friday I gave my secretary $10 to buy some stamps. Naturally I thought that would be enough for a little while. But before I left my office last Monday she again requested some more money. I said: 'What for?' She said: 'For stamps.' I said: 'I gave you $10 on Friday.' She said: 'That will all be gone by the end of the week.' When we checked through my postings on Monday they accounted for just on $10 worth of stamps. That gives an indication of just how difficult for people is the increase in the various rates.
However, I must admit that the Government did make one reduction with the abolition of radio and television licence fees. On the surface this looked most attractive to many people, but it appears somewhat ludicrous when one considers that the Treasurer (Mr Crean) said in the Budget Speech that the fees were abolished because the provision of radio and television is a service to the community. Then the Postmaster-General (Senator Bishop) stated that because costs had increased he must increase the general fees. What is the difference? They are both services to the community. Why should the charges for one be removed and for the other be increased. To me the whole situation appears to be ludicrous. All members on this side of the chamber declare that the Postmaster-General’s Department is a service department and it has to give a service to the community. If that is so, why should there be such substantial increases? To my mind the increases are certainly unreasonable. The reports of the Postmaster-General’s Department show prohibitive increases in almost every sector. Telephone service connection fees are rising from $60 to $80.

Mr Millar—What about the rentals?

Mr KING—I am not too sure what the rental was under the previous Government. I know the new rate.

Mr Millar—It was $27.

Mr KING—I think the honourable member for Wide Bay is correct. Under the previous Government many rentals were only $27 a year. Today the same service costs $85 a year. The Liberal-Country Party Government contended that rentals in country areas were lower than those in metropolitan areas because the people of the country areas did not have the same facilities as subscribers in metropolitan areas; they did not have the same opportunity to contact so many people for a local call fee. The telephone accounts of country subscribers include a substantial charge for trunk calls. The previous Government recognised this point and reduced the rentals accordingly and so brought them more into line. But not this Government. It suggests that if something is good enough for one it is good enough for all. If that is the case, why did the Government allow a variation in rental for different types of services? A non-business rental charge is $65, but a business rental charge is $85. Why the difference? Some primary producers in my area are classified as conducting businesses. Unless they can guarantee to the Department that their telephones are wholly and solely for social use they have to pay the business rate. So there is discrimination here. To be consistent the Government should have no differential in rentals.

I remind the Committee that country people as a whole pay a lot more for these services than do people in the metropolitan areas. I think of the anomalous charge on subscribers residing more than 5 miles from a telephone exchange. Under the previous Government’s policy the Department installed telephones without a charge for line construction. This is not so today. A subscriber more than 5 miles from a telephone exchange who has a telephone connected has to pay for all line construction beyond 5 miles. I have raised an anomalous case with the Postmaster-General which I hope he will look at. In this case a telephone line was installed under the previous Government, under the previous policy, and was in existence for some time. The telephone service was temporarily disconnected and when the new subscriber applied for reconnection of the service he was asked to pay for the construction of the line that was already there. If that is not an anomaly I have never seen one. This is just one of the anomalous cases in relation to country telephone lines.

I am not directing any criticism at individual public servants or the employees of the Post Office. I believe that generally speaking we get a top class service from the bulk of the employees. But because of certain actions taken by this Government literally no mail is sorted in many areas from Friday evening to Monday morning. Sometimes the mail has to go from one town to another and when it goes as second class mail, heavens above, there is a great delay. Newspapers printed on a Friday are delivered on the following Tuesday—really up to date this is. I put to the Government that it should give some consideration to the sorting of mail at other times. Of course in the metropolitan areas where there are large numbers of people the mail is sorted at the weekend and on Monday morning it is delivered. However, that is not the case in rural areas under this Government.

Under the estimates for capital expenditure we see exactly the same allocation of funds this year as were allocated last year. Heaven only knows what is the increased cost due to inflation and because of increased charges within the Department, but we know that the same amount of money will certainly not go nearly as far as it went last year. My guess is that the allocation this year is the equivalent of about a 30 per cent cut. The same thing applies in mail deliveries. It has become pretty monotonous to hear mail contractors saying ‘I am sorry, but I have to give it away.
I cannot make it pay at these rates", and the Department saying: "Because of the cost we now have to reduce the service." The reduction may be from 5 days a week to 3 days a week or from 3 days a week service to 2 days a week. If this trend continues people will be lucky if they get a mail delivery a week under this policy. Fancy having to wait a week for country newspapers which are so vital for people residing in these areas. As each year goes by the service is deteriorating.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr KEOGH (Bowman) (2.55)—I briefly want to comment on the remarks of the 2 previous speakers from the Opposition side, the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) and the honourable member for Wimmera (Mr King). As to what the honourable member for Gippsland said, I agree in principle with the argument which was put forward by my colleague the honourable member for Burke (Mr Keith Johnson) in regard to postal charges for Christmas cards, and I would not want to try to influence him to send me a Christmas card seeing that he has told me that he will not change the principle that he has adopted in the past of not sending one to me. But I must say that I sympathise with the point of view expressed by the honourable member for Gippsland. I think his suggestion is really worthy of more serious consideration. I urge the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen), who represents the Postmaster-General (Senator Bishop) in this place, to bring this matter to his attention and urge that further and very close consideration be given to ascertaining whether some relief can be given on this occasion to people who will be sending out Christmas cards in large numbers and will have to meet a substantial increase in postal charges announced in the Budget.

Reference has been made to the increase in the letter rate charge from 7c to 10c and not the original proposed increase of 7c to 9c. The responsibility for this additional increase must rest on the shoulders of the Opposition. As the Minister said in his second reading speech when he introduced this measure, the additional charges will bring in to the Post Office an amount of $146m which is the exact amount of money by which the Post Office would have fallen short as a result of the irresponsible action taken by the Opposition when what was referred to as a mini-budget was introduced earlier this year to reject the postal charges the Government had intended to impose at that time. Those charges were imposed quite openly following the undertaking given by the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) at the Premiers Conference that this Government would measure up to its responsibility and would ensure that departments were responsible for meeting their commitments. In other words, we would not allow departments with certain commitments to continue to avoid their commitments by not raising revenue. He has set that example, as he has in other areas set an example for State governments, in an endeavour to convince them that it is about time they shouldered their responsibilities and made sure that they made a real effort particularly in respect of some of their departments to raise the finance that was needed rather than to cry poor mouth to the Australian Government continually year after year.

I remind the honourable member for Wimmera of something that he might like to carry back as a message to some of his electors in case he has not already told them or in case he is not aware of it. He is bemoaning the fact that these additional heavy telephone charges will mean great hardships and will place a burden on his electorate. He might remind the primary producers that they can claim telephone rentals as a legitimate business expense for taxation purposes. I am sure there will not be too many of them who do not realise this. The Government should be congratulated for adopting the attitude that the Post Office should pay its way. We must remember that the Postal Department has the highest concentration of public servants of any other department. About 120,000 public servants are employed in this Department compared with a total Public Service commitment of about 266,000.

The matter that I principally want to refer to in the time available to me in this debate is a problem that many people have to face. I get complaints, as I am sure every honourable member does, of overcharging on telephone accounts. I agree that in many instances there is no sound reason for complaint where the overcharging is anything else but the result of a commitment that the people themselves have made by using the subscriber trunk dialling service or using their telephone more often than they themselves believe it is being used. But instances have been brought to my attention in which it seems to me almost impossible to believe that the overcharging could be anything but a mistake on the part of the Department or in some cases as a result of the use of faulty equipment. I know that the equipment is always tested.

I must say that on every occasion I have referred a matter to the Department it has done its very best to check out the equipment and it has left no stone unturned to investigate the case to
see whether the complainant has any legitimate grounds for a reconsideration of the telephone account which was presented because the amount charged is well above the general run of telephone accounts that the person had received over a number of years. I think this was mentioned to some extent in the Vernon report. From memory, I recall that it was suggested in the recommendations of the report that the Post Office should do everything possible to institute some system of presentation of accounts so that people will be able to get an itemised or more detailed account than is available at the moment. Despite the fact that the Post Office will give people a summary of the charges that are made it is apparently not able under the present accounting system to provide people with sufficient details to convince them that the account is accurate when it gets to the stage that the Post Office says: 'We are sorry. We cannot vary the charges. We have investigated this. We found these charges that have been imposed on you are for calls that have been made from this number. We have no alternative but to maintain that the charge in your account must remain as it is'.

What I am asking for is that every effort be made as quickly as possible to ensure that a better system is introduced so that we can get to the stage where even if justice is being done to the person concerned—and I accept the fact—justice may be seen to be done. At the present time I have placed before the Postmaster-General a case involving a widow in my electorate. Her telephone account had increased by over 100 per cent from $35 to $74. It is very difficult for a person like this woman to face up to this additional heavy charge particularly when in her own mind she cannot see any reason why the account should increase so substantially. She assures me in writing and in conversation which I have had with her that she has never used subscriber trunk dialling and she never has people staying in her place overnight. She is 76 years old and a widow. Despite the fact that she might have used the telephone a lot more during the period in question than she has over a number of years at least if it could be proved to her beyond all reasonable doubt by providing an itemised account there would be no argument. But when you leave people in doubt they feel they are being victimised and they feel that the Post Office is unjust in these things. This is a most unfortunate situation. I hope that action is taken as suggested in the Vernon report and as I am sure has been suggested by other honourable members in the past in an endeavour to overcome this problem.

I want to refer to another item which has given me some concern in recent times. It is the great increase of vandalism to public telephones that appears to be developing in the Brisbane area. I know that it also occurs in other areas. I congratulate the Minister on the move that has been made to bring the coin telephones within the control of his Department because this surely will permit public telephones owned by the Government rather than the Red Phones and the Yellow Phones which are owned by private enterprise to be provided and located by the Government in more secure places so that they will be available to the general public for use from day to day. I do not know whether there is any way by which we can overcome the growing problem of vandalism to public telephone facilities. I understand from conversation with the Minister recently—I congratulate him on this—that shortly a very concerted campaign is to be introduced by his Department to try to overcome this problem by illustrating to the people how ridiculous this wanton destruction is and to try to convince them that they should report any destruction which they see in their area. Vandalism, of course, is a problem of concern to all people who accept responsibility for the young people of Australia. Very often they hold about the same regard for authority as young people had in the past.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Jenkins)—Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr ERWIN (Ballaarat) (3.5)—I wish to say a few words on the proposal to reorganise the Australian Post Office. The Government has decided that from as early as possible in 1975 and no later than 1 July 1975 a postal commission and a telecommunications commission should assume responsibility for the provision of postal and telecommunications services respectively. Interim chairmen for the 2 commissions have been appointed and an inter-departmental working group has been established to consider the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into the Australian Post Office. The report of the Commission was presented to the Governor-General on 19 April 1974.

Chapter 6 of the Commission's report deals with the case for the separation of postal and telecommunications administrations. It is only as a matter of history that those 2 different functions are administered together. In practice there is a growing de facto separation within the Australian Post Office. The 2 functions differ in their growth rates. The growth rate of the postal service is tending to equate with the rate of growth
of the population. The growth rate of the telecommunications service is increasing sharply. The consultants to the Commission stated that the similarities between the 2 services begin and end with the fact that both communicate information. The telecommunications function uses advanced technology and has high capital investment in relation to employment. The postal service is labour-intensive, with a relatively small capital investment and modest technological resources. Persons working in the 2 areas require different skills and a different management expertise is appropriate to each. Over 90 per cent of the existing staff—numbering 130,372 persons at 30 June 1973—are involved solely in either postal or telecommunications activities.

The operations of the Australian Post Office are very large and possibly have reached the point where false economies are arising from its great size and spread. Two separate organisations would be more capable of being operated efficiently and would be more manageable. The size of the present operations is indicated by the following statistics: Revenue in 1972-73 amounted to $937m; capital expenditure in the same year amounted to $500m; and Australian Government funds employed as at 30 June 1973 amounted to $3,180m. It should be noted that the proposal to replace the Postmaster-General’s Department by commissions will not involve such a change of financial and accounting procedures as it would with other departments. Since 1968 the Department has not been financed in the same way as normal departments. In that year a separate Post Office trust account was established. Revenue goes into that fund and expenditure is made from that fund, with any deficit being covered by borrowing from Treasury on which interest is payable.

The Post Office is permitted to be more flexible than other departments in relation to its expenditure proposals. It can change its proposals during a financial year without parliamentary approval. Post Office accounting is closer to normal corporate accounting than are other departments. Provision is made for depreciation of fixed assets and for superannuation and long service leave. The only major departure from normal corporate accounting is that no income tax is payable on profits earned. Telecommunications consistently have earned profits and postal services just as consistently have suffered losses. For the period 1959-60 to 1972-73 the telecommunications profits were $226.9m and the postal service losses were $138.2m.

In summary, then, the existing Australian Post Office embraces 2 functions that differ in their technology, their requirements for labour and capital and the skills required of their labour force. They have differing growth rates and markedly different profitabilities. The combined operations are possibly too large for efficient management and operation. Because of their differing techniques and capital/labour ratios, they would be more manageable separately. To a large extent separation already exists in fact within the Australian Post Office so far as staff is concerned. I support this proposal.

Mr MATHEWS (Casey) (3.11)—The Pink Pages of the telephone directory have become one of Australia’s most significant avenues for advertising, and in particular for service trades or tertiary industry advertising. The conduct of so significant a channel of advertising imposes heavy responsibility on the Post Office in terms of protection of the consumer interest. I want to express this afternoon some satisfaction over the zeal with which this responsibility is being discharged. On the 3rd of this month I had occasion to draw the attention of the House to the activities of the Melbourne radio and television repair firm Milleradio, which is a heavy consumer of Pink Pages space. This fact, the use that Milleradio makes of the Pink Pages, exemplifies a wider problem with which the Post Office authorities are familiar. I refer to the endeavours that are made by firms registered under a number of proprietary names but at a single address to dominate the Pink Pages with their advertisements.

The Post Office has an arrangement under which no one advertiser is allowed to have more than a quarter-page advertisement in the Pink Pages. This arrangement frequently is evaded by firms such as Milleradio through the device of registering themselves under many names at a single address and taking out a quarter-page advertisement under each of those names. When I spoke about this matter earlier this month I drew the attention of the Postmaster-General (Senator Bishop) to this practice and I expressed concern that many people who wanted television and radio repair services were being inadvertently drawn into the Milleradio net as a result of ringing telephone numbers of firms which were all in fact Milleradio but traded under other names. I reminded the House that Milleradio had been named most unfavourably by the Victorian Consumer Protection Council and that its activities had been discussed in every report of that Council from as far back as 1968. On looking at some of those reports this morning I was struck by the incidents that were described in them. For
instance, the 1968 report records the following instance:

An elderly consumer gave to Milleradio, the chassis of her television set, after being told that the tuner needed repairs. The cost was to have been small. After a considerable delay, the consumer was advised that the cost of repairs would be $80 and that she would have to pay in cash outside her home before the appliance would be reassembled. The consumer, an elderly lady, was advised by us to take legal action, which she did, and the result was most favourable.

A second instance was described by the Council in the following way:

Consumer gave to Milleradio his television set for repair, but demanded a firm quote before any repairs were made. He was told that the cost would be small, but to ring for a firm quote. When he contacted the firm, he was advised the cost would be $50; he told the firm he could not afford that much and demanded the return of his appliance, but was advised that he would have to pay $25 before the set would be returned, although no repairs had been effected.

Those instances described in the 1968 report of the Victorian Consumer Protection Council are very representative of the unsatisfactory transactions which have been described to me in letters I received from people after I last spoke about Milleradio in this place and after I wrote to the Postmaster-General and suggested that something should be done to correct the abuse.

I was interested to see that in the same week the Victorian Minister of Labor and Industry, and Minister of Consumer Affairs, Mr Rafferty, also had something to say about Milleradio in the Victorian Parliament. He named Milleradio as the most significant source of complaints to the Consumer Protection Council. He said that last year of 135 complaints involving radio and television repairs 95 were against Milleradio and that 15 per cent of the claims heard before the Victorian Small Claims Tribunal involved this firm.

I am pleased to say that the Postmaster-General has now taken action so effective that I believe it will do more to stamp out the abuse of the pink pages and to correct the whole unfortunate position in the radio and television service field than all the denunciations that have been uttered over the last half dozen years. The Postmaster-General has sent me mockups of the advertisements which will be required in next year's pink pages telephone directory from all firms registered under a variety of proprietary limited names but at a single address. In future wherever a telephone number is given for such a firm that telephone number will have to be accompanied by the commonly recognised name for the firm concerned. At a conservative estimate, in the present telephone directory Milleradio would have dozens of telephone numbers cited, all of which are merely numbers of answering services for the firm's Prahran workshop. In future beside each one of these telephone numbers there will be the word 'Milleradio' in type of comparable size.

I was interested to see that the proprietor of Milleradio was quoted in the Melbourne ' Herald'on 9 October to this effect:

Every time I get bad publicity, my business increases.

Despite everything they say about me, I am still doing 1,000 repair jobs a week.

Old customers keep coming back, and now I'm getting the second generation—the children of customers whose TVs we repaired in the early days.

I have great customer loyalty, and they always remember me when I'm getting knocked by adverse publicity.

I hope that Mr Miller is right. I believe he will need all that second generation customer loyalty. I think he will need all the adverse publicity he can get. I am satisfied that the action that the Postmaster-General has agreed to take over this abuse is the correct action. It indicates a very proper respect for consumer protection and it is indicative of the zeal with which Post Office officials associated with the pink pages discharge their responsibilities.

Mr CORBETT (Maranoa) (3.19)—The first thing about which I would like to talk this afternoon is the matter of telephone connections. It is of very great concern to people in my area that in some instances it costs $5,000 to have a telephone connected. People just cannot afford this amount. I am referring to people living in a cattle area at a time when the beef market has collapsed. A man who lives in an area that was to be connected to an exchange was asked by the Postmaster-General's Department whether he could be included in another area to suit the Department. The man agreed. It is estimated that under the new scheme it will cost him $5,000 to have a telephone connected. He would have had one installed free of charge under the old system of providing a telephone free of any additional charge within 15 radial miles of an exchange. He moved over to the next grid to suit the Department, but when the Government policy was altered the Department was not prepared to go on with the provision of an exchange in the area to which he had transferred. I led a deputation which waited on the Director of Posts and Telegraphs in Brisbane. He was sympathetic but he could not do anything because the line of demarcation was complete and hard. There is no flexibility in the new scheme. I believe that the Government should consider allowing some degree of flexibility so that justice can be done. It was not done in the case to which I have referred.
I also want to refer to a matter that the honourable member for Wimmera (Mr King) mentioned. Under the previous Liberal-Country Party Government, which had a realistic attitude towards the provision of telephones in country area, 15 miles of line was provided free of charge. It should be borne in mind that this was done at the request of the Department to enable telephone communications to be upgraded to a satisfactory standard by the installation of automatic exchanges. There was no option left to subscribers, so the previous Government, after a good deal of effort largely on the part of many members of the Australian Country Party at that time, instituted the former scheme. The special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen), who is sitting at the table, actually accused me of having inside information in connection with it. He was quite wrong, but that is by the way. Constant dripping wears a stone, otherwise I would not be here appealing to the Department to show some consideration to the people who have to pay an enormous amount of money to get a telephone connected.

Some people living in out of the way areas but only 15 miles from an automatic exchange have no real method of communication in time of emergency. Women are often left at home by themselves all day. One woman had to fight a bushfire to keep it away from the house in which she was living. She died of a heart attack within 6 months of that time. Her husband claims that it was due to the fact that she did not have a telephone to call for help and therefore either had to allow the house to be burnt down or had to fight the bushfire as best she could. A human problem is involved. A mother in an out of the way area might have sick children. What is the use of having an up to date ambulance service 50, 60, 70 or 80 miles away if there is no way of communicating with it in times of emergency? The Government has adopted an unrealistic approach in reducing from 15 miles to 5 miles the length of line provided free of charge. It is an unreasonable approach. I appeal to the Government to have another look at the matter.

I draw attention to the long delays between an application and connection of a telephone. On 17 October Senator Lawrie asked a witness appearing before one of the Senate Estimates Committees a question with regard to deferred applications. A table had been provided showing applicants awaiting telephone services State by State. Senator Lawrie said:

What intrigues me is why almost half of those deferred applications come from my State of Queensland. What is the explanation of that?

The question was answered by Mr Freeman, who incidentally is the Senior Assistant Director-General (Works Program Co-ordination) of the Engineering Development Division. He said:

The reason for the high situation in Queensland has been due to the unprecedented buoyancy in that State over the past 2 years and it is a situation we have been attempting to correct.

He went on to say that the demand in Australia had fallen by 16,000 applications and that in Queensland over the previous 2 months the unsatisfied demand had fallen by 4,000 applications to 24,000. It is very interesting that the situation was caused by buoyancy in Queensland, which is the only State in Australia that has a National Party Government which has been able to offset the detrimental effects that the Commonwealth Government has had on Australia as a whole. I know that the Queensland Government cannot go on doing that because it would be impossible to do so with the present high rate of inflation.

I would like also to refer to the road mail services. They are continually being reduced on the ground that it is not economic for the PMG Department to provide them. Looked at in isolation, there are some instances where it costs a considerable amount of money to deliver a single article. I suggest that there should be a Treasury subvention to allow the PMG to provide services which are uneconomic in themselves but which are justified from a national point of view, particularly in relation to production and export earnings. If we are going to look at road mail services we cannot look at them in isolation. Surely they should be looked at from the broad national point of view. If we do that then I think the answer lies in the submission made by the Country Party to the royal commission that a Treasury subvention should be provided to the Postmaster-General’s Department to enable it to provide this rural service nationally without upsetting the balance of its own accounts. I think that is a reasonable approach. I should like to ask a question and I hope that the Minister will be able to answer it. Does the Government intend to make the Post Office produce a balanced budget? If it does, what would be the cost of postage under those circumstances? Would it be 14c, as is suggested in the Melbourne ‘Sun’ yesterday, I think it was? The cost of the Postmaster-General’s Department producing a balanced budget, or even making a profit, if you like, is of concern to the community.

I wish to raise a point in relation to the speed of mail deliveries. This matter was raised by one of my constituents, who lives about 300 miles—400 to 500 kilometres—from Brisbane. He
challenged the Post Office on the delivery of mail and said that he was prepared to ride on horseback from Brisbane to his property and deliver the mail faster than the present service would get it there. The challenge was not taken up, but it is indicative of the falling off in deliveries to rural areas. That illustration highlights the point that the problem can be overcome by a Treasury subvention for that particular purpose.

The changeover to the new system is going to cause people all over Australia, particularly those in country areas, very great concern. We know that the changeover is not envisaged for some time yet. The Postmaster-General's Department did obtain a balance from its telecommunications section which enabled the figures to be better than they might otherwise have been, but without the advantage of that section to balance the budget there is going to be a deficit. I think it was the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs who suggested that it would require a 15 per cent rise in charges to cope with increasing costs. At that rate, there will be an increase of 1½c on letter postage to cope with those increasing costs. As the Melbourne "Sun" and probably other newspapers too have suggested, the cost could rise to 1½c to cover this deficit in the balance of payments. When the Minister replies I hope he will give the House some indication of whether it is the Government's intention to show a profit in the Post Office, or at least a balanced budget, or whether it is going to overcome the deficit in some other way and thereby avoid the exorbitant charges that would have to be made to achieve a balanced budget.

I think it was the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) who said that already people were having letters delivered by hand from Melbourne to Sydney instead of sending them through the Post Office. Can the Minister say if the Government is going to adopt a policy of increasing postal charges? If it is, then I regret it, because the Post Office is a service department. As I say, I believe that the Post Office should not have to carry an uneconomic service but if it is going to show a profit how is it going to do this without an exorbitant increase in charges? Is the Government prepared to allow that exorbitant increase to be brought about for the sake of achieving a balanced budget, by making the people who use the service pay for it?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Jenkins)—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State) (3.29)—in reply—The debate on these estimates has been in the main quite reasonable. On the Opposition's side, first let me congratulate the honourable member for Ballarat (Mr Erwin), who made a very short speech of some 6 minutes in which he said virtually all of the things that should have been said for many years. He said how essential it was that the communications business should be a businesslike operation; that you face up to reality and you look at the needs of the community, you look at the services which can be provided and you look at the expertise that exists in the Post Office and you see that there is a division of functions. The honourable member gave his support to the findings of the Vernon Commission and that is to be commended because, in the main, oppositions are prone merely to criticise and not to make any valuable contribution to the problem that exists throughout Australia, namely, that we do need a better communications service. We want to be efficient. That has not been the case, and it was left to this Government to initiate the royal commission. The findings of that royal commission were the result of extensive evidence that was taken. Its findings are worth while and are in the process of being implemented. I am a little disappointed that we cannot get the legislation into the House during this session but I understand that there are some drafting problems, particularly in relation to satisfying the requirements of the Treasury and other departments. I can assure honourable members that the legislation will be introduced early in the autumn period.

I recognise the merits of what the honourable member for Ballarat said, and they should also be recognised by other speakers who took part in this debate. For example, the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) was very concerned about what he called the falling off in service. I do agree that there has been a falling off in service. The problem has been to keep up extensive mail deliveries over a very wide expanse of land. It is true that if the Post Office had been allowed to compete in all of the services that are being provided it could have made a profit. It was never allowed to compete in the courier service, where perhaps it could have got $1.80 for delivering one letter, because private enterprise says that is the value of delivering that letter. One must ask why is it that the Post Office was prohibited from entering into the courier service, where it could have made a substantial profit? The Post Office has always been obliged to deliver a letter from Sydney to Perth for 7c. It could not possibly make a profit on that charge. Of course, if it is a country newspaper that is
being delivered the Post Office has got to deliver it everywhere for half that cost.

The honourable member for Maranoa (Mr Corbett) spoke about the cost of delivering country newspapers, but the fact is that there is a loss now of $11m on the delivery of those newspapers. It has been said that the Government has to give them some help. That help has been given, and one must ask the next question: Where does the help come from? The people who are using the telephones. The Opposition is quite happy to let a system exist where somebody can get help provided that some other unfortunate is made to pay extra; in other words, provide a subsidy. That is no way to run a good communications system. It does not follow that the charge has always got to be rapidly increased, but that followed in this case with the last increase. I repeat that one of the major reasons for raising extra money was that the superannuation fund had not had enough money put into it in the past. The Vernon Commission established that the fund needed an injection of some $130m to make up the leeway. It will be seen that of the amount of $146m which will be raised by these increases, $130m goes into superannuation.

Mr Nixon—They did not recommend the level of funds you are putting up.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—They did. The honourable member can argue; he just likes to take a negative attitude. Have a look at the report of the royal commission. It says that the funding for the superannuation fund is deficient and cannot be supported and has to have this injection of funds. This is how that particular increase occurred.

One of the other matters mentioned was the abolition of the radio and television licence fee of $26. This was a logical thing to do. In the main, everybody has a television or a radio receiver, and it followed that there was no need to put a tax penalty on people in the form of a radio and television licence and then go to all the trouble of prosecuting people because they did not have a licence, and outlay some $3m in trying to find who was avoiding payment. Sir Alan Hulme recommended in 1970 that that tax ought to be abolished because it could be a charge on general revenue, and virtually everybody had a radio or television set. That is the reason why the Government said that it was fair enough to remove the tax, because the community can pay for it. But the same thing cannot be said about the rural telephone position, because that concerns a direct subsidy to each individual, depending upon the cost of the line. If the line costs some $400 a kilometre you can imagine the cost that is going onto each subscriber as the distance from the main exchange becomes greater. In the area of the honourable member for Maranoa it was costing in some cases $20,000 to put one subscriber on the line. There is a big difference between providing that sort of service to one person and providing a service across the board to the community.

Mr Corbett—Fifteen miles was provided free.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—And in relation to that 15-mile limit one could still find if one had to go through rock or difficult terrain that there was a cost of something like $20,000 involved. The honourable member for Maranoa had a system running—I will give him credit for the fact that he thought of it—whereby the rest of the people in Australia who used telephones had to pay. After the system had been running for 18 months or 2 years it was then found to have cost $26m. It involved the payment of interest. It was then running at an annual loss of $3m and it never had any hope of being a financial success. My predecessor as Postmaster-General, Sir Alan Hulme, said the same thing. Members of the Country Party talk about rentals. No adjustment was made in the rentals of subscribers in country areas on the basis that people who rent telephones in country areas should make a greater contribution. The city rentals were increased instead.

Dr Forbes—Why do you not give the country back to the rabbits?

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—Why does the honourable member for Barker not get up and talk instead of continually interjecting?

Dr Forbes—Because the Government will not allow me to do so. It is gagging everything.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—The honourable member for Barker is too tired to put his name on the list of speakers. Coming back to what I have been saying about subscribers in country areas, we have given an 8-kilometre free run. That involves an expenditure of about $3,000 for each country subscriber. It would take a fair bit of usage of such a telephone for us to get our money back. How much use would have to be made of a telephone in order to get back an expenditure of $20,000? It should be borne in mind that it has always been the premise of honourable members opposite that the Post Office should be a commercial undertaking and that the telecommunication part of it should pay interest on moneys it receives. How much money would have to come in to meet a $20,000 capital outlay on one farm at an interest rate of 7 per cent? It could never
have been done by following the country line policy. At the time I came into the portfolio of Postmaster-General it was said: 'This is the worst thing ever to have been done. It is going to involve an outlay of about $250m if all the deferred applications are to be satisfied. By the time that is done we will have an annual interest bill of $30m.' That would have meant every telephone subscriber would have had to pay more.

Mr Corbett—Why not let them build their own lines?

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—There is no real objection to them building their own lines, but there is one technical objection. Unless the line is up to the grade it cannot get the communication and half the private lines in Queensland would not meet the standard. So it is not much good fooling people and saying that they can put in their own line if they cannot get it up to the required technical standards. That is the reason why the Department had to make this decision. They were not political decisions on the basis of what should be done. They were political decisions from the Country Party's point of view. Supporters of the Country Party say: 'It is all right with me if I can get everybody else in Australia to subsidise me because I am in a Country Party electorate'. That is the way in which the system was running. That is not a fair proposition.

Mr Corbett—It was related to export earnings and national income.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—The Country Party areas might be export earners, but what about all the other people who are using telephones? What about the fellows in the city areas who use the telephone every 10 seconds and who pay bills of $2,000 and $3,000? Are their activities not related to export earnings? Was it not their money that honourable members opposite were using to subsidise others? Of course it was. That is the whole point. How else can one run a communications system unless the system itself is frequently used? The only way in which the Post Office itself makes money is if the telephones themselves are used frequently. I know that a telephone is a necessity of life, but it is of no value to the Post Office to find that a telephone is used only about 3 times a day. That is the point.

Mr Nixon—It is a service.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—If it is a service let somebody else provide the subsidy from Consolidated Revenue and not the telephone user. That is the big difference. The previous Liberal-Country Party Government never did it.

I turn to the future of the Post Office. With the setting up of a new commission we will be able to establish regions—honourable members opposite ought to be interested in this from the point of view of decentralisation—in Queensland there will be not just one director but three or four directors. They will have autonomy and the right to delegate power within their regions. If the directors are efficient there will be efficient communications.

(Opposition members interjecting)—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Jenkins)—Order! There are too many interjections. I invite the Minister to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—I recognise the point you have made, Mr Deputy Chairman. What I am saying is that the Post Office has to run an efficient communications system and it is thought that it could be much more efficient if it were to be decentralised. I would be amazed if that were not now the view of members of the Country Party. If they would rather have what is called a central autonomy with one person directing the position I think they are taking an about-turn. The facts of life are that if one has the ability to have people in the field who can readily understand the problems of a region one is much more likely to get a better service and a more efficient arrangement. I think that is what members of the Country Party really mean, even though today they tried to say that it is not. The future of the Post Office is going to be secure in the knowledge that there is going to be that sort of system. There is going to be a business operation and there will be people in the corporation who are business minded. That will get away from the Public Service system of having to say that something cannot be done because of some policy or because some bureaucratic arrangement will not let it be done. If one has the flexibility of modern management one can get a lot better results than one has been able to obtain in the past.

The honourable member for Bowman (Mr Keogh) spoke about matters which other honourable members have mentioned, including the provision of a concession in relation to Christmas cards. I have been led to understand by the Postmaster-General (Senator Bishop) that this is not feasible and that it would involve a loss of some millions of dollars in revenue. He said that he has had the matter investigated. I agree with his investigation. The Postmaster-General has said that, on the advice of his Department, he cannot afford to take any further losses. The honourable member for Bowman also raised the subject of vandalism, which
causes a big loss to the Post Office but which cannot readily be avoided. Efforts are being made to try to reduce the expenditure caused in that respect.

The honourable member for Bowman also raised the usual problem of a person not being able to obtain details on every call that is made, particularly STD calls. This is a difficulty I experienced when I had responsibility for the portfolio. Let me say, in fairness to the Post Office, that there was not one piece of evidence produced to me of a malfunction of a meter, despite the fact that a lot of publicity had been given to that matter. In every case when what is called a tape recording was put on a meter it was able to be established that every call had been a bona fide call. Of course, it does not always follow that everybody who used that telephone was a bona fide subscriber. One could well have the position of a baby sitter in Melbourne telephoning somebody in Perth and of the bona fide subscriber having to pay the bill, not knowing that such a call was made. But, in fairness to the exchange equipment, I wish to say that anybody who looks at it will see that it really cannot be manipulated. It is quite extraordinary to think there would be any malfunctioning of the meter. So while the charges may be said to be outrageous they have been proved in every case to be correct. Of course it would be possible to have a tape put on a telephone, but it would require an enormous capital outlay to do so. If any subscriber ever wants his telephone checked a tape can be put on it. In fact, I will admit that it is better if a tape is put on without the subscriber knowing it. If a tape is put on one can check every call because it registers accordingly.

I think those are the main matters which were raised today. There was a matter raised by the honourable member for Gippsland (Mr Nixon) which I am having investigated for him. It related to the question of whether some band could be made available for the amateur user of walkie-talkies, as he called them. If I can get some information for him I might be able to let him have it later this evening if there is an adjournment debate. I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. I now move:

That the question be put.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Department of Defence

Proposed expenditure, $1,337,165,000.

Dr FORBES (Barker) (3.44)—We are about to get, I suppose, the one and a half hours a year we get to talk about defence. This is the first opportunity we have had to talk specifically on defence for more than a year. Even the customary practice which had been followed for so many years of the Minister for Defence making a statement to the House and of it being possible to debate it has not been followed. I believe this to be absolutely scandalous, particularly because defence is one of the fields—no doubt this is why we do not get adequate time to debate it—in which the Government is most vulnerable. The Government, particularly the Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard), does not seem to understand the enormity of what it is doing in the defence field. This is quite obvious, as the Minister had made 2 major speeches lately—one which he tabled in the House and the other which he delivered on Monday to the Returned Services League Congress—and in both of those statements he was most sensitive to criticism of the Government in relation to its defence policy. In fact, he took the RSL to task for daring to criticise the Government in respect of defence.

I really believe that honourable gentlemen on the Government side do not understand the enormity of what they have done. They boast frequently about the huge increases in expenditure that the Government has undertaken in other fields including education, health and the arts. One has only to mention an area and they are boasting about the huge increase—70, 80, 90 or 100 per cent—in expenditure in that area. Every time they do that and every time the fact is brought home to us that we have an inflation rate of over 20 per cent a year, it demonstrates with absolutely sickening force how completely and utterly the Government is neglecting defence. That is why people criticise the Government. A contrast is drawn between what Government members boast they are doing in very many fields—this is underlined by the highest inflation rate that Australia has had in this century—and what the Government is doing or is not doing with respect to defence. The more Government members boast, crow and preen themselves with respect to expenditure in these other areas, the more contrast is driven home to the people. That is why the Government is being criticised, and deservedly criticised.

It is this which makes the attempt by the Minister for Defence to suggest that a Liberal-Country Party Government would cut defence expenditure so ludicrous and so pathetic. He did this yesterday by misinterpreting—
Mr Barnard—That is what your shadow Treasurer said.

Dr Forbes—Look, I have only 10 minutes to speak on defence. That is all you have allowed me in this whole year. So, you keep quiet; stop interjecting. The Minister did this yesterday by misinterpreting a statement by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr Lynch) that we would cut overall government expenditure by 8 per cent. He misinterpreted this to mean that we would cut each item of government expenditure by 8 per cent. How ridiculous can one be? To suggest that we would cut further expenditure on something as important as defence, which this Government has cut and cut and cut, is absolute nonsense. We are committed quite specifically and without qualification to substantially increased defence expenditure when we come into government. Unlike the present Government, a Liberal-Country Party government would keep its promises. Who is this Minister, by means of a Dorothy Dix question from the honourable member from Bonython (Mr Nicholls) who has never thought about defence in his life, to talk? He is the man who promised specifically and solemnly when in Opposition, in an attempt to win government, that the Labor Party would spend 3.5 per cent of the gross national product on defence. In the first Budget of the new Labor Government after that promise to spend 3.5 per cent of the gross national product the expenditure on defence represented 2.9 per cent; in this year’s Budget it has been reduced to 2.6 per cent. Who is he to rise in this chamber and criticise the Opposition?

I have hardly any time in which to deal with other matters. But I must pick out one specific item in these estimates in respect of which the Government is most culpable and say something about it. I refer to the fact that in the 1974-75 defence estimates the Government provides only $91.8m for new equipment. That is 6 per cent of the defence vote. By way of contrast, I make the point that in its last Budget, that for 1972-73, the Liberal-Country Party Government provided $184m for new equipment. In his statement on the 5-year program made in 1972, the then Minister for Defence, the honourable member for Farrer (Mr Fairbairn), forecast that in 1976-77 expenditure on new equipment would rise to $325m, at 1972 prices. I will content myself with the 1972-73 figure, the one included in our last Budget. I contrast the $184m appropriated for new equipment then with the sum of $91.8m—these are Labor Party, Whitlam depreciated dollars—provided in the Budget this year, 2 years later, for new equipment.

At this rate the Australian Services will soon lack credibility completely as they struggle and scrape along with 15-year-old destroyers, 17-year-old minesweepers, an 18-year-old aircraft carrier, a force of patrol boats which are due to be phased out in 1982, medium artillery pieces of World War Two vintage, 20-year-old tanks, armoured personnel carriers and other vehicles which have been through several years of intense operations in Vietnam, Mirage fighters which have been in service for a decade and frequently become unserviceable after less than half an hour in the air, and Hercules transports that are over 10 years old and with no adequate replacement in sight. Even if the nature of warfare were static, an annual appropriation of $91.8m for new equipment would be ludicrous. As we have seen, especially in the Middle East in October 1973, the conduct of modern warfare is being revolutionised by the development of new missiles, remotely piloted vehicles, satellites and battle-field surveillance equipment which turns night into day for those who have it, and by the evolution of new tactics for use on land, at sea and in the air. Hence, for Australia to spend only $91.8m on new equipment against this background is gross irresponsibility, for which we might pay dearly in later years.

For the late 1970s and early 1980s at least, Australia faces a grave deficiency of modern military equipment which will of itself cause a serious strategic problem. Even if a Liberal-Country Party government were to come to office tomorrow, the problem of lead times for major equipment items is such that there is little that could be done to fill this gap. The longer the present Government stays in office, the worse this situation will become.

The Deputy Chairman (Dr Jenkins)—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

Mr Riordan (Phillip) (3.53)—Perhaps I should preface my remarks by saying to the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes) that what counts is not how much is spent on military equipment but what is received for that expenditure. He should recall his own record, because it is not too good. The sort of equipment that he purchased was not up to standard. It was left to this Government, when it came into office in December 1972, to set about modernising the equipment of the Australian Services. This work has been commenced and it will be continued. The honourable member for Barker, never known for his discretion, has let the cat out of the bag again. Here is an assertion, which I accept without qualification, that a future Liberal
government, if anyone could see that far into the future, would not, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr Lynch) said, cut all expenditure by 8 per cent; such a government would be selective in its reduction. It is the total expenditure that will be cut by 8 per cent. I have the honourable members assurance that this is the position because he is nodding his head. If total expenditure is to be cut by 8 per cent—and we accept his assurance that defence expenditure will not only be not cut but increased—this means severe cuts elsewhere.

Dr Forbes—That is right.

Mr RIORDAN—That means there will be a slashing of expenditure on education and on social welfare. The honourable member would develop an Australian Army with modern equipment but with nobody sufficiently educated to operate it. Of course, he would be driven back to the old Liberal way which is not to pay servicemen what they are entitled to receive, not to pay them what they are worth but to get what one can for the least possible cost and to make up the difference by conscription. I should be pleased to hear a completely unequivocal statement by spokesmen of the Liberal Party that they will not in future reintroduce conscription. These are the guilty men who until the day they were thrown from office insisted on conscripting the youth of Australia, disrupting young lives for 2 years at a time, interrupting the training of Australian youth to put them into the Army, taking young men out of universities and out of clerical positions in private enterprise and putting them into the Army to do basically the same work.

Mr James—Or putting them into gaol.

Mr RIORDAN—These are the guilty men, and those who resisted, as the honourable member for Hunter interjected, even those with conscientious objections, were thrown into gaol and treated as common criminals. I want to hear members opposite say unequivocally that they will not reintroduce that iniquitous system. These are the guilty men who conscripted Australian youth and sent them to the jungles of Asia to die and be wounded. These are the men who would do it again. They oppose our concept. The concept of this Government is to put the defence services of Australia on a modern and proper basis. The Liberal-Country Party team said before the last elections that no government could have an Army without conscription. After this Government abandoned conscription we saw the same thing happen in the United States of America. So far I have not seen that country’s army disintegrate, nor has ours and nor will ours disintegrate in spite of the ranting by the honourable member for Barker.

His Excellency the Australian Ambassador to Ireland, when Leader of another Party in another place, aptly summed up the Liberal-Country Party approach to defence. He said that they left the defence of Australia in the hands of boy scouts and girl guides. When I heard the honourable member for Baker speak this afternoon I thought that was perhaps an appropriate description. We reject the concept that there is need to continue to spend more and more on defence without reason or logic. This Government believes that the Australian defence forces—our Army, Navy and Air Force—should be modernised. The Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard) has made it clear in recent statements that that program is progressing extremely well. The Government has already ordered new naval vessels from the United States of America and has presently under consideration the upgrading of armoured equipment for the Australian Army. Tests have been carried out with German and American tanks and no doubt in due course orders will be let.

The Liberals reject the concept that there is no immediate threat to Australia. Again this afternoon we heard the same thing from the honourable member for Baker. The Liberal Party sees a military threat to Australia’s security. Surely we are entitled to ask and the Australian people are entitled to know from whence this threat is to come. Who is going to attack Australia next week? The military experts in this country—those who have spent their lifetime training for the defence of Australia—believe there is no immediate threat and that there will be no outbreak of military hostilities in this region of the world.

Mr Hodges—What if you are wrong?

Mr RIORDAN—I think that is a fair question. If in the morning when I am about to leave home the sun is shining I do not wear an overcoat because I can reasonably predict that it will not snow. If I am wrong perhaps I will catch a cold. The odds are overwhelmingly in favour of the fact that I will not be wrong. The Australian Government’s concept for defence is to establish—it has been established—a corps style force into which an immediate army can be assembled if need be. If the unfortunate need should arise the situation could easily be rectified. I ask Opposition members to indicate where the threat is and to state the time it will arise. If the Opposition’s policy were adopted it
is inevitable that those who are poor and underprivileged will have to go without while we build a more massive defence force. The question of priorities must be established. Those with the least at the moment would have to go without more. If there were a threat I for one would be prepared to say to the Australian people, as would the Government: 'We have to set the priorities in a different way. People will have to go without certain things in order to build a more massive defence force'. But when one makes such a decision it should be based on fact, not fiction. It should be based on the view of experts and not on the view of those who want to play soldiers—who want to play cowboys and Indians—that at some future time there might be a threat.

Before the May 1974 elections the honourable member for Barker insisted that the Government spent too little on defence. During that campaign he said that the Liberals would not increase defence expenditure.

Dr Forbes—That is a lie.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN—Order! I ask the honourable member for Barker to withdraw that statement.

Dr Forbes—I withdraw it and change it to ‘an untruth’.

Mr RIORDAN—The honourable member for Barker is quick to use insulting terms but it would be far more appropriate if he had the manhood to stand up and state what are the facts instead of the glib mish mash of nonsense to which he treated the Committee this afternoon. He said that we should have an Army of 41,000. Then he said it should be an Army of 36,000. On Tuesday last he said: 'I would not be anxious to increase unduly the numerical strength of the services'. Does he deny that he said that at the Returned Services League Congress?

Mr Barnard—He cannot make up his mind.

Mr RIORDAN—I agree. For once during this speech the honourable member for Barker has fallen silent. No matter what he says, that is what he did say last week. His contradiction has caught up with him. He made up his mind several times but contradicted himself on each occasion. The realities of life are that this Government will have a defence force which is capable of defending Australia. It will be consistent with our national needs. Australia will have defence services consistent with urgent priorities that need to be adopted. Australia will have a defence force of men who are volunteers.

Mr GARLAND (Curtin) (4.4)—In reply to the honourable member for Phillip (Mr Riordan), who has just resumed his seat, I briefly take up the major point he made. He said that the Government was modernising the defence forces of Australia. What rubbish! He knows, or should know, that in respect of the equipment to which he referred—tanks and ships—with the exception of the ships all the decisions made by the Government have been for a continuance of studies that have been proceeding for a long time. He would know that many of the programs have been cancelled by the Government and the Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard). He would also know that these decisions about the scrapping of the DDL program in order to provide an inadequate replacement will result in far less effectiveness for the maritime services of this country. One can only hope that that inadequate replacement will not result, in the years to come, in tragedy for Australian seamen. If it does, it will be that and that alone for which this Minister for Defence is remembered.

I will refer to one or two particular matters this afternoon, which I believe to be a serious and improper use of Royal Australian Air Force aircraft authorised by the Minister, at any rate he is responsible for them. I refer to the use of 2 F111s and a Hercules aircraft for an anniversary celebration, carrying postage stamps, in a most expensive exercise around Australia. By way of introduction I say the Minister must provide proper training programs for the F111 and other defence equipment. F111s are, after all, highly sophisticated and expensive weapons and the Minister, I repeat, is responsible for them. Naturally they are run, of course, at tremendous cost. They are effective if we use them properly. To have them used in an inadequate way is to make a mockery of defence and of the defence services and will serve only to lower morale still further.

From a recent publication we learn that a few months ago an F111 was used to carry 9,797 postage stamps and envelopes in its bomb bay. The aircraft was followed by another F111. This actually happened in April this year. The aircraft apparently flew from Amberley, to Darwin, to Pearce in Western Australia and then to Edinburgh in South Australia. The first aircraft which carried the stamps in its bomb bay, had a back up aircraft. In turn they were followed by a Hercules aircraft which carried an unlocking device to open the bomb bay when the Hercules aircraft arrived 3 hours later. The flights were to celebrate an aerial survey of the coastline of mainland Australia 50 years ago by 2 officers of the RAAF. The publication states:
... the mail was confined to one machine with another F111C following as a back-up aircraft. The scheduled flights were at bases at Darwin, Northern Territory, Pearce, Western Australia, where there was an overnight stop, and Edinburgh, South Australia. After leaving Edinburgh this aircraft flew over Point Cook, Victoria in a salute to the original flight before returning directly to Amberley. All covers carried on the flight were postmarked with a pictorial postmark illustrating a map of Australia, a General Dynamics F111C bomber and a Fairey 111D. Backstamps were applied at Pearce and on return to Amberley. The stop-over period of two hours at Darwin and three hours at Edinburgh precluded back-stamping at those points.

The covers were flown in the bomb bay of the aircraft and a special plastic covering was wrapped around the six mail bags to protect the contents from dampness caused by condensation which forms in the bomb bay at high altitudes. About 150 covers received at Amberley Post Office after the mail was despatched were carried by the crew in the cockpit but these items were transferred to one of the mail bags after back stamping at Pearce.

Although the F111C arrived at Pearce at 3.30 p.m., the mail stayed in the bomb bay for another three hours waiting the arrival of a Hercules transport. This much slower piston-engined supply plane carried ground staff associated with the flight, spares, and most important for the post office staff, an unlocking device which enables ground access to the F111C's bomb bay. The covers were handed over to the Post Office at 6.35 p.m., and the staff busily began applying backstamps.

Backstamping of covers was completed at 1.30 a.m. the following morning and the mail handed back to the RAAF at 6.30 a.m. for delivery to the waiting jets. The mail was allocated to the back-up F111C, which was the last to take off.

In view of what has been said in previous debates about the performance of the Post Office it is a pity that it is not more efficient in other areas.

I bring this matter to the attention of the House because I believe it is the Minister's duty to provide adequate and proper training programs for this very expensive equipment which will help the effectiveness of the forces. In doing that we will raise the morale of the Services instead of employing the aircraft in luridously expensive celebrations of an anniversary. It is common knowledge that at Amberley recently, and perhaps today, only fuel for less than 3 hours flight time was available for the F111s.

Mr Lusher—How many hours?

Mr GARLAND—Less than 3 hours. What an idea of defence preparedness. I believe today an F111 is marooned in Darwin after a recent exercise. Yet here we have a government which tries to say: 'We do not need any defence, but we have done a lot for defence'. The implication is always that the Government has increased the effectiveness of defence. In fact it is just wearing down. The reason for that is not hard to find. Any thinking person knows that half of the Labor Party does not believe in any defence and the whole of it is short of money. We have a situation where less and less is being spent in real terms, that is to say, adjusted to the inflation rate. The amount of money has greatly reduced and its effectiveness has reduced very much more. We have seen during the period of this Government a disgraceful run down in defence preparedness and effectiveness, a disgraceful run down in morale and, in those events to which I have referred, an incredible display of misplaced priorities.

Dr FORBES (Barker)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Jenkins)—Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Dr FORBES—Yes, by the honourable member for Phillip (Mr Riordan) in two ways. He said that I had been inconsistent in relation to the statements I had made about manpower. During the last election campaign we undertook to increase the Army to 36,000 men. He said I contradicted that in a speech I made at the Returned Services League National Congress on Tuesday. I said at the National Congress: I would not be anxious to increase unduly the numerical sizes of the services until their own strategic and tactical doctrines were developed and until the major re-equipment program had been launched.

As I understand it the Government's objective for the Army is 34,000. It is not an undue increase to increase the size of the Army from 34,000 to 36,000. The Honourable Gentleman also suggested that in the last election campaign we said we would not increase defence expenditure. I said to him that that was completely untrue. Because the Minister felt vulnerable in defence matters he leapt on our defence policy and made a statement or had a statement issued from his office. As a result of the Minister's making that statement I issued a Press statement. After saying a lot about the differences between the 2 parties I said:

None of this in any way contradicts the assertion made in our defence policy statement that there would have been no substantial increase in defence spending in the next two or three years. This is a legacy of the situation created by Labor. You cannot buy major defence equipment off the shelf.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Giles)—Order! I do not think the honourable member can either debate the question or bring in new matter.

Dr FORBES—I am not debating the question. The honourable member for Phillip accused me of saying that the Liberal-Country Party Opposition during the last election campaign said that in government we would not increase defence expenditure. I am stating what I actually said to disprove that statement. In the Press release I
ended up by saying that equipment decisions we would have made immediately after coming into office would not have resulted in deliveries for some years, a similar statement about recruitment and then finally I said:

But we would have made the equipment decisions and put no limitation on the recruitment of manpower until we reached the objective we had set. In the years ahead there is no doubt that this would have involved substantial increases in defence expenditure.

Mr KERIN (Macarthur) (4.16)—Firstly, I can understand why the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes) has to make a few personal explanations. I would assume that he has to make quite a few to his colleagues. He said that he does not get enough time to speak on defence in this chamber. Most of his speech today was quoted directly from a speech that he gave at the Returned Services League Congress on 29 October. It would appear that he either read a speech on the estimates at the congress or that he made a speech here with the RSL in mind. This seems to me to be a rather shabby tactic if he is saying that he is not getting enough time to speak on defence in this chamber and then uses the opportunity he gets to speak to quote from speeches he has already given. In other words he did not prepare for the Estimates debates in this chamber.

We have also learned today that the honourable member for Curtin (Mr Garland) can read. He spent most of his speech reading from a document—an Australian document he called it. He did not even name it. We have also heard from the honourable member for Hume (Mr Lusher) who keeps on interjecting, that the main threat to Australia is from Queensland. He did not define whether the threat is from the Government of Queensland. One can only assume that it might be some Australian Country Party organisation that he has in mind.

I should like to take this opportunity to point out that there is quite a confused picture emanating from the Opposition with regard to defence. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr Lynch) on 'Monday Conference' definitely said that the Opposition would cut spending across the board by 8 per cent. On 24 October the honourable member for Barker had this to say:

None of this in any way contradicts the assertion made in our defence policy statement that there would have been no substantial increase in defence spending in the next two or three years. This is a legacy of the situation created by Labor.

The sort of legacy we inherited was exactly the same. There had been so many non-decisions made in the defence buying area.

Dr Forbes—Why did you cancel some of them?

Mr KERIN—The only thing we cancelled was the DDL because we decided to save a lot more money by getting a patrol frigate which carried exactly the same armament and which will cost virtually half as much. A questioner on 'Monday Conference' detailed the areas—he put it very clearly—where spending overall could not be cut, such as interest on debt charges and payments to the States. The Opposition joins the Premiers when they come forward wanting more money for the States so I do not think it would cut expenditure in that area. So just where would the Opposition cut spending if it is not to be in the defence area? The Opposition's own shadow Treasurer said he would cut it 8 per cent across the board. The simple fact, if the Opposition looks at some of its other contradictory statements, is that it means that some areas will be cut a lot more than 8 per cent across the board. I am not so sure that the Opposition does not intend to cut expenditure on defence.

The reason that I asked a question of the Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard) the other day was that I was rather alarmed that no qualification was given by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I am glad if the honourable member for Barker has cleared up the allegation made by the honourable member for Phillip (Mr Riordan), but I am not so sure he has cleared it up. I seem to recall that during the last election campaign the honourable member for Barker said that the Opposition might spend an extra $200m in this year's Budget. This, of course, is the amount we have nearly matched. There are lots of other matters that one could go on about. The confusing statements that seem to be coming out today and in the last few months lead me to believe that the Opposition is mainly using distortion and a wrong interpretation of facts.

Perhaps the most important one of these is the constant distortion of the concept of the strategic bases and the gross misstatement of the meaning of the 10 to 15-year strategic situation assessment. This is constantly done to confuse the issue while claiming that the Opposition is supposedly developing defence policy. The strategic assessment said—it must be said over and over again—that there is no foreseeable threat to the continent of Australia for the next 10 or 15 years. It is a meaningful statement inasmuch as it is logical but it is meaningless in that it says nothing about the direct strategic situation in 10 or 15 years. Any situation may arise within 3 months in some scenarios. A situation may arise within 1, 2 or in
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any of the 10 to 15 years. But on the premises of the strategic bases it remains a valid document.

I think the Liberals have used a smokescreen of distortion to save face because of the undeniable fact that they have no policy of their own. They have been forced, in fact, to agree with the Government policy after their previous disastrous policies were overwhelmingly rejected by the people in 1972. They have been unable to come up, for example, with any alternative from their previous failures of Vietnam, conscription, the F111 and other ill-conceived prestige equipment purchases. Unable to find any alternatives they have adopted the Government’s policies as slowly as the necessity to save their reputation will allow. I think all the work done by the Minister for Defence and the Department of Defence on the many studies will show some concrete results.

I could quote some of the other statements of the honourable member for Barker. In his statement of 24 October he said that we are now devoting a lot of our money to paying and maintaining non-specialist private soldiers. That is simply quite wrong. He asked why are we maintaining a relaxed attitude to the resignation of large numbers of officers of the rank of major and above. This is simply wrong. We have expressed our concern, but we all know why these resignations have occurred. They are mainly to do with the financial situation of the officers concerned. As a matter of fact, in the September quarter the manpower figures rose by a record amount. The honourable member for Barker queried why HMAS ‘Sydney’, our only strategic sea transport, is to be pensioned off in the absence of a decision about its replacement. The simple fact is that the life of the ‘Sydney’ was to expire this year because the previous Government had not made any plans for a refit. Even with a refit it would have lasted only 2 years. The honourable member also queried, in relation to the defence of continental Australia, why there is not more urgency about the replacement of the Neptunes and why the decision was made to replace them with even less aircraft than at present. The aircraft we are thinking of replacing them with are a lot more capable than the Neptunes. I do not see long range maritime patrol aircraft as the answer to defending Australia.

I could go on through the statement the honourable member for Barker made. My main concern—I note that he raised this matter today—is the declining share of capital expenditure in the Budget allocation. I feel that here I must be a bit critical of the Government. If the view of the Government is that a little money can always be chopped off the top of an allocation when we are working out our Budget, in the defence area I think it is a very wrong attitude. If, as is alleged, some $30m was chopped off this year’s estimate, then the 5-year program of buying becomes that much harder to run. Manpower is taking more and more. I am quite sure in my own mind that the Opposition would not be opposed to the soldiers and other servicemen getting a fair pay. But if an amount of money in the defence estimates is just taken off, this comes directly from the capital expenditure appropriation and with a 5-year rolling program it makes it very difficult indeed.

This year $92m is proposed for capital. It will be phased into the 5-year rolling program. If $30m were added every year for 5 years, at the end of that time we would have $755m. If we had the same amount deducted each year we would have quite an amount less. So if we are to have a realistic 5-year rolling program I think we need to look forward to adding a share each year. This is more realistic, and we should consider the lead time factor. Other nations are cutting back. I think they are doing it at their peril. For example, I believe that Canada now has armed forces of only 50,000 people. It is under the umbrella of the United States but it could reach a point of no return if it ever gets to the stage where all its resources are in manpower.

Just briefly I should like to mention some of the developments within my own electorate. A contract has now been let to Australian industry for the installation of a $2.5m simulator for the Navy’s new Sea King helicopters. It will be installed by mid-December 1975, with site acceptance in January 1976. This will be additional to the S2E Tracker simulator already at Nowra which will continue to operate there. The Sea King simulator represents a significant advance in training procedures, being more economical and allowing the achievement of greater precision in tactical training. It gives the instructor the ability to alter the situation and throw in new tasks to test aircrew efficiency in a way which would never be possible in operational training. Modern simulators realistically duplicate the flight characteristics of the aircraft, including its motion, and therefore represent a very realistic flight training aid which does not have the danger and costs associated with aircraft training. People could speculate and say that the helicopters are likely to outlast HMAS ‘Melbourne’ by a considerable time. Depending on the result of the hull survey, HMAS ‘Melbourne’ could be retired any time after 1980. I have very definite
ideas about naval air power. I point out that helicopters themselves will be in service into the 1990s and they should continue. Even though the naval air power study—I have not seen it—was not too optimistic about the future of conventional modern aircraft carriers in Australia there are many alternatives and these are being examined. I would hazard a guess that even the naval air power study has suggested that sea-borne platforms for logistic roles and for other roles involving helicopters are very much things that the Navy should continue to have and will continue to have.

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

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (4.26)—It is very difficult for any red blooded Australian, or for that matter any blue blooded Australian, to sit and listen to the people who sit opposite say that there is no possibility of any assault on or threat to this country. That is treacherous and is completely betraying the future of this nation. If the security of this country was not assured, then no other matter would be of consequence. We have earned the contempt of the world in 2 short years. Where we were respected we are now ridiculed. Where we were trusted we are now regarded with deep suspicion. Where our forces had earned the generous and declared admiration of the world we are now written off as having armed forces reduced to comic opera proportions.

Let me get on to more specific matters. Let me look at the present operational capacity of the Australian Army, which is the branch of the defence forces that I know best. The Regular Army is limited to 6 battalions, together with supporting arms and logistic elements for a force of that size. This means that we could put into the field a complete task force. That is just great, is it not? But, and it is the ‘but’ that matters, the problem is, of course, to sustain it and to meet other requirements which may arise subsequent to committing that task force. Probably the best way of considering what is the strength which could be sustained in an operational theatre and what the impact would be on the capability of the Army to deal with any other situation which might arise is to look at a possible emergency. Let us get right down to facts. Let us suppose that it were decided to commit a complete task force of 3 battalions in Papua New Guinea to assist in a confrontation situation in that country. Let us also suppose that the immediate requirement was to put 2 battalions into the field in the area of the border with West Irian, with a third battalion as the theatre reserve. With all the logistics elements as well—the supporting arms—this sort of exercise would require something of the order of 10,000 men. It is suggested that we have now committed the whole of the Australian Army.

There are 3 reasons for this: Firstly, we could not put a force into Papua New Guinea, or for that matter anywhere else, without holding in Australia a substantial reserve to meet unexpected contingencies within the operational area. Secondly, it would be unacceptable to send every fighting unit out of the country. Thirdly, the remainder of the Army—the communication zone and training units—would be fully involved on the mainland. The next consideration is whether we could sustain such a commitment. It is suggested that we could not. In fact, I say specifically that we could not. The initial unit which was sent might have to bear the brunt of very heavy fighting and ample provision would have to be made for its relief. The reserve battalion—I emphasise the words ‘the reserve battalion’—available in the war theatre is unlikely to be sufficient. You might note, Mr Deputy Chairman, that that is the greatest understatement you have ever heard while sitting in that chair; it is the understatement of the century. A fourth battalion may be required. It seems to me that the maximum force which ought to be committed in such a situation, in view of the present Army’s strength, is a task force of 2 battalions. This would mean that only one battalion would actually go on operations. That might sound a conglomorate, but honourable members should look at this in Hansard and see how serious the situation is.

The conclusion which emerges from this sort of analysis is that the reductions which have been made in the Army bring its overall fighting capability down by something more than 50 per cent—and, God help us, the Army was little enough before it was reduced to that size. It is emphasised that this approach is concerned only with the immediate commitment which can be made. It is clear that if such an emergency arose the Army immediately would set about raising additional units within a period of 6 months—God knows where we would be by then—and it should be able to put a 3-battalion task force into the field. I have here more information that I have written about the Citizen Military Forces as a reserve, but do not let me start on that subject.

Let me now do 2 things: Firstly, set out clearly how we on this side of the chamber regard the defence requirements of this nation and the measures which we say are necessary to give the
Australian people, God bless them, effective protection and assured security; and, secondly, at the same time expose the manner in which this present Government, hell bent on a snivelling subservience to every little tin-pot communist country, has emasculated the Army, ripped out its heart and wounded—as yet not mortally, but near enough to it—the proud morale of our defence forces. The first thing we would do is to look for the closest co-operation with New Zealand, co-ordination with its defence Services and, where possible, standardisation of equipment. Forgive me if I smile a little; we were not even able to co-operate with the New Zealand forces on a joint operation a few weeks ago because HMAS 'Melbourne' was held in port when a handful of men went on strike. The attitude was: 'There is no war. We are on strike; leave it until next week'. So much for that. We would have the closest liaison in defence preparedness with Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea and the exchange of personnel for defence training. South East Asia does not trust us. Indonesia in particular has a profound distrust of Mainland China and knows that the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), the Deputy Prime Minister (Dr J. F. Cairns) and this Government are utterly subservient to Peking.

But what really concerns me and creates an area of potential threat to Australia is the announcement by this Government that all of our defence forces will be withdrawn from Papua New Guinea after independence. The sad fact is that obviously there has been a deterioration at least of this aspect of our relationship with Papua New Guinea. Let me say quite specifically—this is absolutely verified by my experience when I was Minister for the Army—that there was a splendid understanding between Chief Minister Somare and our Department of Defence. In fact, Michael Somare stated—I am sure he will confirm this—that he would desire a continuation of our relationship in regard to 2 matters, namely, foreign affairs and defence. Apparently this attitude has been completely upset. The third thing we would aim at is the strengthening of our ties with the United Kingdom and the United States of America and the utmost cooperation with these countries which are our traditional allies in military training and defence procurement. Is anybody going to tell me that the United States any longer trusts a government whose ultimate objectives are the complete regimentation of every soul in this nation and bureaucratic control with a death grip on the throat of every individual in this nation—things to which the United States is diametrically opposed? Of course it does not.

Our fourth objective is to promote the active functioning of regional defence arrangements to maintain the security of South East Asia, South West Pacific and the Indian Ocean areas. There is so much that I would like to say on these matters but I would like quickly to list the remaining objectives. The seventh objective is the maintenance of a highly trained and efficiently equipped citizen forces. The Minister for Defence told us some time ago that the CMF had never been in better condition. Let me just give him one example of the condition in which the CMF now finds itself. An annual camp held at Sellheim in northern Queensland is attended specifically by members of the CMF. When I was the Minister for the Army the average attendance at the camp was 1,000 or 1,200 personnel. This year the attendance was very much less than 500 personnel who were mainly drawn from sub-units and had to be grabbed from here, there and everywhere else.

The tenth objective is the continuing procurement of technically advanced equipment for the armed forces and the maximum possible manufacture in Australia of defence equipment either in part or as a whole. The eleventh objective is co-ordination with the private sector of the economy to build up industrial capability for defence procurement. The twelfth objective is the co-ordination with Australia's allies in the development, testing and research of modern defence equipment and weapons systems for the use of—

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

Mr GARLAND (Curtin)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN—Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr GARLAND—Yes. The honourable member for Macarthur (Mr Kerin) said that I spent most of my time when speaking to the Estimates of the Postmaster-General's Department reading a government publication which I did not name. It is not to be implied that the document from which I read was not an official government publication. It is the Philatelic Bulletin of the Australian Post Office of September 1974. I read from this document because I assumed that the honourable member would regard that as more authoritative than if I had precised it.
Mr HURFORD (Adelaide) (4.38)—In rising to support the Defence vote I want to draw attention to the nonsense that we have just heard from the honourable member for Kennedy (Mr Kat ter). The rubbing of our armed Services by the honourable member does neither him nor the Opposition Parties who chose to place him on the front bench any credit whatsoever. The whole basis on which his remarks were made was wrong. His remarks were full of a lot of emotional claptrap which should not be expressed in this Parliament. On the other hand I want to congratulate the Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard) who is carrying out an extremely difficult task very well indeed. It is a most difficult task because the whole thrust of the Australian Labor Government is for peace, not war. I must say that their difficulty is shared by all those who work in the very honourable area of defence—those members of the armed Services generally and civil servants—because, frankly, it is much easier to build up morale in a time of threat or war than it is in a time of peace and when we have friends. Thank goodness we have friends who share those thoughts. Thank goodness we are living in a time of peace and we ought to congratulate ourselves that we have an Australian Labor Government which concentrates on just that.

One of the most important concepts of a defence policy is the recognition that the situation as we know it at present could change. As is well known, the best strategic analysis sees no real threat to Australia at the present time. It sees security for many years. I need only quote from the 1974 Defence Report to show this. This report is not something that has been dreamed up by Labor politicians such as myself. The report has been written not by politicians but by senior public servants in this country, heads of the armed Services, heads of the Joint Intelligence Organisation, the head of the Prime Minister's Department and the head of the Defence Department. These are the words which they used in their 1974 report in contradistinction to the nonsense that has come from the Opposition benches:

No regional power has or is likely to acquire for many years the capability and motive that might require a substantial Australian defence response.

I almost feel like quoting that part of the report again so that these words can sink into the minds of members on the Opposition benches, but time will not permit me to do so.

The basic need is to maintain a capability in military skills and in basic equipment from which the nation can respond to meet a change in the situation as we know it now. The nature of any change is most difficult to predict. However, if we bear in mind that the primary object of having armed forces is to defend the Australian mainland, it is clear that a defence policy must aim towards providing the essential sea and air power to enable sufficient forces to be available to ensure adequate control of the seas close in to Australia, to be able to patrol well out into the ocean areas and to strike if necessary. It is essential that a force be kept in being with sufficient equipment as a basis from which balanced expansion can be effected. These are the principles which we are looking to.

It has been recognised for a number of years that the destroyer element in the Navy is inadequate. The important decision has already been taken to purchase 2 patrol frigates from the United States of America. It should be understood that this purchase will in fact replace ships due to be phased out of service by the end of this decade. As was pointed out earlier, the patrol frigates are due for delivery in 1981. Another important decision is to purchase 8 long range maritime patrol aircraft. Again, however, this is a purchase which replaces existing Neptune aircraft which are due to be phased out. A decision to replace the Centurion tanks with 53 United States M60 tanks or German Leopard tanks has already been made.

No one will deny that there has been a gradual fall in the percentage of the defence vote spent on equipment. Indeed it has fallen from approximately 25 per cent in the mid-1960s to approximately 7 per cent today. To a great extent this has of course largely been caused by the need to spend more of the vote on pay and improved conditions of servicemen. The defence vote itself has been increased from $1,334m last financial year to $1,409m in this Budget. There is no doubt that the manpower position in the armed Services has been brought to a much more realistic level when we consider the very high cost of new equipment. The plain fact is that in peacetime in a low threat situation the important thing is to keep manpower to minimum levels commensurate with the basic function of the defence vote, that is, the maintenance of skills and the ability to man the warships and aircraft available to which I referred earlier.

Defence expenditure as a percentage of the gross national product in a number of countries which are acutely aware of their responsibility to ensure national security but which at the same time, like ourselves, really have no aggressive intentions—and perhaps I should first of all point out that Australia's percentage is approximately 2.4 per cent—are as follows: Canada 1.8 per cent;
West Germany 2.9 per cent; Italy 2.9 per cent; Sweden 3.1 per cent; and Switzerland 1.7 per cent. It is not really fair to make comparisons of this type because Australia's defence situation is very different from that of any other nation. A European country such as Sweden for instance, has for many years maintained a capability for rapid mobilisation of very large armed forces. If we make a comparison with a country such as this it is apparent that Australia spends a most substantial percentage of gross national product on her defence.

A feature of Australia's defence situation which will continue to influence planning is her strong position in comparison with other nations in the South East Asian and Asian areas. Japan is clearly much more powerful in a military sense if she wanted to mobilise, and so is China. However, neither of these countries has either the capacity or the desire to attack Australia. Other nations in the area have not the industrial capacity or the industrial strength to sustain operations on the scale required to threaten Australia's security. These are facts, not emotions as put forward by the Opposition.

In addition, Australia has achieved a close relationship with her neighbours. It is realised by the Australian Government and the South East Asian nations generally that there is an overall gain to be achieved by mutual co-operation. Australia has accepted a heavy long term commitment to aid the less developed nations. This is directed towards economic aid to assist in development as well as direct assistance. There is no need to remind the Parliament that the total of $341m included in the Estimates is $81m more than the amount for last year. It is proper to bring that matter to the attention of honourable members at this time when we are talking about having friends rather than enemies. With Australia's industrial development so far ahead of that of the poorer nations in this region, there is everything to gain from the fostering of the friendships that are now being developed by the Australian Labor Government.

In any consideration of defence one thinks of the fundamental principle that long term planning based upon a concept of the general security of the Australian mainland is the only basis which is sound. This means the maintenance of the very efficient small armed forces which we possess. It also means a regular and critical review of equipment planning so that we actually possess those capital items which we need so badly.

I would like to say something about equipment in the few moments left to me, but I notice that my time is about to expire. But I would like to draw attention to the fact that the Australian Government, through the Minister for Defence, whom I have already congratulated, is concentrating in providing all 3 of the armed services across the board with basic items and bringing their equipment up to date. He is not going in for glamour items like the F111 and therefore has none of the problems obtained by concentrating efforts in that sort of area. I repeat my earlier message of congratulations to the Minister. Of course our whole emphasis must be on peace, not war.

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

Mr FAIRBAIRN (Farrer) (4.47)—We have just heard from the honourable member for Adelaide (Mr Hurford) a pitiful series of excuses for the defence failures of the Australian Labor Party. It really was painful to listen to some of the excuses. We were told that it is quite all right if we spend only 2.4 per cent of gross national product on defence. The honourable member said nothing about the fact that the Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard) and the present Government, when in opposition, promised that the Labor Party would spend not less than 3.5 per cent of gross national product on defence. We have seen defence expenditure drop more and more until now it is only 2.4 per cent of gross national product. As another excuse the honourable member compared our defence expenditure with that of European nations which have a long history of keeping out of any war. There is no reason to compare Australia with these nations.

The honourable member also mentioned that only 7 per cent of the defence vote is being spent on new equipment, yet he congratulated the Minister on the way in which he was modernising equipment across the board and not going in for glamour items like F111s. This so-called glamour item is about the one major item of equipment in Australia today which is first class by any world standard and on which Australia's defence can rely, provided the communists agree to let us have the necessary petrol. Recently they have decided not to do this, so on occasions the F111s just sit on the tarmac waiting to get petrol so that they can fly. There is no doubt whatsoever that what Australia needs is more equipment and less manpower. If there is a certain amount to be spent on defence in Australia it can be spent best by outlaying the highest possible percentage on new equipment and on
improvement of bases. This is what we have always aimed at. It is true that when I took over ministerial responsibility for the Department of Defence we were not spending what was regarded by many of us an adequate percentage on new equipment. In fact the 5 year rolling program which the previous Government produced aimed at increasing this amount each year until the percentage again reached the high twenties. It is shocking that only 7 per cent of total defence expenditure is being spent on new equipment. It is quite scandalous. Of course, one can see everywhere one looks a complete run down in the equipment that is being provided for the 3 Services just because there has been virtually no new decision.

Before I go on let me also mention the other point that was made by the honourable member for Adelaide and also by the honourable members for Phillip (Mr Riordan) and Macarthur (Mr Kerin). They said that the advice available to the Government was that there was no threat to the Australian mainland in the next 10 or 15 years. They said that on the basis of this there is no need to spend so much money on defence. They said: 'Let us spend it on welfare and cut down defence expenditure'. I just do not believe that the views of either Service officials or civilian officials who give advice to the Government have changed to the extent that it is believed they have changed. For one thing, members of the Opposition have been unable to look at the so-called strategic basis, although we have asked the Minister time and again whether we can see it. It is very nice to have some document from which you can quote the bits you want to quote and do not quote the bits you do not want to quote. All I can say is that in the time of the former Government the advice given was of a different nature. Let me read from one of the defence reports which I presented and which at the time was believed on the best advice available to be sound advice. It states:

Uncertainty about future developments in a fluid situation requires that we keep under close review the dimensions and the character of our defence capabilities as a whole. There is no single or clear contingency which affords a basis for Australia's force development policy in the coming years. Discernible trends and new or abiding uncertainties suggest the importance of keeping the determinants of our force structure flexible. There is a need for close attention to the proper balance between expenditure directed to short term defence capability and other expenditures which will enhance defence potential in the longer term, and provide a basis for a military potential which can be realised in adequate time should circumstances require. Major weapons systems take many years to procure and bring into operation.

This is particularly so about the DDL destroyers. We knew at the time the previous Government took the decision to build the DDLs—a decision later revoked by the present Government—the first of them would not come into operation until the early 1980s. This was the latest time we could possibly afford to have the DDLs available because some of our destroyers were going out of service. There is a long lead time attached to every item of equipment, particularly major items of equipment. It went on to say:

Changes in our strategic environment affect our options for defence strategies, but they do not alter the need for adequate defence and national military capabilities. While no immediate threat to the security of Australia is foreseen, our evident ability to support our allies, or to prepare ourselves to cope with contingencies which might emerge at a later date, must not be prejudiced if our longer term credibility—to friends and potential enemies alike—is to be maintained. There is moreover a continuing need to develop the skills of our Services, to keep abreast of the technology of weapons systems, and to provide for orderly development and efficient management of the Services.

I do not believe that at any time have advisers to any government said: 'There is no threat to Australia for the next 10 or 15 years. Go your hardest and spend all the money you want on welfare and forget about the Services.' This has never been said. A short sentence has been lifted out of context. I am sure that the Minister would agree that we cannot say that there is no threat to Australia. It is not only a threat to Australia but a threat to our whole area that should concern us. Look how closely the Indonesian mainland came to being taken over by the communists. In the coup that took place in Indonesia some generals were shot and some generals were missed. If all the generals that the communists wanted shot had been shot we could well have had a communist Indonesia instead of the Indonesia we have today, which is extremely friendly towards us. The same sort of thing is happening in Vietnam, where our friends—I say 'our friends'; I do not say 'the Government's friends'—are being attacked. Something like a quarter of a million North Vietnamese armed soldiers are on the fields in South Vietnam. The North Vietnamese are attacking the Cambodians.

I am saying that the whole of this South East Asian area is one of the most unstable areas in the world and we have got to have adequate defence capabilities; we are just not getting those adequate defence capabilities at the present moment. In a speech I made in the House on defence only a few months ago I pointed out the way in which our whole defence forces were running down. Our Army had lost some 12,000 men. It was 11,210 fewer than when the Liberal Country Party Government went out of office; the Navy had 906 fewer men; the Air Force had 1,218 fewer men. In actual fact, shortly after I
made that speech the Minister put out a statement in which he corrected my figures and showed that I had actually overstated the number of people we had in the Services and in fact it was over 400 fewer than I had said, so the position is even worse. And what is being done? Absolutely nothing in the field of new equipment. The only action, taken with a rush by the Minister just before the election, was the purchase—after the cancellation of the DDLs and the breaking of a promise by the Minister that whatever was going to replace our destroyers would be made in Australia—of 2 patrol frigates and, as everyone knows, they are ships which were designed for a specific purpose in a large navy, the United States Navy, and were not designed to suit Australian conditions at all. The Australian Navy looked at the patrol frigate and said that it was quite unsuited and therefore it designed the DDL. The DDL was accepted by the Liberal-Country Party Government because it would have a much greater capability than the patrol frigate. But no, the Minister cancelled that, and the Navy is now to get a secondhand ship. The Government has also cancelled the fast combat support ship and it has slowed down on the Cockburn Sound development. It is doing everything it possibly can to try to keep the United States from building up a base in the Indian Ocean.

So one can go on. There has been no decision whatsoever. When the Liberal-Country Party Government was in office it was close to making a decision on the new tank to replace the present one, which is far too old. We had narrowed the choice down to the German Leopard and the American M60. Still no decision has been made on that. No decision has been made on the replacement for the Neptunes. No decision has been made about what is going to replace the Mirage. If nothing is going to replace it, then why does the Government not update it? This can easily be done by putting in better radar, a better air to air missile system and a better engine.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Jenkins)—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

Mr CROSS (Brisbane) (4.58)—I should like in the very short time available for the Estimates debate to refer to some of the matters mentioned by the honourable member for Farrer (Mr Fairbairn). If I could take the Committee back to some of the comments he made in his closing remarks, he said that the Government on the eve of an election announced an equipment program. One should say that that is not quite right. It is a fact that the announcement was made on the eve of an election, but at the time that equipment program was announced the Government did not realise that it was the eve of an election; it was before the so-called Gair affair. The Minister had announced his intention of bringing down that equipment program some month or 6 weeks before. Everyone knew the House was expecting an equipment program that session.

The honourable member for Farrer has made a number of points about the fact that the Government revoked the DDL decision. It is true that an intention to build the DDL was announced by his Government over a long period of time—I think it might have been five or six or more years—and there were various proposals coming down. Several documents that I can recall were tabled in this House. Of course, honourable members know that the term ‘DDL’ conveys the meaning of a light destroyer, but as time went by this destroyer became a more and more expensive item, and I put it to the honourable member for Farrer that his Government did not make this decision before it went out of office because it could not agree to spend this amount of money. When the present Labor Government came into office it accepted the intention of building a light destroyer, and it found that the Williamstown Dockyard, which would be the logical place for such a construction program to take place, needed reconstruction and rebuilding. It is this Government which has provided the money to modernise and develop the facilities at Williamstown Dockyard to the extent where such a destroyer could be built there at some time in the future. Under the previous Government the capacity of the dockyard was very much run down.

We have heard about the replacement for the tanks. This is a point that the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes) made earlier when he read out a list of hardware that had been around from the Second World War or for 23 years or the like. I put it to any fair minded member of the Committee—and most members of this Committee are fair minded—that it is a bit rough to blame a government that has been in office for a little over 18 months because it has not replaced all the equipment which has been in the armed forces for the previous 23 years or a quarter of a century. There were substantial backlogs in the equipment program. Quite frankly, I would like to have seen more money spent on equipment in the recent Budget. In the current rather difficult financial situation, with a Labor Government keen to develop its social welfare programs, I would have hoped that the Cabinet would be a little more sympathetic to the
claims of the defence forces in this year and in the years ahead, because we all accept that there is a need for a long lead time in these matters. But I do not accept that there has been any neglect, because it does take a considerable period to assess a program properly and to get it under way.

A similar position applies to the replacement for the Neptunes. I have been landing at Townsville airport for quite a long period—not as often as I would have liked in recent times, but life has been rather lively. The Neptunes have been obsolescent, or nearing obsolescence, for a substantial period, and the decision on their replacement as honourable members will know from having read the defence report which is before them at the present time, is about to be made.

Mr Fairbairn—It was about to be made 2 years ago.

Mr CROSS—Sure, and I put it to the honourable member that it was about to be made 5 years ago. I am not sure whether it was the honourable member for Farrer, but I do remember that in a defence debate very much back in history one of the Ministers for Defence said that one of the top items in the then Government’s program at that time was a replacement for the Neptunes at Townsville. I am sure that was four or five years ago. In any event, a decision is about to be made and it will be made against the background not only of acquiring the best possible aircraft in terms of the Australian need but also in terms of its flow-on effects to Australian industry.

I want to take issue with the honourable member for Kennedy (Mr Katter) on some of the things that he said. It is one thing to come in here and blame this Government or its Minister for the way in which the defence forces have been treated, but I always consider that it is very poor to say things which have the effect of reducing the morale of the defence forces. This Government is dedicated to getting its defence forces by the voluntary system of recruitment. It does not resort to the methods used by the former Government in introducing conscription. But when the honourable member for Kennedy said that the armed forces were reduced to comic opera proportions—and went on to give some other examples of this kind—I think he skated just along the edge of the line of being a bit unfair to our very efficient and well trained armed forces. If there are faults in our armed forces then I put it to the honourable member that he should blame this Government. We are in the business of being blamed or shelling out blame, if it is the other side of the coin, and I think it does us ill to belittle the armed forces themselves.

The honourable member for Kennedy referred to a number of situations. He spoke about action in New Guinea near the West Irian border and the need for possibly 10,000 men. Well, I find it passing strange. In the document which the Minister for Defence has but recently circulated to us, dated a week ago, is the longest statement that I recall in any defence document on Australia’s projected defence relations with New Guinea for the year ahead. The document sets out a continuation of that close consultation and co-operation with Papua New Guinea and the major developments that have taken place recently in that country, which is setting up a defence administration in its own right. It also sets out Australia’s continued role in co-operation with the Papua New Guinea defence forces in the years ahead. I fail to see how anyone could take exception to the terms in which the Minister for Defence has spelt out the position on this matter. When a country has self-government and is approaching independence it is very difficult to spell out in precise terms some of the things that can be negotiated only at the time of independence. But I deny that there would be any reluctance on the part of a Labor Party government in this country to accept responsibility for the defence forces in Papua New Guinea because, frankly, given the fact that Australia has continuing responsibilities for assisting Papua New Guinea, we would not—I put it to honourable members opposite that they would not either—want to see a newly emergent Papua New Guinea devoting an over-large amount of its money to defence preparedness when there are so many more urgent things for it to do.

I would like to deal with some of the other matters raised by the honourable member for Kennedy. He said that South East Asia, in particular Indonesia, does not trust us. He contested the idea that there is no immediate threat to this country. I take issue with the several honourable members opposite who have made this point in this debate this afternoon. I recall when the right honourable member for Higgins (Mr Gorton)—not very far back—said that his advice at that time was that there was no projected defence threat for 10 years. I know that there was some disagreement with him on his side of the chamber when he made known that view. But it is not a new story. It is not just the message which has been coming through from the Department of Defence since the present Government was elected.
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Of course, no one ought to be complacent about that sort of story because all of us who have read the lessons of history know that things can change in a fairly short space of time. But, commensurate with the present defence assessment in our part of the world, we have a highly effective defence force. I think that we are all very proud of the capacity of our defence force. I was particularly proud of the work carried out by the armed forces—the Army and the Air Force in particular—during the floods which occurred in south Queensland in earlier parts of this year. The armed forces did not use all of their capacity. They had the capacity to help to an even greater extent than they did, but it was obvious that the training and equipment that they had was such that they were well capable of playing a part in a natural disaster of that proportion.

I am pleased with the improvements that are taking place at Amberley and Canungra at the present time. I hope that the Minister will continue with his intention to build better accommodation for the staff at Victoria Barracks. I congratulate the Minister on what he has done in the present situation. Again I express the hope that next year the Cabinet will be somewhat more sympathetic to the capital program, because I do believe that there is no room for complacency in this area.

Mr DRURY (Ryan) (5.8)—It is clear, as the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes) and other honourable members on this side of the chamber have said, that unfortunately defence has a relatively low priority under the present Government and that the proposed expenditure falls short of what in fact was promised before the Australian Labor Party came to power in terms of the gross national product. In its 1974 report the Department of Defence warned that Australia must maintain an adequate defence force because of the continuing possibility of what it described as low level situations developing. The Department said that this possibility applied in particular to Australian maritime resources.

We need to get our priorities right. To us on this side of the chamber there are many disturbing factors in the present situation. Many of them have been covered already this afternoon. I am concerned, as are others, about the low morale of Navy, Army and Air Force personnel and the high rate of officer resignations. We have a large continent and a long coastline to maintain; yet our forces have been dwindling in number and have been becoming relatively immobile. Exercises have been strictly curtailed. I suggest that we need a highly mobile, hard hitting and well integrated defence force which is capable of coping with any emergency.

Our naval patrol boat force is expected to fall to the small number of 13 within the next month or so with the handing over to Papua New Guinea of 5 Attack class boats from the Navy's fleet. Two such boats have been given to Indonesia already and I understand that two more are to be handed over to that country soon. Let me say at once that I fully support the concept of regional co-operation, but I am gravely concerned that our patrol boat strength is falling so low. It is true that a tentative order has been placed for 2 United States built patrol frigates, but that order is liable to cancellation under certain circumstances: Firstly, if the United States Navy buys fewer than 12 of those ships; secondly, if there is a significant change in the cost; and, thirdly, if trials indicate that the first ship fails specific performance tests.

I understand that delivery of those 2 patrol frigates is not expected to take place until 1981—7 years from now. That is a long time. A great deal can happen in that period. None of us can foresee what will happen. I must say frankly that I am not at all convinced by the strategic assessment that there is no foreseeable threat for 10 to 15 years. The honourable member for Barker recently has drawn attention to the fact that the Soviet navy continues to be active in the Indian Ocean and that recent reports from New Zealand suggest that the Soviet Union obviously has a strong intelligence interest in the Australian region.

A very senior Army officer, Brigadier Hooton, who last year resigned as the head of Army intelligence in protest against cuts in defence expenditure, has pointed out that Japan, China and India, as well as the Soviet Union, have the nuclear capacity to threaten Australia. He has expressed the view that in the long term Australia's security is less assured now than at almost any other time since Federation. Brigadier Hooton has expressed concern that at the highest levels professional servicemen have been isolated from the Government and that advice on defence is now the province of public servants. He claims that this change has led to wrong advice being given and that Australia could develop policies based on a low threat estimate for a long period and insufficient recognition of the time needed to prepare forces in a national emergency.

In March of this year an excellent report was produced by a committee of inquiry chaired by
Dr T. B. Millar on the subject of the Citizen Military Forces. We on this side of the chamber are looking forward very much to hearing from the Government just what is going to be done by way of implementation of what we consider to be the many very desirable recommendations contained in that report. In conclusion I say that we are firmly of the belief that it is a paramount duty of the Government to ensure that Australia is provided with adequate defences at all times. Second best, or hoping for the best, is just not good enough where the safety and security of our country are concerned.

Mr JAMES (Hunter) (5.13)—I am happy to be able to make a contribution to this debate on the estimates for the Department of Defence. As my mind goes back over a considerable period of years I am utterly disgusted by the unjustified criticism by the Opposition of the Government's defence policies. The Opposition has made feeble attempts to denigrate the Australian Government in connection with its defence policies and its provision for expenditure, which we are now debating, in the Budget. It is worth repeating that on 'Monday Conference' last Monday night a spokesman for the Liberal-Country Party Opposition, the honourable member for Flinders (Mr Lynch), said that the Government should make an 8 per cent slash across the board in Government expenditure, but when he was pinned down as to the departments in which he would slash government expenditure he evaded the question. Obviously he meant, but was not prepared to say, that he would slash defence expenditure. But, on the other hand, we find that the shadow Minister for Defence, the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes), purporting to be critical of the Government for not spending sufficient on defence. A direct conflict exists between 2 responsible Opposition shadow Ministers.

Further, I read criticism of the Australian Government for allowing Australian defence requirements to run down. This is utterly untrue. It is worth reminding the Parliament and the people of Australia that it was the Australian Labor Party to which the Australian nation looked in World War I and World War II to steer it through those critical periods of our history. The Australian people would not trust the tories. But honourable members opposite still follow the same policies. The Australian Labor Party when it came to office during World War II found Australia virtually defenceless. Our Wirraway aircraft were being shot down in New Guinea by Japanese Zeros. We had urgently pressed for more modern equipment from Britain and the United States of America. Britain was unable to fulfil that requirement.

The Whitlam Administration has rebuilt the bridges of friendship in South East Asia which were originally established by a former member for Hunter, Dr Evatt. Australia is more respected in the eyes of those people today than for many years. This is the result of the policies of this Government and of the Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard), for whom I have the utmost respect. The honourable member for Farrer (Mr Fairbairn) to my disgust—and I hope to his shame—revived the sordidness of the Vietnam War as a result of which 500 Australian boys lost their lives and some 400 Australian lads are now receiving treatment for lost limbs. I intend to place on the Notice Paper a question asking the responsible Minister how much is being paid by Australian taxpayers today in the form of widows' and military pensions in respect of the wounded of Vietnam which was not worth the blood and bones of one Australian boy. To the utter disgust of the world, America and Australia involved themselves in Vietnam. Why is it that today the United Nations will not accept our offer to send 125 troops to Cyprus as part of the United Nations peace keeping force in that country?

Mr Lucock—Because we have not any left to send.

Mr JAMES—They are available. But our name is still tainted by our involvement in Vietnam. We hope that our troops would be warmly received. But the United Nations think, in my view, that it is too soon after Vietnam for Australian troops to go to Cyprus.

Mr McKenzie—We have more in the forces now than we used to have.

Mr JAMES—Yes. We have more troops now. We have a waiting list of people wishing to join the armed forces. There are boys in my electorate who are unable to get into the armed forces because of the waiting list. This situation results from the policies of the Australian Government and the Minister at the table. But, under the former Liberal Government men could not be encouraged to join the armed forces because the armed forces were not attractive enough—and well honourable members opposite know that fact. The former Government took notice of some of the defence chiefs and said that it would need to use conscription. It used conscription. As I have pointed out in this Parliament before, when boys were conscripted to serve in Vietnam there were 17 members of the then Government
who were physically capable of meeting the entry standards required to join the forces in Vietnam. And not one of them—

Mr Lusher—The sound level is too high. We cannot understand the honourable member.

Mr JAMES—Look at this pretty boy from Hume who is asking me to remain silent. Why were you not in Vietnam as a supporter of the tories, the Liberals, who were prepared to conscript other boys at 19 and 20 years of age to go to Vietnam. You were not prepared to go yourself. Every time I think of that, I am reminded that your defence policies are so immoral and so filthy that they stink like a Turkish wrestler’s jockstrap. You cannot properly defend your situation. The former Government sent a former Minister for Defence, Mr Athol Townley, who served under Sir Robert Menzies, to America to buy aircraft because it feared that criticism would be levelled at it in the forthcoming election in 1963 on the ground that the defence chiefs had told the Government that the outmoded Canberra bomber was of no further use in modern warfare. He was sent to America with an open cheque. Like a housewife with expensive tastes he said: "Yes. A dozen of these, a dozen of these, and 2 dozen of those", and he ordered 2 dozen F111 bombers. I would like to think that you would leave your own wife if she went shopping like that.

Mr Lusher—A point of order.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Drury)—Order! Is the honourable member for Hume raising a point of order?

Mr Lusher—Yes. I am interested to hear what the honourable member is saying. But the noise level of the sound amplification of his speech in the chamber is so high that he literally cannot be understood in this part of the chamber. Could we have the amplification system toned down a little?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN—Perhaps the technicians can do something. It is not a matter for the Chair.

Mr JAMES—Why don’t you go outside?

Mr Lusher—We want to hear what you are saying.

Mr JAMES—You know that this debate is being broadcast. You are afraid that some Australians—

Mr Calder—No Australians would be listening to this.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member for Hunter has the call.

Mr JAMES—You are afraid that some Australians might be influenced by the factual details that I am giving in connection with the tories’ defence policies.

At 4.27 p.m. today, the honourable member for Kennedy (Mr Katter), the Opposition’s spokesman on the Army had the temerity to say that we had fallen out with our South East Asian neighbours. We have more respect in the eyes of South East Asian people as a result of our policies than Australia has had for many years. I point out that 42,000 Australian boys failed to register to serve in the Vietnam war. Those 42,000 boys thought that the then Government’s policies were so immoral that they failed to register. I admired them. I influenced them not to register because I felt so strongly about those defence policies on Vietnam at that time.

I wish to direct the remainder of my remarks to the unfortunate conflict in Cyprus in respect of which the Australian Government, I believe, is following the true path. I am inspired to speak on Cyprus following the worthy remarks of the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) in this chamber this morning. The existence of Cyprus as a sovereign, independent and territorially united state is in grave danger. The events witnessed by the island in recent months have increased the danger with every passing day. We see the influence of international imperialism within the orbit of NATO which finds great difficulties within itself in recognising the independent non-aligned policy pursued by the former President of the democratically elected government, Archbishop Makarios, who in my opinion should be reinstated in his position in Cyprus to lead that country along the path of non-alignment and non-aggression and to follow his peace-loving policies, instead of allowing Cyprus to fall into the hands of warmongering forces within the ranks of NATO so that it can be made a military base and further jeopardise the peace of the world.

Mr SULLIVAN (Riverina) (5.24)—The honourable member for Hunter (Mr James) quite amazed me. It appears that his right to speak in this debate is based on no other qualification—and I guess that this is all that is necessary—than being a member of this Committee. I enter the debate because I have served in the Army for 26 years. I served in the war of which the honourable member spoke. I do not intend to shout. But I do believe that I have a contribution to make to the debate. My contribution will be concerned with making a number of observations on that part of defence, the Army,
which I believe are pertinent when considering these Defence estimates.

I am afraid that the Minister for Defence (Mr Barnard) either knowingly or unknowingly misled the House. Only yesterday, when replying to a question by the honourable member for Macarthur (Mr Kerin), he said:

It would not be possible to maintain a 3 task force Army, as we already have determined we will maintain.

This statement, if taken on face value, would lead one to believe that Australia has right now 3 task forces—3 separately formed groups of men at full strength, trained, equipped and with the necessary logistic support to move and defend this country. The statement was, at best, misleading and, at worst, was nothing more than a falsehood. The truth is—surely when we speak about the defence of this country we deserve to hear the truth—that the task forces referred to have only 2 battalions each of which are at reduced strength. Each battalion is at no more than approximately 75 per cent of its strength. One rifle company from each battalion is not formed and the support company which provides the vital support for the battalion commander, if he is to do his job, is currently under-strength in each battalion. The fact is that the Australian Army at its best could provide only one battalion for sustained operations. This is a frightening fact when one compares that figure with those of the Army of our closest neighbour, Indonesia, which right now has 45 infantry battalions, 24 armoured battalions and 6 airborne battalions or a total of 75 battalions.

The Australian Army currently is organised for tropical warfare. It is an organisation based largely on jungle warfare as experienced in South-East Asia. The mobility for the Army comes from outside agencies. Consequently today, with the new role of defending mainland Australia, we have an organisation which is just not suitable for the job. For example, a task force headquarters of more than 100 men currently has 3 Land Rovers and, slowly but surely, these are falling apart. The mobility of our infantry battalions is even worse and more than 90 per cent of the men must walk. To speak of outside support of troop carrying vehicles, armoured personnel carriers and helicopters is to dodge the real problem. In the vast spaces of Australia an Army based on an infantry organisation to be effective must have an integral mobility.

The honourable members for Phillip (Mr Riordan), Adelaide (Mr Hurford), Hunter and Brisbane (Mr Cross) all pursued the argument that we have a highly effective defence force. This just is not true. Those honourable members do not understand the business of defence but, with all due respect, they should, because, when operating, the Services are no more than a well trained team, no different in essence from a cricket team, football team, Olympic track team or a debating team. Would those honourable members send a football team to the United Kingdom with only 11 players, those players not having had the opportunity of playing together before? Unfortunately, if their rationale in the defence arena were applied, they would.

Mr James—You did it with conscripts for Vietnam. You sent them there without any training.

Mr SULLIVAN—The honourable member for Hunter keeps going back to the Vietnam situation. He would not know anything about Vietnam. His intelligence would not permit him to understand it. Would those honourable members I mentioned select only 8 players to represent Australia against England in the coming cricket tests? Again, on their defence rationale, they would. The facts are unpalatable to the Government theorists. It takes time to develop a Service team, and the expertise, skills and experience gained cannot be stored away. In the last 2 years the tremendous expertise developed through experience in Vietnam has been decimated. It takes years to accumulate, develop and pass on such expertise but it takes only weeks or months to destroy it. It is a question of whether Australia is worth defending. If it is, and the people I represent and speak for say it is, we should take steps to defend it. We certainly need more than one infantry battalion to carry out the role of defending Australia.

No matter where one looks in reports submitted by the Minister for Defence one finds that he argues against the obvious and against what is, in fact, true. He says that it simply is not true that our defence forces are being allowed to run down to unrealistic levels. I submit that they are. The fact is that our forces have been allowed to run down. The Minister said:

It can be said that they are being maintained at a higher level than at any time in our peacetime history.

That is a terrible platitude. It is an untruth. We must look realistically at the problem of defence. It is suggested that it is not true to say that defence expenditure is being cut, but the Minister said:

What we are doing is taking care that every dollar is well spent.

Why has this Government not applied that rationale to other areas of spending this year? Why must it be in the area of defence that the
Government is taking care that every dollar is well spent? So the story continues. The Minister said:

It is not true that we are ignoring threats or ignoring the lessons of history.

Unfortunately the lessons of history and threats are with us today as they were with us before the Second World War and before the First World War. Nothing has changed. If we are to continue on the reckless path on which we have embarked with respect to the defence of this country we will all see a very sad day in the future.

Mr BARNARD (Bass—Minister for Defence) (5.32)—Mr Chairman, it—

Mr Staley—Mr Chairman—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Drury)—Order! I called the Minister for Defence.

Mr Staley—Is he closing the debate?

Mr BARNARD—Yes, I am.

Mr Staley—I am on the list of speakers and there are other honourable members from this side who wish to speak.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN—I did not see the honourable member rise, but the Minister did rise. In the Committee a Minister does not necessarily close the debate unless he so chooses.

Mr Staley—The Opposition was told that at least 2 hours would be allowed for debating the estimates of the Department of Defence. That time will expire at approximately 6 o'clock.

Mr BARNARD—The Deputy Chairman gave me the call. I understood this debate was to last for 2 hours. In those circumstances I expected to be the last speaker. In any case the honourable member for Chisholm is at the bottom of the list of speakers. I indicated that I would be prepared to reply to this debate at 5.35 p.m. and it is almost that time now. I have listened with a great deal of interest to those honourable members from both sides who have spoken in this debate. Perhaps I should comment first on the speech of the honourable member for Riverina (Mr Sullivan).

Mr Calder—Colonel Sullivan.

Mr BARNARD—Yes, the honourable and gallant colonel. I would not take from him his record of service in the Army over a long period but I remind the honourable member that there are other honourable members in this Parliament who have also had Service experience. As the honourable member spoke about the size and shape of the Army I think the record should be put right. During the period when the Opposition was in government—a coalition of the Liberal Party and the Party to which the honourable member now belongs—in 1965 it suggested there should be conscription. That Government called up for service every young man in Australia. It instituted a ballot system. Every young man who qualified and who was selected according to his birth date was obliged to serve for a period in the armed forces. Is the honourable member suggesting that we should return to those conditions? Not one member of the Opposition, from the Liberal Party or the Country Party, was prepared to admit that there would be a return to conscription. Indeed during the last election campaign in May of this year both the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snadden) and the Leader of the Australian Country Party (Mr Anthony) stated unequivocally that they would not return to conscription. Let us have a look at the situation. I shall deal firstly with 1964, a period during which the honourable member for Riverina (Mr Sullivan) was still serving in the armed forces of this country and very shortly before we became committed to the Vietnam war. In that year the field force was 10,499 men. The total strength of the Army in 1964 was 22,681. In 1965, when these forces were committed to Vietnam, the strength of the Army was not 30,000, as it is today, but 25,314. The strength of the Army in 1965, when the Party to which the honourable member for Riverina belongs was in government, was slightly more than 25,000.

When I became Minister for Defence I set out, as a matter of policy, to determine what should be the size and shape of the Army in this country. It not my own decision; it was on the recommendation of the Chiefs of Staff, those who had responsibilities—

Mr Katter—On your policy guidelines.

Mr BARNARD—The only thing the honourable member will be remembered for as Minister for the Army is ensuring that all helicopters would be named after him or his electorate. I received a recommendation from the Defence Committee that the strength of the Army should rise to 34,000 by 1976 and that it should be reviewed in 1976. These are the same people who advised the members of the Opposition when they were in government. The Government accepted the recommendation. The Government agreed that we would provide an Army of 34,000 by 1976. I intend now to compare the size of the present Army with the size of the Army in 1965. The honourable member for Farrer (Mr Fairbairn) had the temerity to say earlier that there was a reduction of 9,000 in
1972. Of course there was a reduction because I made the decision to end conscription. That was a proper decision to make. As a result of the Government’s decision naturally there was a fall in the strength of the Army, but today it is back over 30,000 and it will rise to 34,000.

For the benefit of honourable members opposite, the number of applications for enlistment in the Army in the September quarter was the highest figure in peacetime in this country for a September quarter. The honourable member for Farrer, who usually makes a carefully prepared and I think in some respects informed speech, made one very important point. He referred to the amount that is now being spent on equipment in this country. It is true that this is always a matter of concern for any Minister. The amount has been gradually falling but it is not a matter of concern for Ministers for Defence in Australia alone. I think this problem is being experienced by all countries where defence procurement is beyond their control in terms of the amount of equipment that must be purchased from other countries. So, it is a matter of concern, but the honourable member also knows that there is a deliberate 5-year program. What may be spent in the first year may be doubled in the second or third year but the deliberate program is for 5 years.

Mr Staley—You halved it.

Mr BARNARD—That interjection comes from that well known strategist. I wish to make some comment in the very short time that is available to me on the statement made by the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes). He is the shadow Minister for Defence. I am one of those people who has always believed that a shadow Minister has something to contribute in this Parliament. When I was the shadow Minister for Defence I set out to make a number of recommendations and to put forward a number of propositions about what should be done in terms of defence and the reorganisation of the Department of Defence itself. All these issues were dealt with by me as the shadow Minister for Defence. They are now, of course, in the course of preparation and they will be introduced as legislation in this Parliament or be given effect to by regulation. More has been done in this 2-year period than was done by any Minister for Defence from the Opposition side in the last 20 years. I made the point about the shadow Minister for Defence. Anyone who had the opportunity to listen to the honourable member for Barker this afternoon and, indeed, during the last 2 years, would know that he has not made one practical contribution to defence in this country. Not one idea, not one positive suggestion has come from the honourable member for Barker. He is, of course, responsible on behalf of the Opposition to make statements in relation to defence. He does that from time to time but he can never make up his mind.

Let me refer again to the question of Army strength. During the last election campaign in May, as has been pointed out earlier this afternoon, the honourable member for Barker said that the strength of the Army should be 36,000. In other words it should be 2,000 more than I had determined earlier this year.

Mr McVeigh—I raise a point of order, Mr Deputy Chairman. I ask you to advise whether it is indicative of the Government’s lack of interest in this very important sphere that only 2 members of the Government are present when the Minister is speaking.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Drury)—That is not a point of order.

Mr BARNARD—In May the honourable member for Barker said that there should be 36,000 men in the Army. Nobody disputed that. It was 2,000 more than the figure I had given. Only a few days ago he said he did not think he would be able to increase the size of the Army. So, what does one accept from the so-called spokesman on Defence? I repeat that there has not been one positive or constructive suggestion during the whole of the period when he has been the shadow Minister for Defence that the Government could even consider as being worthwhile for incorporation into the defence legislation of this country. I think one can dismiss the criticisms of the honourable member for Barker.

I would welcome constructive criticism from members of the Opposition. Some of the speeches I listened to this afternoon were constructive. I have already referred to the honourable member for Farrer. Certainly there were constructive suggestions from honourable members of the Government side who spoke in this debate. They certainly spoke with much more sincerity and purpose on matters relating to the Department of Defence and our defence policies than did honourable members on the other side of the House. If one examines the expenditure for defence for the financial year 1974-75, which is now under consideration, one would see that it is still much higher in terms of the gross domestic product, than the honourable member was referring to earlier, than was being spent by the then Government, that is, those who are now in Opposition, during the 1960s. Until Australia was
committed to Vietnam the proportion never rose above 2.6 per cent. The honourable member can check the figures. Despite the priorities in terms of social policies and other domestic policies that we enunciated to the people of Australia in 1972 and again this year and the commitments and new directions in relation to those policies, we will not neglect the defence of Australia. I think this has been demonstrated in the 2 years in which this Government has occupied the treasury bench.

Mr STALEY (Chisholm) (5.46)—Mr Deputy Chairman—

Motion (by Mr Nicholls) agreed to:
That the question be now put.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Department of Urban and Regional Development

Proposed expenditure, $14,292,000.

Mr RUDDOCK (Parramatta) (5.47)—It is a pleasure to be able to lead in this debate on these very important estimates. I wish to raise a number of matters in the short time available to me. If I do not appear to start by complimenting the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) it is not because of a lack of understanding of the good things that have come from the program of urban and regional development but because of the important aspects that I must cover in the limited amount of time.

I should like to draw the attention of this Committee particularly to the part of the estimates for the Department of Urban and Regional Development which provide for an increase of some 2,250 per cent in expenditure this year on publicity for that Department and its programs over and above the amount that was allocated last year. I suppose that if we were to say that Government expenditure was increasing to that degree in other areas we would be looked upon as being unreasonable critics of this Government and its programs. I submit that the sum of $450,000 allocated for official publications and publicity is excessive and quite inappropriate for this Department and the needs that it is intended to meet. I note that for members of the other House some information was provided about this sum of money. It was indicated that the money was for public information programs designed to increase public understanding of urban issues and to broaden public support for urban and regional development programs. I am somewhat surprised, if these programs require this sum, that the Minister can come before this Committee and say, as he has said so often, that these are programs that are demanded by the public to meet real community needs. If that were so, this sum of money surely would not be necessary.

I want to cover shortly my philosophical approach to urban and regional development. I should like to draw to the attention of honourable members an amount of $241,000 provided in these estimates for travelling and subsistence. That is not the only amount of money provided for travelling and subsistence, I note; but it is the only heading under which I could identify it. Under the other headings dealing with the Cities Commission and the Holworthy investigatory project the estimates are not detailed sufficiently for me to be able to do so. But in the case of Albury-Wodonga an additional $65,000 is allocated for travelling and subsistence. That is a total of more than $300,000 in the 2 areas I have mentioned. My submission is that this sum of money would not be necessary if the programs were left to the people who are best able to administer them and to deal with them; that is, the States. Quite clearly, while there is an urgent need for moneys to be spent quite properly in the area of urban and regional development, in the area of rejuvenation of our cities and in the area of sewerage, the priorities are best set by the States and they are best equipped to deal with them. In my submission $300,000 would be saved by this Government if the States were left to make these sorts of decisions. Of course, it may well be that money for transport, fares and so on would have to be paid, but it would amount to nowhere near the sum that has been allocated for travelling and subsistence if a proper approach were taken.

I should like to deal shortly with a matter I raised in my maiden speech. I spoke about the regions concept about which we have heard very little of late but which is still adopted by the Department of Urban and Regional Development. I point out that local government for one has not co-operated in the determination of these regions. I point out also that, as in the case of that other area of social welfare, the Australian Assistance Plan, the Minister's policy almost falls upon barren ground because of disputes that have arisen over the boundaries that are being forced upon local committees under this plan for regions that was put before the Parliament last year. The submission I made on the last occasion was that quite clearly far more could be done in the area of urban development if we did not have these fixed regions which are quite inflexible.
I want once again to draw attention to an urgent local need with which I am sure the Minister is familiar, being the member for one of the electorates adjoining my own electorate of Parramatta, and that is in relation to the Parramatta River. I note that the National Trust received a grant under last year's estimates and is to receive a grant again this year. This organisation has done a great deal to highlight the urgent need for regeneration of the Parramatta River. Some moneys were spent in an ad hoc way under last year's Budget and estimates. Moneys were allocated under the western suburbs area improvement scheme. But the matter has been dealt with in an ad hoc way. I want to put before the Minister again the need for him to assist in the formation of a Parramatta River commission—an organisation which would not be established in the terms of these fixed regional boundaries but would require a variable region. It would involve the councils bordering the river, and the New South Wales Department of Local Government, the New South Wales Department of Public Works, the Maritime Services Board, the National Trust, and like organisations. Such a commission could prepare a detailed plan that could then be advanced and have money made available for it through the western suburbs area improvement scheme or some other area improvement scheme.

I also express to the Minister my concern at the proposed reduction in the payments to the States and local authorities. At page 81 the Budget Papers state that the amount provided under the western area improvement scheme is to be reduced from the $5m allocated last year to $4m this year. I am very disappointed at this reduction. I thought that the western suburbs area improvement scheme, although it had shortcomings and did not meet all the needs, was admirable. But clearly the amount is to be reduced, although money is to be made available in other areas. The western suburbs about which we have heard so much are to suffer to enable money to be made available to other areas.

Mr Uren—That is not right.

Mr RUDDOCK—The Budget Papers reveal it. Perhaps the Minister can satisfy me later when he replies. I would value his comments. I do consider it an important scheme and one that ought to be advanced, although not in the fixed way envisaged by the Minister. I want to deal with a proposal, which has been advanced within the local community in my district, for the establishment of a Parramatta community centre. Parramatta as a city serves a greater area than just that contained within the city boundaries. The western suburbs area or region is much larger than the area served by the city of Parramatta. There is a need for a community centre, one which in my view would cost a good deal. Parramatta needs such things as a theatre, an auditorium, a community arts venue and so on. These things are missing from the area. The greater area would be served by these things. I would like the Minister to assure me that although money has not been made available under the Western Suburbs area improvement scheme before for such a project that if one was developed by the Parramatta City Council—it may well involve hundreds of thousands of dollars—funds would be available under the area improvement scheme. It does appear that although feasibility studies were made under last year's estimates no specific amounts were appropriated.

The final matter I want to deal with is a question I placed on notice in this Parliament on 16 July and in the last Parliament on 21 March. I sought information as to the sums of money allocated to each State pursuant to the Sewerage Agreements Act, the names of the authorities in each State receiving grants, what part of the grants were received by each of these authorities, whether the moneys had been collected by each of the authorities and spent and what works had been completed. I asked for particulars of the Federal divisions in which these works had been carried out and commenced. I wonder why the Minister has not yet answered this very important question.

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

MR SCHOLES (Corio) (5.57)—The estimates for the Department of Urban and Regional Development are being discussed in this Parliament for only the second occasion yet this Department is now looked upon as one of the longer established departments of the Government and one which I would think would not be under future challenge as a department which was not required. It is a new initiative undertaken by this Government to involve itself in the needs of people in the community in the places where they live. Australia is a nation of people. It is not a set of little nations collected together in a group as some people would have us believe. I want to speak specifically about the area which I represent, namely Geelong, which is one of the designated growth areas under the program which has been formulated by the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) and his State colleagues after fairly long and detailed negotiations.
The Geelong area has now reached the stage where a development corporation Bill is about to go before the Victorian Parliament. The major planning stages will then firm up so that the basis of growth will be very solidly laid, and in the main laid by those people representing the local communities. There are, however, problems with growth. Geelong, for instance, was one of the areas of most rapid growth in Australia during the middle 1950s. In fact, the area had a 78 per cent growth factor between 1952 and 1958. It then went through a long period of almost negative growth which in the last couple of years has accelerated, although not greatly. Like most provincial areas it has the problem of lack of balance in employment opportunities. Almost every provincial city in Australia has a comparable problem of lack of balance in employment opportunities. Geelong has a very solid base of blue collar work opportunities. It has a small base for work opportunities in the areas of what could be called tertiary employment.

The tendency is—I suppose it is natural—especially for big companies to place their headquarters with office staff in the capital cities and as close to the centre as is possible. Hence buildings go up 40 storeys although it is probable that it would be cheaper to build out of the city area. The tendency of governments—I think this is unfortunate—is to centralise their activities towards the centre of the big cities. It is not a requirement of efficiency. It is not a requirement of any type at all. But there is this tendency on the part of governments also to place their headquarters operations in the centre of big cities. A couple of years ago, for instance, the State Savings Bank of Victoria, which is a government bank, decided to establish a new headquarters in Melbourne. It is going to build a 40-storey building on the corner of Elizabeth Street and Bourke Street—which is getting to the stage where it is practically inaccessible to traffic—to house its headquarters staff which has no reason whatsoever to be in that locality. It may well be there are some policy sections which for reasons of communication might need to be in the central business district but there is certainly no need for a 40-storey building to house some thousands of staff.

Geelong could do with the type of tertiary employment opportunities which could be created by the location of this type of activity in that area. Anyone who looks at the statistics will see that over a period of ten or twelve years there has been a very large listing of unemployed persons under the age of twenty. They are listed as clerical and sales workers. About 400 out of 1,000 were on unemployment benefits as recently as a couple of months ago. There are other factors to be considered. Development does not mean only jobs and houses. If that is all there is to it then it must fail. Development is about people. It is about the way they live. It is about the quality of life that they are able to enjoy and the existing opportunities to improve themselves. If an area is to maintain and attract people then it must provide those facilities which go with the standard and type of life that the people want.

It is not difficult to plan and expend money to provide housing estates. It is more difficult but not very difficult to provide adequate public transport or road systems. In providing road systems very great care must be taken to ensure that they fit into the community pattern and do not disrupt established communities especially where older people live and where movement of people from one area to another may occur. No matter how much better the other area may appear to other persons it is not the community in which they grew up. The people there are not the people with whom they have grown up and with whom they want to live in the later years of their lives. There is disruption to their lives. I refer mainly to freeway type operations which are quite a problem in older areas, not only in Geelong but in every other city in Australia. Once you move people out of the homes in which they have grown up you can destroy what remains of their lives. This is especially so of older people. A new shiny home is not what they want. They want the place they are used to and the friends with whom they have grown up.

Other things are necessary for a city. These are the sort of things that the Department of Urban and Regional Development or the Cities Commission has to look at very carefully in all the growth centres, to ensure that these things are provided before development takes place, not after it takes place, as was the case in the 1950s when people in houses to provide employees for industry were the whole basis of growth. The basis of growth must be the provision of places for people to live, not just places for people to work. Community facilities, recreational facilities, opportunities to expand and participate in cultural activities and opportunities for people not of Australian birth to mix and undertake their ethnic cultural activities are the sort of things that are necessary in a city if the city is to be a live and living thing, not merely an area in which a group of people are living.

The Geelong area is a very sophisticated one. It has a long history of growth. It has all of the basic requirements of a city and it can be built
onto fairly easily. Because of sound planning at an early stage of its development or possibly because there was a mistake in the estimation of growth, it has a basic water supply which will meet the requirements of a population nearly double that which exists at the present time. For similar reasons it has an internal road system which will not meet the future traffic requirements but which is certainly better than many of the inner city road systems of other cities. But the area does not have the type of cultural facilities that I believe, and I am sure that most people in the area believe, are essential for the needs of a growing community. Whilst these facilities eventually will be provided by the community they will be provided at a time which most likely will be too late, unless these facilities are provided artificially from without.

There are a couple of other things I would like to say. Geelong has a very well developed regional library system. I would like to see this system extended to provide reading material for ethnic migrant groups which make up at least 25 per cent of the population of the area. I know that the Department of Urban and Regional Development will take these important matters into consideration. I know that the planning authorities which will have responsibility for the area will also take them into consideration. But I hope that they will do this when the planning is being considered and not after. If these requirements are not considered together with growth factors when the planning takes place, disillusionment could quickly take place and destroy the best laid plans and the best intentions of any community.

Mr GILES (Angas) (6.7)—I hope I do not appear to be arguing with my colleague, the honourable member for Parramatta (Mr Ruddock) when I state that it seems to me to be a perfectly proper decision for a national government to concern itself with regional development. After all Australia, for better or for worse, is now a largely urbanised population and it is only bowing to the inevitable for the Australian Government to take an increasing interest in planning growth centres. The problem is—I expect I am not far away from the thinking of the honourable member for Parramatta at this stage—at what level? A mere funding role would seem to me to be not nearly enough. Yet on the other hand all the capacities, abilities, local knowledge and intellectual brain power certainly do not reside in Canberra.

This Government holds the greater portion of the public purse. It handles migration quotas and all the major infrastructures relating to telephones, employment, health, social services and to a lesser degree perhaps, education, roads and so on. Furthermore, variables such as liquor costs, Post Office charges and petrol price increases are all fields largely under Federal Government control and responsibility with their strong effect on costs and indeed, therefore, ipso facto, on overall inflation. There is, therefore, a logical reason for Federal Government involvement in regional development at some level. I might in passing refer to the tremendous importance of the costs to which I have just referred in country areas. Area code 800 numbers of the type introduced into the United States, which has made a difference to the efficiency of the private enterprise telephone service in that country, could also increase the telephone efficiency of nationwide telephone calls in this country. Obviously if industries in country towns and regional growth centres are to be successfully established they must not only have a cost structure which is not rising as is the case in the capital cities and which would peculiarly disadvantage those industries but they must also have efficiency of service if they are not to have the normal facilities that are provided in major capital cities.

The Government has taken what I think is a risk—a probe in the dark if you wish—by attempting to establish a national policy and a series of master plans and guidelines in dealing with State regional growth schemes. There are times when the Government should probe for more knowledge and experience in new fields. The only limitation, of course, should be how great the expenditure can be within the overall economic guidelines of the nation's needs. I have in mind the priorities that governments must establish in relation to expenditures which are responsible expenditures. But expenditure priorities also point to the difficulty of setting policies and firm plans. The Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) will be delighted to hear that I now intend to quote from Professor Alonso. I give the Minister credit for distributing 3 essays written by Professor Alonso which are not necessarily or entirely in agreement with the policies of his own Department. I do not intend to fall for the easy bait, as the Minister may have noticed, by selectively pulling out hunks of those essays in order to criticise the Government. I think we have to take a more responsible stance than that. Professor Alonso said:

One thing seems certain. A national urban and regional policy for Australia cannot be embodied in a master plan to be produced in the next few years by technical and scientific approaches. A master plan is possible when purposes are
clear, when processes are well understood, and when the conditional futures are predictable. None of these conditions obtain.

Some years ago at the Adelaide University a group of us sounded out the representatives of approximately 100 business firms as to which factor was the most important in relation to their decisions as to where to locate industry. Almost without exception they gave the answer 'human factors'. Of course, by this they meant that their top executive personnel—their officers and other key personnel—wished to live in the capital cities. This was the biggest single factor that came out of the survey. Considerations such as economic areas came after that. I think the Government would do well to remember that encouragement, incentives and devices have to be found to overcome that major decision which has the main bearing on where an industry is located.

Monarto, the South Australian regional growth centre, which I hope will remain within the boundaries of the electorate of Angas, has little chance of attracting service or heavy industries as I see the position when one thinks of the comparable pull of Adelaide which is close by, Albury-Wodonga or indeed other smaller growth areas in South Australia. The South Australian Government has instructed 2 departments—I think the Department of Lands and the Department of Agriculture—to move to Monarto. This implies a downgrading of agricultural and other services to the people north of Adelaide. I imagine that legal firms in Adelaide will now have to search titles in Monarto which is 50 miles away and that this will mean an increased cost to the consumers in Adelaide. There is, of course, for reasons already described, resentment among many of the personnel of these 2 departments who feel that they have been discriminated against. If this is the case it might be a good idea for this discrimination to be eliminated. It could be that in the future Monarto could become a government city as has happened in the case of Canberra. Who knows, if this is one of the incentives needed to overcome the problem maybe we might live to see the day when all departments and even the Parliament House of South Australia are established at Monarto rather than Adelaide.

I was glad to see that the Minister stated in an annual report which I received this week that the first residents of Monarto would be living in the area by 1977. I was so struck by this statement that I issued a Press release to the Murray Bridge newspapers because I thought they would be fascinated by the thought. I hope that the Minister may yet turn out to be right. But I would lay him a dollar that he is at least 5 years out in his prediction, unless he is thinking of a caretaker living in a bag house with an outhouse out the back. I have the awful vision as I thought of this dreadful possibility of seeing the Premier of South Australia standing on a wind swept hill reading his poetry to an admiring audience of maggies and galahs while flying dust turned his greying locks into a reddish hue.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 8 p.m.

Mr MORRIS (Shortland) (8.0)—This Government was elected to office in December 1972 and again in May 1974 largely as a result of the Australian Labor Party's recognition of the difficulties faced by urban populations. For too long urban planning, local government finance and the lack of sewerage services in Australia had been deliberately ignored by our predecessors. At the outset, in speaking in support of the estimates for the Department of Urban and Regional Development I want to congratulate the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) on his achievements, particularly in relation to the harmonious links that he has been able to establish between the Australian Government, local government groupings and the respective State governments. Almost daily we hear wails from Australian Country Party and Liberal Party Premiers and their Ministers as well as from their Party colleagues opposite about the so-called growth of centralism. It is a puerile line of propaganda that they have peddled so often that they are coming to believe it themselves. They constantly complain about an alleged remote bureaucracy here in Canberra; saying that Canberra is distant and removed from the people. They overlook the fact that geographically Canberra is closer to more Australians than is any other capital city in Australia, located as it is almost midway between Sydney and Melbourne.

As one who served 6 years in local government in Newcastle, the industrial capital of Australia, I have had some experience of State centralism and State bureaucracies. Ask any member of any council in New South Wales outside the Sydney metropolitan area about the slow-moving, unresponsive Sydney based bureaucracy of the New South Wales Government, how difficult it is to get decisions on local government matters, and why for over 6 years the Newcastle City Council has been trying without success to get a decision on a project most vital to the whole Hunter region—a subject that transcends party politics. I refer to the deepening of the Newcastle
harbour. I am sure that my colleague the honourable member for Paterson (Mr O'Keeffe) will support me in that.

Mr O'Keeffe—Hear, hear! I give you my full support on that.

Mr MORRIS—I acknowledge the honourable member's remarks. Nothing needs to be said about the Liberal-Country Party State bureaucracy in Victoria other than to refer to the stinging criticisms contained in the Bland report on the Victorian Public Service. In the State where Australians are being most deprived of their proper entitlements by a reactionary and repressive Country Party State Government we saw the spectacle only a few months ago of the Premier, Mr 'Bejoking' Peterson standing over Queensland local government councils threatening that he would reduce State financial assistance to local government by an amount corresponding to any financial assistance that the councils may accept from the Australian Government. I do not think it will be very long before the people of Queensland begin to realise how much they are being denied the advantages available from this Government by the deliberately obstinate and obstructive tactics of the reactionary fascist State Government in Queensland. True Federalism consists of willing partners in a 3-tier system of government—local government, State government and Federal government. But the system will not work when there are only 2 willing partners—local government and the Australian Government—and while some State Premiers follow a course of determined frustration. Who are the losers? The losers are the people, and particularly the ratepayers of Queensland. What is needed is a policy of consultation, not confrontation as followed by some State Premiers, notably again the Premier of Queensland.

In the short 22 months that the Department of Urban and Regional Development has been in existence the Minister and the Department have been the strongest proponents of consultation in Australia. Important and valued links have been established with local government units throughout the nation. The Department of Urban and Regional Development is a pioneer department creating new initiatives, providing long overdue assistance to local government bodies—assistance both material and financial. Reference to the second annual report of the Department will show those initiatives. They include growth centres such as that to be administered by the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation; the Cities Commission; area improvement programs; the regional groupings of local government; the Glebe renewal project; the Rocks project; land commissions to develop and stabilise the price of housing sites; the inquiry by Mr Justice Else-Mitchell into land tenures; the national sewerage backlog reductions program for which $30m was provided in 1973-74 and for which $103m is provided in the current Budget; the inquiry by Mr Justice Hope into the national estate; the Grants Commission; and the national program for urban and regional development. All of these initiatives have been achieved by a policy of consultation, not confrontation as is practised by some State Premiers and Ministers.

The Department's role has been one of consultation and co-ordination backed by the first ever acceptance by a Federal Government of Federal responsibility for these new initiatives. By seeking an atmosphere of cordiality in which all parties can gain a broader perspective of the issues at stake the Department of Urban and Regional Development, led by the Minister, has done much since this Government came to office in 1972 to find tangible solutions to the particular problems of urban and regional living conditions. I can do no better than to quote from the 'West Australian' newspaper of 10 July 1973 in which an article on the 1973 Australian Labor Party Federal Conference reported the Minister as saying:

Cities and urban development were areas in which the Federal Government did not aim to be centralist. It wanted to build a bridge of co-operation with the States, local government and the private sector, to achieve more efficient cities and a better life style.

Co-operative federalism requires that every opportunity is sought to pool the resources and initiatives of all levels of government—a fact that some State governments and the Opposition constantly ignore. But one of the most significant developments that has followed the operations of the Department of Urban and Regional Development has been the recognition of community participation in the decision-making process. There has been a continuing and developing discussion with a wide range of representatives of professional, industrial, land development, finance and other groups over the preceding 12 months. We have recognised that individual citizens and voluntary associations have a role to play in determining the development and use of their regions and cities. We have recognised that public participation is a right, not a privilege. It is true that there are problems yet to be overcome, but they are problems that cooperation and goodwill can and will overcome.
I want to say something now about what to me is probably the most important development in Australia since Federation, and that is the general desire in local government for the expansion of the concept of regionalism. It is in this area that the Department of Urban and Regional Development has played a most important part. We are all conscious of the deficiencies of local government. We are all conscious that local government authorities are the creatures of State governments, and we are all conscious of the fact that our opponents in their 23 years of administration presided over a 12 times multiplication of outstanding local government debt. The Australian Treasury in its 1973 submission to the Grants Commission stated:

From views current from State inquiries into local government there were too many relatively small local authority units and therefore the operations of the Commission should not be such as to discourage the amalgamation of local governing bodies into more viable economic and administrative units.

The Australian Labor Party has long accepted that local government should have access to financial assistance from the Federal Treasury. The Department of Urban and Regional Development has been the responsible Department in assisting local government since we came to office. Firstly, in the formation of regional groupings, 889 councils made application for recognition under the Australian Grants Commission Act. Sixty-eight regional groups were approved by the Minister. Each grouping made application for financial assistance under the terms of the Act, and 92 per cent of the councils that made applications will receive no strings attached non-repayable grants ranging from $3,000 to $2m and totalling $56.3m. That is the evidence that local government wants regional groupings and wants to cooperate with the Australian Government. I should point out to Country Party members opposite that the grants from the Grants Commission—

Mr O'Keefe—When will we get them?

Mr Morris—You will get them in December. Just be patient. You are getting them because of an Australian Labor Government and for no other reason. Grants, if considered on a per capita basis, show a bias in favour of rural authorities due to the use of land values, which have not increased as fast in rural areas, as the basis for measurement of taxable capacity. Members of the Country Party would not know that because they have not read the report of the Grants Commission and are not interested in reading it. Throughout Australia only 13 local government bodies declined to accept membership of regional bodies.

Secondly, the Department of Urban and Regional Development has been responsible for the development of the area improvement program under which 13 regions will share $14m in the first year of a 3-year program. This program is to be used to finance projects, including land acquisition, drainage, planning and development procedures, conservation and provision of community amenities. The area improvement program is intended to be a valuable complement to the tied grants made available to local government through the Grants Commission. I am especially pleased that the Hunter region, which encompasses my electorate, is to receive $1m under the area improvement program this year. The concept of regionalism in local government is rapidly developing as a result of the policies of this Government and, in particular, of this Department. I congratulate the Minister and his Department on their efforts and I commend the estimates to the Committee.

Mr Lusher (Hume) (8.11)—I rise tonight because there is a significant problem which exists in over-the-border growth in that area to the west of Canberra. This is an area of Commonwealth-State dialogue; it must be so in this particular part of New South Wales. The national capital and Australian Capital Territory dominate this region. The huge increase in population, services and amenities available in this area resulting from the presence of the Australian Capital Territory have had significant effects on the surrounding area. Some of these effects have been good and others have not. It is to the not so good effects that I wish to turn my attention during this debate. The National Capital Development Commission has estimated that the amount of detached housing land available in the Australian Capital Territory indicates that there will be no land available for detached housing after about 5 years. This leads to an obviously expansionary outlook on the part of those responsible for the Territory, both in government and in administration. Expansion can mean only one thing, and that is over-the-border growth with implications for New South Wales that will be apparent to honourable members. Commonwealth-State relations rarely run smoothly, and this is particularly so when State lands are involved.

With reference to the problems that are being experienced in the Goodradigbee Shire, the State Minister for Environment and Planning, Sir John Fuller, has recently been put into a position where he had little alternative but to raise the
subdivision limit in that shire from 100 to 1,000 acres, and that is in the area immediately adjoining the Australian Capital Territory. This has been brought about by the continuing speculation in and subdivision of areas, particularly between Yass and Canberra. The whole problem was brought to a head recently over the application to subdivide the large Jeir station property in the Goodradigbee Shire which is close to Hall. The point at issue is that this area in particular, and perhaps the whole shire, needs to be planned, and this is an urgent requirement. It does seem inevitable that at some stage this area will become vital to the future growth and development of Canberra. It may be that negotiations between the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) and Sir John Fuller in New South Wales will lead to a joint development corporation to control the required area. It may be that the negotiations will lead to an extension of the Australian Capital Territory border so that areas of New South Wales become part of the Australian Capital Territory. I express no views at this stage on the possible outcome of these negotiations, but what I do want to say to the Minister is that unless negotiations are completed very soon a most unsatisfactory situation will develop in that area.

There is little argument, even among the landholders in the Goodradigbee, that speculation and subdivision should not be controlled. If over-the-border growth is to proceed, as I think it must at some stage, it will be impossible if so much of the area has already been half carved up. I want to list some of the requirements which I regard as acceptable to both the Federal and State governments and to the landholders. I point out at this stage that there is such concern in the Goodradigbee and Yass areas that a meeting a few weeks ago of a couple of hundred landholders formed a Yass-Goodradigbee landholders' association and I expect that these people will be in touch with the Minister in fairly early course. I look forward to his co-operation with that group.

The first requirements are for immediate planning. The areas which are going to be developed must be determined and those areas which are not to be developed must be determined. In this area there is obviously some fine agricultural land, some of the best in the State of New South Wales. Honourable members will be aware that Yass and its district is the hub of the fine wool industry of the world. We must also have community involvement in that planning. I would like to see, and I am sure that the landholders would like to see, that the planners live in the area and consult with the landholders of the area. Another requirement is that there must be adequate compensation where this is necessary. It is obvious that all of the shire of Goodradigbee will not be required for over-the-border growth and development, but only parts of it, bearing in mind that this shire runs down to the Murrumbidgee River. At this stage it is very difficult to see how the Commonwealth would be interested in land beyond Yass itself. These are practical points and I think that they could be complied with easily.

I want also to list some of the problems being experienced by landholders while this 1,000-acre freeze is on. Firstly, there is a virtual non-negotiability of land, and this applies in practical terms in the shires of Mulwaree and Gunning where, although there is no freeze, nobody in his right mind would buy an acre of land. Secondly there are the problems of people wishing to sell portions of properties to pay probate duty, for health reasons and for other personal causes. Finally, there are financial reasons; a man might be in a position where he has to offload land or some portion of land in order to meet his financial commitments. There are other problems being experienced by landholders during this period of uncertainty. They are more of a financial nature and they all revolve around the question of taxes. The first problem relates to capital gains tax, and there is a great degree of uncertainty about the value of the land while this uncertainty exists. The second problem relates to the development gains tax under which, as I understand it, if land is subdivided the whole of that profit increment is subject to tax at income tax rates. Finally, there is the Elsey-Mitchell recommendation that the community is entitled to receive any profit which is received as a result of zoning changes and changes in land use.

The discussions and negotiations which relate to this over-the-border growth question were started by the honourable member for Gwydir (Mr Hunt) in his capacity of Minister for the Interior. He initiated those discussions with Mr Morton in New South Wales, and I think it is to his credit that he saw the need at that early stage and did something about it. But there is still nothing concrete to show people. I do not think it is a question of being political in this area; I regard it as a human problem, and people's futures are at risk. It is a question of Federal Government agreement with the State Government and the matter affects the future of Canberra just as vitally as it affects the future of the Goodradigbee Shire. A decision is needed very soon on area zonings so that landholders—and I
stress the fact that these are freehold landholders—will know where they stand. I realise that the Minister and the Government have no control over the New South Wales Government in this area, but I do appeal to the Minister for the utmost degree of co-operation, even if he has to bend a little, so that an early solution can be found to this serious problem of over-the-border growth. Let us start with the planning and let us start with it soon. Let us have some initiative from this Government, particularly from this Minister, in the field of co-operative federalism at a practical level.

Before I conclude I should like to refer to a comment made by the honourable member for Shortland (Mr Morris) that rural areas benefited more on a per capita basis under the recent Grants Commission recommendations. There were 8 rural shires in New South Wales that received no grant. Four of those shires were in the electorate of Hume and I would like to see how the honourable member—

Mr McKenzie—They should apply.

Mr Lusher—They did apply, and they were asked for further information. I asked the honourable member for Shortland and perhaps the Minister to show me how the people in those 4 shires would in fact be better off than the rest of the State.

Mr McKenzie (Diamond Valley) (8.20)—The debates on the Estimates give members of this chamber an opportunity to put forward ideas on matters that are of particular interest to them. They enable members of the Opposition to criticise and to put up the ideas that they wish to see implemented and they enable members of the Government to tell the people of Australia something about what is going on in Australia. In this instance the Committee is debating the estimates for the Department of Urban and Regional Development. At the outset I congratulate the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren), his staff and his Department for what they have done in changing the whole aspect of urban development in Australia. I believe that they are dedicated to making living conditions for Australians a great deal better than they have been in the past.

I point out that in a planned society or in a planned urban environment people, no matter how much money they have, what their job is or even what their aspirations are, have much better living conditions than they would have if their society or environment were left unplanned. The Australian Capital Territory is an example of what can be done with proper planning. I pay tribute to former governments for at least planning the national capital in a constructive way. Unfortunately they did nothing for the rest of Australia. They allowed it to grow in a haphazard fashion. The present Government has decided to do something about it. The Australian Labor Party put its ideas on this subject to the people at successive elections in 1969, 1972 and 1974 and they were endorsed by the people of Australia because they realised that in proper planning and proper participation by the national government lay the seeds of proper and organised urban growth.

There is a strong link between urban planning and transport. I am sure that the Minister and his Department are looking closely at this aspect. It is important, if we are to persuade people to live outside the major metropolitan areas, that they have proper transport links with the things that persuade people to live in major urban areas—education and health facilities and the ability to go to a whole range of cultural facilities and activities from football through to art galleries. People need to feel that they are not cut off from the things in which they wish to participate. I suggest that in the future we must continue to give a great deal of thought to urban planning in the context of transport. I believe that the Government and the Department of Urban and Regional Development are planning well. They are planning to make cities more pleasant and more productive for people. That is what the urban program is all about. Is it more important to have a 20-square house or parks in which the children who live in that house can play? I believe that a properly balanced urban development program will enable people to have good living areas and also to have the facilities that a modern society can provide.

The Government has taken the initiative in altering the Grants Commission Act to enable local government bodies to receive finance from the national government. We hear a lot of talk from our friends in the Liberal and Country Parties about centralism. The most centralised form of government in this country is to be found in the State sphere. I speak as a former member of a municipal council with 10 years experience in local government. I know from personal experience that it is virtually impossible for a local government body to initiate programs on its own behalf. The Local Government Act in Victoria is the largest piece of legislation in the Victorian statute book. Every single thing that a local government body can do is controlled by that Act. How much more centralist can one get? The
Government believes that there should be a full and proper partnership between the 3 levels of government—local, State and Federal. I believe that the State governments are far too jealous of the power that they have over local government and that the time has come for a change. One of the ways in which that change will be initiated is by this Government—the national government—taking the bit between its teeth and negotiating programs of change.

One of the problems to be found in urban living today is the disposal of garbage. It has become a tremendous problem in the Western world as countries have become more and more engaged in producing packaging and the various other things which cause a great amount of garbage to mount up. If we are to preserve the ecology and if we are to preserve resources which are of great value not only to the Australian community but to the world as a whole, we will have to do something about this matter. Through area improvement programs and through grants made through the Grants Commission money is being made available for transfer stations for garbage disposal. Because of that and other programs that the Government has initiated, I believe that there will be possibilities in the future for the recycling of a great deal of the materials which at present are buried or burned.

One of the programs which have been initiated by the Government under the auspices of the Department of Urban and Regional Development is the making of grants concerning the National Estate. In relation to my electorate of Diamond Valley grants have already been made for the preservation of valuable buildings and sites which have a meaning to the people in the area and which ought to be preserved not only for the people in the area but also for the people who can come to see them. If we are to have problems with the motor car, let us at least use it properly.

That leads me to a point which I wish to make as a member of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Road Safety. In a report entitled ‘Roads and their Environment’ which was tabled recently, that Committee pointed out that one of the ways in which we can reduce the number of road accidents in Australia is by proper urban planning. I wish to refer to some of the things mentioned in the report. The Committee said that modern, safer guidelines and land usage aimed at minimising travel and the reduction of exposure to accident are important. We need to design residential areas so that people are exposed much less frequently to the motor car. That not only saves lives but also is much less expensive. I said the other day that I had been told by members of the land development industry in Australia that it costs more than $8,000 to service a block of land. In Canberra land costs only a little over $5,000. By planning our urban areas we can save a great deal of money. Cluster housing, for instance, costs a great deal less. The Apollo Parkways Estate near Greensborough in my electorate and the Crestwood Estate in Western Australia are 2 outstanding examples of the modified Radburn system under which children can walk to school—

Mr McVeigh—I did that years ago.

Mr McKENZIE—... and go out into the play areas that are provided without once having to cross a road. I will ignore the inane interjections from members of the Australian Country Party, except to say that if they were really interested in saving lives in Australia they would listen to what is being said and try to support programs which are aimed at making residential areas a great deal safer than they are at present. I commend the Minister, his staff and his Department for what they are doing for urban development in Australia.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

Mr HODGES (Petrie) (8.30)—First, I wish to comment on a couple of the matters raised by the honourable member for Shortland (Mr Morris) earlier in this debate. I am sure that people in this country are sick and tired of listening to the denigration of the State governments by the Federal Labor Government. We have heard these constant and nauseating comments so many times that I wish they would cease. I have noticed that even in recent times the Premiers of Tasmania and South Australia are having many doubts about this Federal Government. As I see it this Government is like a sinking ship. The State Governments of Tasmania and South Australia do not want to be associated with a sinking ship. I ask the honourable member for Shortland to forget about criticising the Queensland Government because the result which will eventuate on 7 December in the State election in Queensland will show this Labor Government and the Labor Opposition in Queensland just what an election is all about. Quite frankly, the Premier of Queensland, Mr Bjelke-Petersen, whose name also was taken in vain by the honourable member for Shortland, will certainly shine through.

Let me take up another point that the honourable member made—that is, that this Government is only a collecting house for the States. We
know that there are Commonwealth areas of responsibility as there are State areas of responsibility. The Federal system was instigated in 1901. The Australian people on numerous occasions since have rejected constitutional changes.

Before dealing with some specific areas of the Ministry of Urban and Regional Development, I wish to make some general comments. I warmly applaud many of the objectives of this Department that are so concisely expressed on page 17 of Budget Paper No. 8. But while the objectives are couched in compelling terms, the Government has failed to scratch the surface of the enormous problems associated with urban and community affairs. I wish the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) would return to the Committee because I want him to listen to this speech.

Before members of the Government hasten to inform me how my Party left local government in the wilderness—and I may add what a cold, wet, and unpleasant wilderness it was—I want to express to them my complete and utter disappointment at the way in which the Liberal and Country Parties in government failed to recognise the plight of local authorities. I admit that this is a serious indictment of my own Party. But if it is one, I am delighted to say, that will not be levelled at the next Liberal-Country Party Government, and that will not be too long in the future. Indeed, it is refreshing for me to sit and listen to Liberals formulating policy over a whole spectrum covering urban development, regional planning and local government. As the result of a tremendous amount of research and work in this area, I am pleased to say that excellent policies and policy initiatives, I might add, will be forthcoming from the Opposition Parties.

I will now deal with the performance of the Department of Urban and Regional Development, in the eye of local government, many of its grandiose offers of assistance are not worth the paper on which they are written. I remind the Minister for Urban and Regional Development that window dressing is not good enough for the thousands of old campaigners, many of whom have spent half a lifetime in local government. I remind the Minister that one must have the goods to offer as well. There is one thing that members on both sides of this Committee must remember: All the wisdom of government does not reside here in Canberra. As a basic tenet, please accept that the majority of politicians in local government are well aware of what they are about. They are informed, exhibit ample political nous and cunning, and possess an earthiness which many members of this Parliament should envy. They shoulder a huge responsibility which many politicians, State and Federal, will not recognise. I am pleased that the Minister for Urban and Regional Development has returned to the Committee.

I now turn to the frustration being experienced by local government in its dealings with DURD. Our honest inability to meet demands is accepted and tolerated. But when a Minister produces booklets such as the one entitled ‘Australian Government Assistance to Local Government Projects’, in full knowledge that about 95 per cent of the claims made cannot be honoured, is it any wonder that his credibility evaporates into thin air. Impressive reports and booklets listing all the goodies, printed on glossy paper, which contain in most cases nothing more than empty promises will do nothing to improve the confidence of local government in DURD or in this Government. My Party in government did very little in this area. But at least it was honest. This Government is deceiving the electorate—representatives and the administrators of local government. Is it any wonder that scepticism grows steadily when flowery offers are made but very, very few ever honoured. This Government offers loaves of bread but few local authorities pick up any more than a dry crust or crumb.

Mr Minister, I want you to examine analytically what you are offering and what you are providing. Talk of the past will achieve little, as it always does when we so frequently hear in this place ‘what happened over the past 23 years’. Not only are requests for assistance refused, but also many councils are left in suspense for months awaiting a reply from the Minister. One city in my electorate made a simple submission to the Minister on 2 July. It had to wait 4 months almost, until 21 October, to receive a reply—of course, in the negative. Mr Minister, this is not good enough. Is it any wonder that I have heard you referred to as ‘Tricky Tom’, ‘Wodonga Tom’ and ‘Urger Uren’.

Mr McKenzie—It is easy to be insulting.

Mr HODGES—That is true. But they are not my words. Mr Minister, you were successful in hoodwinking local government, pulling the wool over its eyes, but I would suggest to you that the honeymoon is over and that you take off the mask and reveal the true face.

There is a great deal to commend the regional planning concept. DURD is to be congratulated
for adopting it as many benefits will flow to communities, in addition to the savings effected. I call to the attention of the honourable member for Diamond Valley (Mr McKenzie) that I will hand out some bouquets, for his benefit, just to show him that I am not being completely biased. Let me say that Queensland leads Australia in regional planning—that much criticised State that I spoke of earlier. Many of the principles adopted by DURD in actual fact were developed and formulated in Queensland and copied by this Labor Government.

The capital cost of providing sewerage, garbage collection, water storage, adequate road systems, to name a few, will be minimised by regional planning. Better and compatible use of land will be achieved where previously much conflict occurred between neighbouring municipalities as the result of a lack of consideration in declaring zonings. I implore the Minister not to diminish the rights of States or to erode the autonomy of local government. What is wrong with the Minister establishing his guidelines and then handing over the money and administration to the States. Please answer that question, Mr Minister.

At the present time, officers of DURD are tripping around the nation assessing where the $9.5m of a total of $14.1m for area improvement should be spent. I am not condemning the area improvement scheme. On the contrary, I thoroughly commend it. But why is it necessary to send officers into 11 regions spread across Australia to assess where this money should be spent on drainage schemes, acquisition of parklands, landscape design and construction, to name a few? Are these men of superior calibre to their counterparts in the various States? I am informed that the administration of the scheme is, to put it mildly, extremely wasteful.

For a Government obsessed with centralist policies, I am bewildered by its desire to decentralise by establishing growth centres. Personally, I am happy with the growth centre concept. Perhaps the Minister might explain to the people of Queensland, where 3 growth centres are planned, the people of Western Australia, where 4 growth centres are planned, the people of Tasmania, where one growth centre is planned, and the people of the Northern Territory where again one growth centre is planned, when they can expect some capital expenditure. I realise that all of these centres cannot be developed at once. But this Government has been guilty of discriminatory action before today.

The attention to sewerage, which is an area of great need, is most desirable. But how the Minister can estimate the overtaking of the backlog to be a 10 year project completely astounds me. His report says that the best estimate of the total cost is about $3,800m, at June 1974 prices, and that the Australian Government’s contribution is likely to be approximately 40 per cent. This would amount to an average expenditure of possibly $200m for 10 years, allowing for inflation. Yet, this year, $105m is to be spent and the forward estimates for 1975-76 and 1976-77 are $112m and $119m respectively. I realise that the report qualifies all forward estimates by saying that they will be determined ‘in the light of prevailing circumstances’. That is nice phraseology. But it looks like more window dressing to me and that the program will extend over 20 years and not 10 years.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

Mr LAMB (La Trobe) (8.40)—So much has been said by honourable members from both sides of this chamber during this debate that I wish to confine my remarks to a theme and to inject some rationality into the debate, particularly after having listened to the honourable member for Petrie (Mr Hodges). He promised us bouquets; he gave us a speech full of nettles and poison ivy. He described the major programs of the Department of Urban and Regional Development as not worth the paper they were written on. That was an unsubstantiated comment with nothing to back it. When we look at the fine series of programs in the estimates of the Department we find a total of almost $400m involved. This is a 250 per cent increase on the initiatives which began last year. It is not new for the Commonwealth to have a role with local government. To a certain extent it has always given specific grants to local government under section 96 of the Constitution. To a lesser extent it has had some regulation over loan programs. However, the increment—this 250 per cent increase in spending—shows something more: It reflects the initiatives the Government has taken over the last 18 months. It demonstrates that the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) and the Government have accepted full national responsibility for financing urban and regional development. It must be realised that if we are to have a national program we must integrate our spending programs. In the Budget paper related to urban and regional development the following is stated:

In particular, the new emphasis being given to urban and regional development reflects a concern to promote greater
equality of distribution and ease of access to the various urban amenities and facilities which improve the quality of life.

I would add to that the extension of the quality of life is not confined to the cities. The Government has demonstrated its concern to assist local governments in country as well as city areas. I would emphasise our assistance in rural areas. The honourable member for Hume (Mr Lusher) denigrated our attitude and said that we had given little to rural areas and most to the States. If one adds up the programs one will find a definite bias, particularly in the program of area improvement. The Grants Commission provides a form of assistance by way of untied non-directed grants to local government, which is a financial topping up exercise to add further finance to local government's coffers as long as they demonstrate a fair degree of independence and of striving to get their own finance. As their rates are based on land values rural areas have a much lower base from which to draw their income. When that is taken into account and applied to Grants Commission per capita grants we find a definite bias in favour of rural areas. It comes as no surprise to hear from the Opposition that there is a rural anti bias in the Labor Party but on examination, on rationally dissecting and analysing the programs, we find the reverse. Behind the rhetoric of the Opposition is a refusal to accept what is truth.

Let me draw a few more contrasts between the attitude of the Government and the attitude of the Opposition to local government. In contrast to the Opposition which clearly is set to divide country and city because it wishes to maintain its shrinking power base—to demonstrate the lengths it will go to maintain that shrinking power base I need only mention that it would decimate the democratic principle of one vote one value—and vilify our policies for the rural sector, quite conveniently forgetting to point out the millions of dollars that are injected into the rural area through the several programs of the Government, and in particular the combined and integrated programs of the Minister for Urban and Regional Development, the Government, through the Minister, has undertaken detailed negotiations with the State governments and local governments. This is evident in the cooperation he has found with State governments which are willing to listen to rational argument, rational discourse and sensible policies that will result in a fairer deal for those who live in urban areas. The Minister is undertaking to achieve the Government's objective of equalising access to services for all Australians. In the 23 years when the Opposition was in government we found a definite drift to the cities. At one stage one in every three people lived in rural areas but now less than 15 per cent do. In other words that drift has meant halving of the percentage living in rural areas. The Government is determined to reverse that drift even at the risk of possibly helping some of the Country Party's ailing support. We do that benevolently.

Mr Sullivan—You touch me.

Mr LAMB—I thought I might. I know the soft spot in your policies. My soft spot is in my heart for you. The growth of new cities will aid our decentralisation program. There is an injection of funds in area improvement programs and sewerage programs. The latter, incidentally, will be extended to all towns with a population of 20,000 or more. The previous Government had no national sewerage program. As a result of the Labor Government's activities the benefits of the cities will also be enjoyed in country areas. There will be direct and indirect benefits to those now living in increasingly overcrowded cities because growth pressures will be lessened and there will be an injection of population and growth in rural areas.

The Australian Government wishes to lift the role of local government to its rightful level as a full partner in our constitutional system. Finance is the greatest lack of local government. Its lack prevents local government from being able to exercise power. However in association with the greater finance injected by the Australian Government must go a greater acceptance of responsibility. I ask honourable members to consider the Opposition's hypocritical and fallacious charge that this Government is centralist. In one breath the honourable member for Petrie said we are a centralist socialist government—that expression comes off the tongue as easy as a swear word to members opposite—but in the next breath he said that the Australian Government is nothing more than a tax collecting agency. I wish he would make up his mind. How can it be an agency and also be a centralist power? If the honourable member would consider this Government's development programs rationally, he would find that we have a national program.

Every integrated aspect of the program of the Minister for Urban and Regional Development will demonstrate an emphasis on integration and on a national approach. Without that national approach we can never overcome the neglect of previous years when the Opposition was in government. To demonstrate that we are non-centralist we have set up several impartial
bodies, commissions or interim committees. We have the Grants Commission, about which I have spoken, and the National Estate Commission which will be set up after the formation of an earlier committee. The officers of these impartial bodies are able to discuss lucidly and at length with State governments and other bodies.

As the honourable member for Shortland (Mr Morris) briefly, adequately and succinctly put it, the policy of this Government is consultation not confrontation. The Opposition pulls its policies and the amounts to fund them out of a hat and announces them off the top of its head. The Opposition would cut expenditure by 8 per cent. I do not suppose that members of the Opposition would go to the local governments in their areas and explain that they would receive less if the Opposition were unfortunately to come to government.

It is a balanced, national and integrated program that must, not, under any circumstances, be threatened by the replacement of this Government by an Opposition which has proved to be hypocritical and to have a lack of foresight and a lack of consultation with the Cinderella of governments, local government.

Mr McVEIGH (Darling Downs) (8.50)—The ideals and aims behind the creation of the Department of Urban and Regional Development are quite commendable; in fact it is a praiseworthy concept. There are very great inequalities in the cities as far as the quality of life is concerned. In fact, in certain areas, they are vast concrete jungles, as it were, which we might term environmental prisons. There are no school grounds in many places. We cannot allow this situation to continue. No increase in wages can make up for the conditions in which a vast number of the Australian people live. I assure the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren) that any moves by his Department to uplift the standard of living of a vast number of the Australian people will have my support and also the support of the Australian Country Party. Of course, at all times we must keep our feet firmly on the ground and pay due homage where it is due. We know that the Department has been built on the solid foundations of discussions initiated by my Party in 1964. The momentum for reform came from well informed debate. We saw in 1972 the growth of the National Urban and Regional Development Authority which became the present Cities Commission.

The Cities Commission and the Department are based on research, co-ordination, training and conference; but I do not think they have put into practice their aims and ideals. Valid criticism can be made to the effect that the Department at present is merely a self-perpetuating power house letting off steam but no action. In effect it is a mere clatter of the press. I want to comment in this debate on a very inaccurate statement made by the honourable member for Shortland (Mr Morris).

Mr Hewson—You mean Zambuck.

Mr McVEIGH—My colleague calls him 'Zambuck' the Shetland pony. I was going to say that if we watered him he might grow. The honourable member for Shortland said that the Honourable Joh Bjelke-Petersen, who everyone knows is a great Australian, had done nothing to help local government in Queensland. It is a pity that the honourable member does not do a bit of home work occasionally, instead of rushing in here like a Shetland pony.

Mr Morris—I rise to raise a point of order, Mr Deputy Chairman. I did not make that remark at all.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Order! That is not a point of order. The honourable member will have to make a personal explanation later.

Mr McVEIGH—Today the Premier of Queensland announced—it is a pity that the honourable member was not fair and did not listen and find out what is going on in Australia—an injection of $15m by the Queensland Government into local government in that State. Yet the honourable member comes in here and says that the greatest Australian who has ever lived has done nothing. If the honourable member gave me $15m and called it nothing I would be delighted. The Premier has given this money to local government in Queensland because of the tight money market created by the Australian Government's financial squeeze policy. To indicate the great fairness of this man, I mention that he has given $6m to the Brisbane City Council, no doubt because of the financial mismanagement of that authority under a Labor administration.

Mr Millar—Shame on the Brisbane City Council.

Mr McVEIGH—As the honourable member for Wide Bay says, shame on the Brisbane City Council for allowing innocent people in Brisbane to build homes in subdivisions on flood plains. We saw the floods wipe out homes which were built on flood plains under building authorities given by a Labor Party council. So, it was most unfair—although I thought the honourable member for Shortland occasionally was honest and
charitable—for him to come in here and say that this man had done nothing, when in fact today he had given $15m. The Premier of Queensland will not destroy local government. In effect he wants to build it up to be an equal partner as the third tier of government in this country.

It is interesting and quite remarkable to note that in the debate those who sit opposite have not commented on the fact that obviously no local government in Australia has seen one dollar of Grants Commission money.

Mr Hewson—They have talked about it for 2 years.

Mr McVEIGH—As the honourable member for McMillan said, the Australian Government has talked and chatted about it for 2 years but has not delivered the goods. We on this side of the chamber are practical people. We do not talk much, but we deliver the proper articles. At present, on account of the deliberate aims and thrusts of those who sit opposite to destroy local government, local governments have had to put off many of their trusted employees who often have been in the employment of the council for many years. It is interesting to note that, notwithstanding the fact that the Commonwealth debt is decreasing, the debt of local government in Australia has now reached the staggering sum of approximately $1,800m. The interest on that is approximately $100m a year.

In this debate I wish to talk about water insofar as the development of urban and regional areas is concerned. Water, in effect, is liquid gold in Australia. This is a dry continent and it is absolutely essential, if we are to ensure the development of our inland areas and to ensure the survival of people who live in the large cities, that we plan our water storage and water development forthwith. I think it is eminently logical to advance the theory that we should initiate moves to turn back into the inland, and to conserve in the appropriate places, our fast running coastal streams which now in many cases run aimlessly out to the ocean. We want more dams for irrigation. It is quite remarkable that notwithstanding the great pressure put on by the Queensland Government, which has given the Leslie Dam absolutely top priority, this Government in Canberra has not moved to give the finance and the necessary permission to complete the second stage of the Leslie Dam which would bring untold benefit to urban areas and also to the irrigation areas of the Darling Downs. We have not heard anything about this project which has been given absolutely top priority by the Queensland Government.

Much research is required in the matter of water. Notwithstanding the fact that we have large streams running aimlessly to the ocean, people will go where the water is. If we really and truly believe in the concept of development away from the large coastal areas, it is absolutely necessary to ensure adequate water in the inland waters. We have not done anything in the way of experimentation with chemical control to stop dams silting up. Those who sit opposite and never quite get their feet on the ground may not realise how tremendously important this is in the older, established countries of Europe where dams built many years ago are now silted up. I understand that it is quite a feasible project to control the silting up of dams by chemical means.

We can talk about the recycling of water. We must do away with interstate jealousies. For instance, Victoria might say that it wants all the water that falls in Victoria for the use of Victorians without having any regard to the State of New South Wales. Men must learn to live with each other and to overcome the environmental problems. Better use must be made of our water. Finally, I make an appeal to the Minister to give consideration to the allocation of regional employment development scheme funds for sewerage schemes in towns and cities with a population of less than 20,000. As the Minister knows, at present these cities and towns, mostly in rural areas, are not allowed access to sewerage moneys because of their small populations. I appreciate the fact that the Minister is nodding his head. It seems to me that if we are to increase the quality of life in these areas and to encourage people who have lived in the immediate vicinity for many years to continue to live there in their retirement, these areas must have sewerage.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

Mr MORRIS (Shortland)—Mr Chairman, I wish to make a personal explanation.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr MORRIS—I do. In his remarks the honourable member for Darling Downs (Mr McVeigh) said that I had said that the Premier of Queensland would do nothing for local government. The words I used were: ‘We saw the spectacle only a few months ago of the Premier, Mr ‘Bejoking’ Peterson standing over Queensland local government councils threatening that he
would reduce State financial assistance by an amount corresponding to any financial assistance that the councils may accept from this Government.'

Mr McVeigh—I raise a point of order, Mr Chairman. My point of order is this: It ill behoves any one in this chamber—

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr McVeigh—You have not heard me, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr McVeigh—May I make my point of order?

The CHAIRMAN—You are not making a point of order. You are making a debating point which is not a point of order. Resume your seat.

Mr McVeigh—I claim to have been misrepresented.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr WHAN (Eden-Monaro) (9.2)—The fracas we have just seen is typical of the relationship between the Opposition and the Government. A Government supporter demonstrated the truth of the statement he made because it was misquoted by the Opposition and we heard the previous speaker, the honourable member for Darling Downs (Mr McVeigh)—

Mr McVeigh—Mr Chairman, I claim to have been misrepresented.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member cannot interrupt an honourable member who is speaking and he ought to know that.

Mr WHAN—We heard the honourable member for Darling Downs make the most absurd statement we have ever heard in this Parliament, that the Australian Country Party does not talk very much. I thought members of the Australian Country Party said things like that only in regard to rural matters, but now we find that they are saying such things in regard to the estimates for the Department of Urban and Regional Development. They do not talk very much? That is one thing not one elector in this country would dispute. The Australian Country Party members have more to say both officially and non-officially in this Parliament than any other section of the Parliament.

Mr McVeigh—And it is all good stuff.

Mr WHAN—And it is all good stuff, we hear from the wings. The sort of material that they speak about frequently was demonstrated in the speech just given by the honourable member for Darling Downs. We just heard him give us the sort of delusion that members of the Country Party impose on the electorate. He said that the Grants Commission money had not reached the councils. There is a very good reason for that—the miscalculation that epitomises every decision that is ever made by the Opposition. That miscalculation was forcing the Parliament to the polls—the double dissolution.

There is no way on earth that we could have got that Grants Commission money to the councils. The honourable member for Darling Downs has not only displayed his ignorance in regard to the way the parliamentary process works; he cannot even read. The Bill to authorise the payment of the money is order of the day No. 37 on the notice paper that was before him when he seated himself in the chamber this morning. The Bill has not even gone through the Parliament. How could we pay this money to local government? We ought to see a much more acute awareness, at least of parliamentary procedure, from the members of the Country Party. We have come to accept that they lack a policy and have to impose misconceptions on the electorate, but surely we should expect that they can see that the parliamentary procedure has to be followed, that we have to pass the Bill before we can—

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I suggest that the honourable member should now return to the estimates.

Mr WHAN—I am talking about the Grants Commission which is clearly an issue which comes within the estimates of the Department of Urban and Regional Development which we are now discussing. Let me get down to much more important issues, issues which affect one of the best parts of Australia—the electorate of Eden-Monaro. I direct the attention of the Committee to 3 important expenditures in the estimates we are now discussing. The first—this may seem strange for those people who do not know the geography of this area—is the expenditure of $140m on the growth centre of Canberra; the second is the expenditure of $750,000 on the south-east coast of New South Wales, which is largely comprised of my electorate of Eden-Monaro; and the third is the $34m to be expended on sewerage works in New South Wales. What relevance do these 3 provisions have in relation to the present debate? They revolve around one simple fact: The population of Canberra by 1985 is estimated by the National Capital Development Commission to be 471,000 people. The population is currently
about 185,000 people. The population will grow from 185,000 to 471,000—nearly half a million—people by 1985. The impact that this growth will have on the electorates of Eden-Monaro and Hume is immense. It is absolutely essential that we dovetail this growth in the ACT with the surrounding areas.

Let us think very carefully about the problems that this issue presents. The first problem—it is a unique and special problem for this Government because we do not have the same political philosophy of Mr Askin and, God knows, how could we—is the difficulty of dovetailing the decisions that are made by the Australian Government with those of the New South Wales Government. The present Minister for Urban and Regional Development is a lovable man who endears himself and achieves co-operation. He has been remarkably successful in evoking co-operation from the States. I have no hesitation in saying that under this Minister we have been able to achieve much more success in regard to this extremely difficult task of obtaining co-operation from New South Wales in the border regions than we would have perhaps under some other Ministers in the present Government. Let us not get personal. The point to be made here is that the achieving of co-operation between the Australian Government, the State Government and local government, is absolutely essential for the development of the border region, for one simple reason, that is, that the population of Canberra will be nearly half a million by 1985.

Under the present Minister for Urban and Regional Development we have gone a long way towards achieving that co-operation. Queanbeyan, which is one of the fastest growing cities in New South Wales will benefit, I hope, from the allocation for sewerage of $34m in these estimates. This will be applied to cities with a population of more than 20,000 people. Queanbeyan has a population of more than 20,000 people. I hope that by the time of the next election its population will be 50,000. The people of Queanbeyan vote very well. I feel that in this particular case Queanbeyan deserves special consideration. Because only a railway line divides Queanbeyan from the Australian Capital Territory, we must have co-operation between the New South Wales Government and the Australian Government and the local government authorities in the development of that city. It suffers major disadvantages because of the presence of Canberra. Low income families are culled out to live in Queanbeyan and we have more than our average share of social problems in that city. We have more than our average share of local government problems in that city because the presence of Canberra, the sheer weight of the city, places a great imposition on Queanbeyan.

Far more importantly from the point of view of the total electorate is the area improvement program for the south-east region of New South Wales for which $750,000 is provided in these estimates. The effect of Canberra extends far beyond Queanbeyan. There are very few Canberra residents who have never travelled between here and the coast, who have never travelled what is almost a greater death highway than the Hume Highway is correctly represented to be in the Press. The road between Canberra and Bateman’s Bay deserves special consideration. Previous Federal Governments have acknowledged this. I am confident that this Government also will acknowledge that this road should receive special consideration. I know that I have understanding and sympathetic Ministers. In particular I know that the Minister for Urban and Regional Development who is in charge of the estimates now under discussion appreciates the problems with which I am confronted in regard to this road.

There are other social problems in my electorate which extend to the coast. One problem concerns recreational areas in the country and on the beaches which are used by the people who live in Canberra, which is the most rapidly growing city in Australia. We must integrate the development between Canberra and the surrounding areas if we are to achieve satisfaction for all. This need was acknowledged when the present Government took office and the Prime Minister allowed me to run a symposium—a very successful symposium—on the problems. I believe and I am absolutely confident, from continuing relationships from the Prime Minister down in the Cabinet, that we will have a continuation of that co-operation.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

Mr McVEIGH (Darling Downs)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

The CHAIRMAN—Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr McVEIGH—Yes. The honourable member for Eden-Monaro said that I did not know parliamentary procedure. This is not so. In fact I do know parliamentary procedure.

The CHAIRMAN—That is not a misrepresentation.

Mr McVEIGH—A Bill was read through this House last week in one day—
The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr MCVEIGH—A Bill was rammed through this House in one day last week.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr MCVEIGH—So, I know—

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I warn the honourable member for Darling Downs.

Mr CADMAN (Mitchell) (9.13)—At the outset I think I should say something to protect my friend the honourable member for Darling Downs (Mr MCVeigh) from the honourable member for Eden-Monaro (Mr Whan). I think the honourable member for Eden-Monaro should recognise great dedication and enthusiasm to a cause when he sees it. He should be prepared to overlook some of the shortcomings displayed by this most valuable member, a member who makes a very great contribution to the activities of this House.

I would like to commence my remarks on the consideration of the estimates for the Department of Urban and Regional Development by dealing with the balance between the Grants Commission and the area improvement program. A total of something like $56m has been allocated to local government by the Grants Commission. This amount of money has been allocated on a formula and the basic consideration, as I understand it, is on a needs basis. However, I find myself quite at a loss to understand exactly how these needs are assessed because within my own electorate I see great variation and great differences in the allocation of these funds. I would suggest that when the Minister for Urban and Regional Development is considering the area improvement program he should try to balance the shortfall, the differences, the oversights of the Grants Commission by placing in those areas where there has been a shortfall assistance under this area improvement program.

I would like to give the Minister some examples in this regard. I want to quote from the document entitled 'Urban and Regional Development 1974-75' circulated by the Minister. The document states:

The formulation of comprehensive development strategy plans for areas currently growing rapidly is important to future integrated development.

The document continues:

A further $45,000 was spent on studies and strategy plans for the Colo area of Sydney, which is under pressure because of the large number of city people seeking recreational outlets.

I think that is a most commendable plan. The honourable member for Mackellar (Mr Wentworth) has examined this plan with me. But the problem is that there has been no follow-up to this action. It does not look as though there will be follow-up action unless the Minister is prepared to initiate a second implementation or to give a second boost to the initial study. I am sure that the people involved in this local government area can understand the problems. But they need assistance, particularly financial assistance if the area study or the strategic plan that has been carried out on recreational facilities is to be of any value to them.

Another matter which I wish to raise concerns the Baulkham Hills Shire Council which has received a princely sum of $68,000 from the Grants Commission. Local government bodies in the surrounding areas received from $120,000 to something touching $1m.

Mr Armitage—Do you object to Blacktown Council receiving those grants?

Mr CADMAN—In no way whatsoever. I do not wish to imply that. I wish to see some balance and understanding as to why the differences in grants between local government areas have occurred. In no way do I decry the grant given to the Blacktown Council because I sincerely believe it is needed. However, I would like to point out that the Baulkham Hills Shire Council charges some of the lowest rates in Australia and is one of the most efficient bodies in Australia. I believe that this local government body is being penalised because of its efficiency. I believe that a simple assessment of the rates charged or a simple assessment of the facilities provided does not take into reckoning the true abilities of local bodies or councils. It does not take into account their ability to raise funds. These factors can so easily be overlooked.

I would like to suggest at this stage that an inbuilt formula based perhaps on the mileage of roads, condition of roads and the population increase within municipalities could be considered. The Baulkham Hills Shire Council is the fastest growing local government body in New South Wales. A formula which took into account population growth could well alleviate many of the problems of that area. People in the shire are scattered far and wide and the Council is battling to keep facilities up to them.

The area improvement program is decided and assessed by the staff of the Minister. But I feel so often these people go into an area with little local knowledge at their disposal and pick up a program that may be dealt with in isolation.
and as a result can easily be misled into making a decision on what is applicable to an area or what is a cohesive plan for the local government body concerned. The officers whom I have seen have often tended to pick a program that is rather spectacular, something that will cause comment but which may not be related to the overall development of a local government area. I mention in passing the planting of many trees in the Shire of Colo. I think I mentioned this matter in my maiden speech. No doubt the Minister is aware that this sort of situation cannot be allowed to continue. No doubt in the future officers of his Department will be more careful in considering local needs and the true feeling of people in an area. It is all very well to pick something from the list provided by a local government body which is spectacular, but I think that any program that is chosen must be related to the priorities of the residents.

I notice that the Government has allocated $14.1m for area improvement in the forthcoming years. I think it is unfortunate that we cannot look at the on-going costs of local government because there is no doubt that there will be a great increase in rates this year. I know that some councils and municipalities are looking at proposals to increase rates by something like 30 per cent to 50 per cent. These increases have been forced on the councils by increases in interest rates and wages which are items completely outside their control. Additional staff has been required to run many of the programs carried on under the area improvement program and perhaps in some small way this program has helped to encourage a bad and very serious development in the finances of local government.

I should like to conclude my speech by commenting on the incorporation of matters such as the National Estate within the Department of Urban and Regional Development. Reading through the Estimates I have frequently come across wording such as lands, buildings, preserved, restore, enhance, conserve and environment. I suggest to the Minister that traditionally and on the lead given to us by many countries with a great many more years experience in this field than we have had, the most effective way of dealing with the problem of matters coming under the National Estate—I do not in any way wish to decry the excellence of this program—is to place them under the Environment portfolio which has a team of specialists, people who are closely related to a study of the area, the preservation of buildings and the seeking out of historic sites and in fact historical towns.

The links between conservation, preservation and the environment are, in my view, the ones that are very close and I would feel that despite the Minister’s interest in the matter they are best dealt with under the Department of Environment and Conservation. In fact, I have noted on many occasions that the Minister responsible for that portfolio seldom makes a statement and seldom initiates anything without a covering statement from the Minister for Urban and Regional Development. Frankly I cannot understand this. Do we have a form of co-operation or do we have a form of oversight on your part, Mr Minister, because I think that this area should be divorced from your portfolio so as to give it the proper and continuous attention that such an important program deserves.

Mr UREN (Reid—Minister for Urban and Regional Development) (9.22)—In summing up the debate on the estimates for the Department of Urban and Regional Development I point out that we are discussing this Department for the second time. My Department is a new department. I inform the honourable member for Mitchell (Mr Cadman) that in establishing this Department the Australian Government determined that it would be a major policy department. In urban affairs and in the field of the environment everything is connected to everything else. In other words, there is an inter-relationship with all urban matters—land use, transport, housing or what have you—because they involve people and the lives of people who live in urban and regional communities. I know that it is very hard for honourable members opposite to understand this comprehensive approach. The estimates that we are debating are for my own Department, which is encompassed by my Ministry, the Cities Commission and the National Capital Development Commission. When this Government was elected to office on 2 December 1972 we knew that there were urban areas that had been grossly neglected by the previous Administration over a period of 23 years. In fact, an amount of $416m has been allocated in this Budget in this field but only $67m had been allocated by a previous government in the financial year 1971-72. That money was for the development of Canberra by the NCDC. This year we are allocating $140m to the NCDC.

In the setting up of my new Department, even though it has been set up in Canberra, there has been a spirit of entering into a dialogue with people at the local level, with private organisations, with local government organisations, with State government and Federal Government departments. It is important to inter-relate the
whole of the aspects which are involved. We do not divorce one aspect from the other. In case anybody has any doubts about this I point out that if we are to solve the problems of urban and regional development, bearing in mind that 85 per cent of the Australian population live in these areas, we must have a spirit of co-operation not only between the Australian Government, the State governments and local governments but also with the private sector and the people within our community. We need the co-operation of all organisations, both public and private. We need the involvement of the people. No other department situated in Canberra really integrates, contacts and talks to people at the grass roots level or involves itself with people more than my people do.

I was pleased to note that the 4 young speakers who spoke in this debate from this side of the chamber—in support of the Government—the honourable member for Shortland (Mr Morris), the honourable member for Diamond Valley (Mr McKenzie), honourable member for La Trobe (Mr Lamb) and the honourable member for Eden-Monaro (Mr Whan)—really have an understanding of what our policy is about. They have a real understanding of the policies which need to be considered and understood. I am indeed proud of them. We have found that in urban communities which are over-centralised the crisis that has occurred has really taken place to a greater extent in the 2 major cities of Sydney and Melbourne. Even though the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) and myself as the 2 major spokesmen on this matter for many years were fringe-dwellers we found ourselves co-operating with members of the Australian Country Party who wanted decentralisation, and for the first time action has been taken by a Government to try to do something about decentralisation.

During the administration of the previous Government the population of non-urban Australia was 31 per cent in 1947 but by 1970 it had fallen to 14.7 per cent. It is our policy to slow down the growth of our major capital cities, particularly Sydney and Melbourne. We had to try to rationalise the development of those cities because they had expanded and had become over-centralised. The heart of those cities was over-centralised. There was an over-development of the central business districts of both Sydney and Melbourne. We sought to bring about rational development in those cities, and that is our objective. We set out in our policies to bring about a rational transport system. This year we have initiated a program and provided funds for the States on a $2 for every $1 matching basis to upgrade public transport systems. We are trying to rationalise the road systems. We are trying to bring in new techniques in the field of housing.

In an attempt to give some real assistance to local government we have made available through the Australian Grants Commission an amount of $56m. The honourable member for Mitchell (Mr Cadman) criticised the Government over local government indebtedness, as did the honourable member for Petrie (Mr Hodges), but let me give honourable members opposite some idea of the debt structure that existed under the administration of successive Liberal-Country Party governments led by Menzies, Holt, Gorton and McMahon. In that time the Australian Government's internal debt remained fairly static. There was very little change during the 23 years of Liberal-Country Party administration. But the States' debts increased sevenfold. Local government debt had increased by 2,000 per cent. In the case of semi-government instrumentailities such as sewerage authorities the debt increased by something like 2,800 per cent. When young members on the opposite side talk about the problems of local government and the problems of urban cities I remind them that this is what we on this side of the House have inherited. I stress to all honourable members that you cannot solve the problems of urban and regional affairs overnight. There are no instant coffee solutions.

We are trying to do something about these problems. We are trying to do something about all the cities in both rural and urban areas. We are trying to enhance and protect the National Estate. For the first time we have introduced an inquiry into the National Estate to try to preserve it. This is not on the basis of centralism. This is on the basis of a spirit of co-operation. The only way in which we can really solve this problem is by co-operation and dialogue amongst all levels of government—Australian, State and local—and the private sector and even the individual. We all have to work together to preserve those things which have been created by man and by the nature which are unique or beautiful and worth preserving for posterity.

In the first year of the Labor Government's administration I was able to get from the Federal Treasury $2.5m for the National Estate. This year $8m will be allocated to preserve and enhance the National Estate. The honourable member for Petrie (Mr Hodges) criticised the attitude of the Federal Government towards Queensland. He should ask the conservation groups in that State and the National Trust of
Queensland which was the first national government that came to the aid of the National Trust in Queensland and he will be told that the Whitlam Labor Government was the first one to assist it.

We can talk about the question of regions. It is said that the Whitlam Labor Government is a centralist government. Is it a centralist government? We have done more than has ever been done before to bring about equality amongst the 3 levels of government in a spirit of co-operation. We are not trying to dictate policy to the regions. The allocation for administration this year is less than $500,000, because we want to see leadership come from the grass roots. We want the regions to make requests. We want to know what their needs are. That is why we are not thrusting anything on them. Everything is done on a voluntary basis. The regions to benefit from Federal assistance have been decided in co-operation with the State authorities and have been discussed with local government authorities. Dialogue will be held with these authorities to determine what their future may be.

The honourable member for Petrie asked about the Government’s promises on sewerage. We will analyse the question of sewerage. On present day costs without any inflationary input, it will cost the citizens of Australia $3,800m to sewer all our urban communities in a proper way, which will protect the environment. We believe that the national Government will be paying 40 per cent of that cost. As I said earlier, after 23 years of the administration of the former government the debt burden of semi-government authorities has risen by 2,800 per cent while the internal debt of the national government remained static.

What was done in the first year of the Labor administration? In that year we were able to make available $37m at the long term Commonwealth bond rate repayable over 40 years. We did not think that those terms were good terms but they were the best terms that had ever been made available to semi-government authorities in their history. This year, with the support of my colleagues, I was able to get Cabinet approval to make available $104m, 30 per cent of which will be in the form of non-repayable grants with the remainder to be repaid over 40 years with interest calculated at the long term Commonwealth bond rate. I remind the honourable member for Petrie that this year Queensland was able to draw $13.5m. It received no assistance for 23 years, but in one year it received $13.5m from the so-called centralist Whitlam Labor Government. We have made this money available to the Bjelke-Petersen Government in Queensland.

I could speak about many other things, but I should answer briefly the honourable member for Parramatta (Mr Ruddock) who sought certain information about the area improvement programs in the western sector of Sydney. He said that last year $5m was made available and that this year only $2m was made available. That is not the situation. Last year, the first year of the program, $5m was made available. Included in that $5m was money that would normally have been spent through the departments of Tourism and Recreation, Transport, Social Security, Education and other departments as well as through the Australian Council for the Arts. This year, which is the second year of the program, we have been able to work in co-operation with all other areas within our Government. Money will be spent by the departments I have mentioned as well as by the Department of Urban and Regional Development.

I stress that in looking at the urban and regional development of our communities we have to make sure we have continuing and interconnected policies. We have to look at the long term urban strategy. We have to look at the urban and regional development budget program. Money should be spent wisely and not spent wrongly as it so often was in the past. I believe that the only way we can do these things is by encouraging a spirit of co-operation with other levels of Government. My Department and my Ministry work in a spirit of co-operation with all levels of government, with citizens’ organisations and with the citizens themselves, because my administration believes in dialogue with the people—we have trust in people—with people’s organisations, with local government, with State authorities and with its fellow departments in the Federal system.

Mr Wentworth—One of the pathetic things about the Minister is that I think he really—

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr Wentworth—He does not always understand.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I warn the honourable member for Mackellar.

Mr Killen—What has he done?

The CHAIRMAN—He is speaking without the call; that is what he is doing.

Mr Wentworth—I apologise.

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

Mr Wentworth—Do you call me now, Mr Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. There is a question before the Chair. I am waiting for the Committee to resume its normal decorum.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Remainder of the Bill—by leave—taken as a whole and agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; report adopted.

Third Reading

Motion (by Mr Lionel Bowen)—by leave—proposed:

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Mr Wentworth (Mackellar) (9.39)—Mr Speaker—

Motion (by Mr Nicholls) agreed to:

That the question now be put.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2) 1974-75

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 17 September on motion by Mr Crean:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr Wentworth (Mackellar) (9.40)—Mr Speaker, this Bill—

Motion (by Mr Nicholls) agreed to:

That the question be now put.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Motion (by Mr Lionel Bowen) proposed:

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Mr Speaker—The question is that the Bill be now read a third time. Those of that opinion say aye, to the contrary no.

Mr Wentworth—Mr Speaker, I was on my feet, sir.

Mr Speaker—Did you say you were out on your feet?

Mr Wentworth—I said 'on my feet'.

Mr Speaker—I am sorry. I call the honourable member for Mackellar.

Mr Wentworth (Mackellar) (9.41)—Mr Speaker—

Motion (by Mr Nicholls) agreed to:

That the question be now put.

Original question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

Mr Lionel Bowen (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State)—I present for the information of honourable members the report of the Industries Assistance Commission on commercial motor vehicles dated 17 September 1974.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr McKenzie (Diamond Valley)—I present the third report of the Publications Committee.


SEAMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL 1974

Second Reading

Mr Lionel Bowen (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State) (9.43)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to increase the rates and amounts of compensation payable under the Seamen's Compensation Act to seamen and their dependants. The Bill will ensure that the monetary rates payable under the Act are kept in line with those contained in the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Bill. However, I should mention that the proposed amendments will not involve any cost to the Australian Government as payments under the Seamen's Compensation Act are made by the shipowners. The Bill provides for the weekly rates of compensation for total incapacity to be increased from $43 to $57 for a seaman; from $11 to $15 for the dependent wife of a seaman; and from $5 to $7 for each dependent child of a totally incapacitated seaman. The maximum weekly amount payable in respect of partial incapacity is to be increased from $43 to $57.

In addition to the increases in weekly incapacity payments, the Bill provides for the lump sum death benefit, to which the lump sum benefits for specified injuries and maximum compensation are related, to be increased from $14,500 to $20,000. The weekly payment for each dependent child of a deceased seaman will be increased from $5 to $7 and the maximum
payable in respect of funeral costs will be increased from $300 to $450. These increases in benefits for our Merchant Navy personnel will be payable on and from the date on which the Bill receives the Royal Assent. I commend the Bill to the House and trust that honourable members will give it a speedy passage.

Debate (on motion by Mr Killen) adjourned.

COMPENSATION (AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES) BILL 1974
Second Reading

Mr LIONEL BOWEN (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State) (9.44)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The main purpose of this Bill is to provide for increases in benefits payable under the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act 1971-1973 which provides workers’ compensation for employees of the Australian Government and its statutory authorities. Before outlining the provisions of the Bill I should mention that the Bill would not be necessary but for the Senate’s failure to pass the Compensation (Commonwealth Employees) Bill 1973. That Bill was passed without opposition by this House in April 1973 but its consideration was deferred on several occasions by the Opposition parties in the Senate and it eventually lapsed when the Parliament was prorogued last February. Because of the attitude of the Senate and also because of the Government’s intention to introduce a national compensation scheme, as evidenced by the National Compensation Bill 1974 that was passed by this House on 24 October 1974, the Government decided not to persevere with the Compensation (Commonwealth Employees) Bill. However, as honourable members are aware, it is proposed that the national compensation scheme should be introduced in stages, with the first stage not expected to come into operation until 1 July 1976. Because of this and also because there have been significant increases in the cost of living and in the benefits payable under state workers’ compensation legislation since the rates of compensation for Australian Government employees were last increased in November 1972, it is now necessary and, indeed, only equitable for the rates payable under the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act to be increased.

Compensation for total incapacity

The Act already provides for employees injured on or after 2 November 1972 to receive a weekly compensation payment equal to their normal full sick pay rate during the first 26 weeks of total incapacity for work. However, for long term cases, where the injury was sustained prior to 2 November 1972, and for cases where the injury was sustained on or after that date and total incapacity has exceeded 26 weeks, the compensation is based on fixed weekly rates specified in the Act. The Bill provides for these rates to be increased. Under the Bill, the weekly compensation for a totally incapacitated employee without dependants will be increased from $43 to $57. The additional weekly supplement for a dependent spouse will be increased from $11 to $15 and the weekly supplement for each dependent child will be increased from $5 to $7.

Compensation for partial incapacity

In accordance with the increase in the basic weekly rate for a single employee, the maximum amount of compensation generally payable to a partially incapacitated employee will be increased from $43 to $57 a week.

Compensation for death

The Bill also provides for increases in the amounts of compensation payable where an injury results in the death of an employee. The basic lump sum payable to dependants will be increased from $14,500 to $20,000. The weekly amount payable in respect of each dependent child of a deceased employee will increase from $5 to $7 and the minimum total amount payable for each child will be increased from $500 to $700. The maximum amount payable in respect of funeral expenses will be increased from $300 to $450.

Compensation for specified losses

The lump sums payable under the Act for specified losses will also be increased. The maximum lump sum payment for the more serious scheduled losses will be increased from $14,500 to $20,000 and there will be proportionate increases in lump sum payments for the less serious losses. Payments for loss of the capacity to engage in sexual intercourse and severe and permanent facial disfigurement will increase from $7,250 to $10,000 and compensation for loss of the sense of taste or smell will be increased from $1,450 to $2,000.

Other increases

The maximum amount payable for alterations to buildings or vehicles, or repair or replacement of certain aids and appliances will go up from $350 to $500. Finally, the amount of additional compensation payable where an employee requires the constant help or attendance of another person will be increased from $9 to $14 a week.
Minor amendments

The opportunity has been taken to make some minor amendments, some of a drafting nature and others to correct errors or anomalies in what is comparatively new legislation. The first of these amendments will ensure that a 'prescribed Court', as defined in the Act, will include the County Court in the State of Victoria. Consequently upon the enactment of the Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973, the Bill will amend the provisions in the Act relating to salary and allowances for the Commissioner for Employees' Compensation and the Compensation Tribunal.

At present, a claimant cannot recover any costs he incurs in connection with a request to the Commissioner for reconsideration of a determination. However, a claimant is entitled to costs if, after he has instituted proceedings before a compensation tribunal or a prescribed court, the Commissioner, on his own motion, reconsiders and varies or revokes the determination and thereby renders the proceedings before the tribunal or court abortive. Under a new provision contained in the Bill the Australian Government will be liable to reimburse any costs reasonably incurred by a claimant in relation to a determination which is varied or revoked by another determination as a result of a request to the Commissioner for a reconsideration; such a liability will be imposed when the second determination is more favourable to the claimant or, if it is less favourable to the claimant, when he was not the party who made the request for reconsideration of the first determination.

The Bill contains some amendments to the provisions in the Act relating to the calculation of an employee's average weekly earnings to remove some anomalies which have come to notice. Some amendments of a consequential nature are also included because of the enactment of the Defence Forces Retirement and Death Benefits Act 1973. These amend the provisions under which the portion of a superannuation pension not attributable to the employee's contributions is taken into account when determining the weekly compensation payable for total or partial incapacity for work.

Amendment of other Act

Honourable members may also care to note that the Bill provides for amendments to the Schedule to the United States Naval Communication Station (Civilian Employees) Act 1971-1973. This Act is a companion piece of legislation which extends the terms of the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act to civilian employees employed by the United States Navy in connection with the naval communication station. The amendments to the Schedule are necessary to apply the amendments to the Principal Act to these employees.

Application of amendments

The intention is that the amending legislation will come into operation on the day on which it receives the royal assent and the Bill provides for the increased weekly payments to apply on and from that date, notwithstanding that the payments relate to an injury sustained before that date. The increased lump sum payments for death and specified losses will apply on and from the date of commencement of the amending Act in all cases where the death occurs or the loss is suffered on or after that date, even though the death or the loss may have resulted from an injury sustained before that date. Increases in other benefits will apply in a similar manner.

Cost of increased benefits

The total cost of the increases to which I have referred is estimated to be $700,000 for the remainder of this financial year and $1.2m for a full year. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr Killen) adjourned.

AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AGENCY BILL 1974

Second Reading

Mr MORRISON (St George—Minister for Science and Minister assisting the Minister for Foreign Affairs in matters relating to Papua New Guinea) (9.52)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to establish the Australian Development Assistance Agency to administer the provision by Australia of aid for developing countries and to advise the Minister on matters relating to aid. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will be responsible for the Agency. Honourable members will recall that this Bill was introduced by the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) and passed by this House in the second session of the last Parliament. It is gratifying to note that the Bill received support on both sides of the House, and indeed more generally in the community. There are no changes in the Bill which was reintroduced in this Parliament—in the Senate—on 22 October. The reasons for the Government's decision to unify the administration of Australian aid within a separate statutory corporation were outlined fully in the Prime Minister's second reading speech on this Bill in the House on 12 March 1974. This is recorded in Hansard of that date and there is no need for me
to go over the same ground in quite the same
detail on this occasion. I propose, however, to
cover the main points and to make one or two
additional observations.

Over the years there has been a great increase
in the volume and complexity of Australia's
development assistance. The Government has
decided that it is necessary to consolidate the
organisational arrangements which have
developed in a largely ad hoc fashion over a
quarter of a century since Australia's first involv-
ment in aid as a founder of the Colombo Plan.
The solution which was appropriate in 1953-54,
to distribute between various departments with
related interests the administration of a program
of less than $20m in aid, is clearly inappropriate
to the complex program of 1974-75, which totals
$341m. The Government decided that
improvements must be effected in all aspects of
our aid endeavours—in the machinery for
formulating policy, in ensuring greater attention
to the welfare and distributive effects of our aid,
in evaluating the effectiveness of our various pro-
grams, in bringing greater expertise into our
staffing arrangements and in more directly
associating the community with the Govern-
ment's aid efforts.

Because of the inadequacy of past arrange-
ments, also recognised by the Joint Parliamen-
tary Foreign Affairs Committee's 1972 inquiry
into Australia's foreign aid, in March of last year
the Prime Minister commissioned a task force 'to
examine all the options for a unified aid admin-
istration to administer all aid including multila-
teral aid, all bilateral aid and aid to an indepen-
dent Papua New Guinea'. This task force con-
sidered a number of possible structures for aid
administration. In the Government's view, the
form which will best meet Australia's needs is a
statutory corporation, under a Director-General
responsible to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.
The Bill now before the House is designed to
implement these decisions.

Honourable members will be aware that, as an
interim measure, pending legislation, and in
order to provide continuity in our aid arrange-
ments, an office of the Australian Development
Assistance Agency was set up on 1 December
last within the Department of Foreign Affairs to
bring together existing aid functions previously
carried out by a number of departments. The
Agency has since been functioning in that form.
Mr L. W. Johnson, former Administrator and
High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea, was
appointed on 8 April of this year as its Director-
General.

Parts I and II of the Bill provide for the estab-
lishment of the Agency and set out its functions,
which are to administer Australia's aid to
developing countries and to advise the Minister
on these matters. Part III of the Bill provides for
the appointment by the Governor-General of a
Director-General of the Agency, for a term not
exceeding 5 years. Part IV of the Bill covers the
establishment of a Development Assistance Ad-
visory Board, to advise the Minister and the
Agency in respect of matters relating to aid to
developing countries. The Board will normally
include members of the public, the trade unions,
the business community and voluntary organisa-
tions, in addition to public servants. An interim
committee of the Board has been established
under the chairmanship of Sir John Crawford
and has already done valuable work in clarifying
the approach which should be adopted on the
complex issues of aid.

Part V of the Bill covers staff matters and pro-
vides that the permanent staff of the Agency
shall be public servants. Part VI of the Bill pro-
dvides for moneys appropriated for aid projects to
be paid to a Development Assistance Fund
which will be non-lapping. This will avoid the
difficulties which have been encountered in
meeting aid commitments and will ensure conti-
nuity of aid activities. Part VII of the Bill pro-
vides, inter alia, for the Agency to submit an
annual report to the Minister for presentation to
Parliament and to furnish financial statements to
the Auditor-General.

In deciding that the Agency should be re-
sponsible to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the
Government has recognised the close connection
between aid and foreign policy. Development
assistance lies within the framework of
Australia's foreign relations and our aid objec-
tives must be consonant with our national policy
objectives in our relations with other countries.
We attach great importance, therefore, to the es-
tablissement and maintenance of a close and
effective working relationship between the
Agency and the Department of Foreign Affairs.
Practical liaison arrangements have already
been established between the Agency and the
Department to ensure consultation on a day-to-
day basis. Submissions to the Minister on policy
and other matters of substance will indicate that
such consultation has taken place.

Similarly, Aid Agency personnel serving over-
seas, who will be under the direction of the head
of the Australian mission, will have the normal
responsibility to keep heads of mission informed
of their activities and to consult appropriate mis-
sion staff on matters which have foreign policy
impressions. Heads of mission, or their designates, will be given an opportunity to comment on proposals for new forms of aid or significant modifications to existing aid activities. In addition, the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Mr Renouf, is at present a member of the interim committee of the Development Assistance Advisory Board and will be a member of the Board to be established under this legislation. The Department of Foreign Affairs will also be represented on the interdepartmental committee on external aid, which will ensure the co-ordination of aid policy matters with other areas of Government policy, including our foreign relations.

Mr Speaker, an important consideration which has influenced the form of this Bill has been the Government’s recognition of the growing awareness in our community of Australia’s place in the world and in particular its role in our region. Australians appreciate that we are among the more fortunate nations of the world and that this fact has important implications for our attitudes towards assisting developing countries. The Government, in setting up the Development Assistance Advisory Board and by its assistance to non-government agencies, has indicated that it welcomes community participation in Australia’s aid efforts. Many Australians understand that changes have taken place in the philosophy underlying international aid and they are conscious that Australia must adapt its aid policies to the needs of the future. The Government looks to the new Agency to devise aid initiatives which will help to raise the living standards of the majority in developing countries, to ameliorate population pressure, to create wider employment opportunities and to strengthen the rural sector. These are aspects of development which have sometimes been overlooked, but which are now being recognised as key areas in the effort to assist developing countries. To ensure that Australian aid takes these directions there will be a comprehensive review of existing programming and a greater emphasis in future on critical analysis and evaluation. The Government expects that the Agency established by this Bill will further the new directions in our aid policies, ensure greater benefits to those who receive our aid and devise effective programs which will gain the support and sympathetic involvement of the Australian Community. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr Killen) adjourned.

AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION BILL 1974
Second Reading
Mr MORRISON (St George—Minister for Science) (10.0)—I move:
That the Bill be now read a second time.

On 2 October 1974 a Bill was introduced in another place by my colleague the Minister for the Media, Senator Douglas McClelland, which was designed to establish an Australian Film Commission. This body will administer the principal forms of assistance to be provided by the Australian Government for the development of the film and television program production industries in this country. The Bill was intended by the Government to provide the best combination of features to achieve the advancement of these industries and to serve best the interests of Australia though a broad answerability to Parliament for the public funds entrusted to the Commission. However, the Bill now before this House is an amended version of the Bill originally introduced in the Senate on the 26th September. By the original Bill’s nature, the Government thought it would have enjoined the cooperation of all. But this was not the case and the passage of this Bill through the Senate has seen the real effectiveness of the proposed Commission reduced as an instrument for the regeneration of the Australian Film Industry. I will deal later with some of these matters in greater detail, but at the moment I will set out the intentions of the Government when introducing the Bill.

The broad functions of the Commission are intended to be as follows:

(a) To encourage, whether by the provision of financial assistance or otherwise, the making, promotion, distribution and exhibition of Australian films and television programs;

(b) To make, promote, distribute and exhibit any films and television programs or commission these activities on its behalf;

(c) Through Film Australia, the Australian Government’s film production arm, to make, or commission the making of films, meeting the requirements of a Department of State or authority of Australia, films dealing with matters of national interest to Australia, and films designed to illustrate or interpret aspects of Australia or of the life and activities of the Australian people;

(d) To assist a State or State authority to purchase Australian films of an educational
nature and of national interest or importance; and

(e) To encourage the proper keeping of films in archives in Australia, providing financial assistance, if necessary, for this purpose.

The Bill provides for the repeal of the Australian Film Development Corporation Act 1970 and the Australian Film Development Corporation Act (No. 2) 1970. Upon repeal of those Acts the Australian Film Commission will assume as part of its functions, but in broadened and strengthened form, the role and responsibilities of the Australian Film Development Corporation which, within its restricted franchise, has assisted considerably the development of local film and television production. The Bill also makes provision for the transfer of Film Australia, at present a branch of the Department of the Media, to the Australian Film Commission where it is intended that it will continue to produce excellent films of world standard for Australian Government purposes. I stress the word "continue" because the Opposition in the other place appeared to convey the impression that this was some Machiavellian new function which was designed somehow to enable the Government to begin flooding the country with propaganda.

It should be noted unequivocally that the previous Australian Government had been having films made, with the approval of the Minister of the day, by a branch of a Department of State, over which it had total control, for 23 years. Similarly the present Government has had such similar control over the Government's film making organisation for nearly the past 2 years and I challenge anyone to name any one film produced by the film production unit which can be considered to be in any way a propaganda film. Surely it must be obvious that it would be unworkable if the Government were not to have any say whatever in the making of films for national purposes, as the Opposition in the Senate sought to provide for. This would be tantamount, in a commercial context, to preventing the freedom of a person wishing to commission a film organisation to make a film, expressing his opinion on how the film should be made.

The Government realises, however, that it has a responsibility to assist in the development of the talents and abilities of Australian filmmakers, through the Government's film production unit and the Bill thus provides Film Australia with a fresh and expanded opportunity to develop and apply its creative potentialities. Similarly the Bill provides for the freedom and flexibility in financial operations which Film Australia has not had in the past and will enable the Commission to co-ordinate and operate in the closest of harmony with the demands of the industry.

The Bill is an earnest of the Government's determination to establish a viable local film and television production industry. The Minister for the Media said, at a gathering of motion picture industry executives on 2 February 1973, that the Labor Government has 'undertaken as part of our nation building, to encourage an increasing participation by Australian artists, producers, writers and technicians in developing a local feature film industry and in the production of Australian programs for television'. He also pointed out on that occasion that it was tragic that film, one of the greatest forms of mass communication in history, was not fostered and protected by Government during Australia's promising early film beginnings. Twice the Australian film industry has had the ground cut away from under it. He pointed out that vested interests had been allowed to largely destroy the industry through greater access to the capital necessary to such an industry and through the stranglehold obtained on the channels through which films reach their audience.

In 1963 the Senate Select Committee Report on the Encouragement of Australian Productions for Television—known as the Vincent Committee—pointed out that, in the case of an industry with a strong cultural element, there is a great responsibility to protect it. That report also recommended a loan scheme of subsidy and this was implemented to a degree with the introduction by the Gorton Government in 1970 of the Australian Film Development Corporation Act. However, the Act did not go far enough in setting out the functions of the Corporation. The Tariff Board was requested, on 20 March 1972, by the then Minister for Trade and Industry in the previous Government, to inquire into and recommend on the assistance needed for the production in Australia of motion picture films and television programs. The Board made its report in June 1973 and after detailed consideration of the report the Labor Government accepted most of its recommendations with respect to the measures considered necessary to encourage a local film production industry. The Government also approved of the establishment of an Interim Board to advise the Minister on policy matters associated with the formation of the Commission and to carry out some preliminary planning tasks. The Interim Board has been functioning efficiently since February of this year. It is
representative of the industry and the public and has been examining a wide range of important matters.

During the period since this Government came to office in December 1972 we have done much to encourage the industry and to stimulate fresh ideas and new initiatives. As a consequence there has been a new surge of hope throughout the industry. Feature film production has risen to levels not known for many years. Television programs of a distinctively Australian character have reached new heights of public acceptability and popularity. In all, there has been a heartening upswing in creative and technical opportunities and in the influence on the industry of Australian producers, artists, writers, actors and technicians. The development of the Australian film and television industries under the Labor Government has been outstandingly successful.

The enactment of this Bill to establish the Australian Film Commission is now a vital and historic step in the process of further developing a viable Australian film and television program production industry. The Bill introduced in the other place provided for the Commission to have the power to do all things necessary for the performance of the functions set out for it. Provision was made for the Minister to be able only to give general directions to the Commission in respect of the overall performance of its functions, except in those functions relating to the making of films for Australian governmental purposes out of funds directly appropriated by Parliament for these purposes, where it was proposed he should have a power of specific direction. The power of specific direction was retained merely to ensure that the Government's film program was carried out in accordance with the situation which has existed for some thirty years now, whereby the Minister is immediately accountable to Parliament for the way in which those funds are expended.

However, the Senate Opposition sought the deletion of the Minister's general power of direction, ostensibly for the noble purpose of ensuring the complete and absolute independence of the Commission. This attitude was taken despite the fact that a considerable number of legislative enactments under the previous Government contained analogous provisions.

For example, section 17 of the Australian Tourist Commission Act 1967; section 13 (3) of the Australian Wheat Board Act 1970; section 7 (3) of the Australian Apple and Pear Corporation Act 1973; section 19 of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission Act 1966; section 10 (1) of the Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1972; and in section 14 of the Commonwealth Scholarships Board Act 1945. Under the Bill as initially presented any such directions, whether general or specific, would have to be given by the Minister in writing and be set out in the Commission's annual report.

The Bill also provided for the Australian Film Commission to have power to direct exhibitors that a specified portion of the screening time given to short films must be devoted to films certified by the Commission to be Australian short films. The Opposition in the other place again sought to vitiate these provisions by deleting Film Australia films from eligibility for consideration as quota films. This further demonstrated the Opposition's lamentable understanding of the issues involved. They criticised and had deleted from the Bill, a provision giving the Minister power to direct the Commission to observe Australia's international treaty obligations. Their reasons were that it should be left to a statutory body, quite independent of the Government, to interpret and implement the Australian Government's obligations under an international agreement; a ludicrous proposition in the extreme.

The financial affairs of the Commission will be conducted under two broad categories. As a trading corporation in respect to all of its general activities, other than the special film-making functions of Film Australia, the Commission will apply the accounting principles generally followed in commercial practice. Film productions at Film Australia, on the other hand, will be financed from moneys specifically appropriated for this purpose by the Parliament and will therefore be treated as a non-trading type of activity. Nevertheless, as I mentioned earlier, the Treasury regulations will not apply to the operations of the Commission and it will be able to devise financial systems appropriate to its special needs. The Bill does provide, however, for strict accountability in the management of the Commission's affairs. The Auditor-General is given full powers to inspect accounting records and is required to audit the Commission's accounts and to draw to the attention of the Minister any irregularity of importance.

The Bill makes proper provision for the transfer to the Australian Film Commission of the assets, rights, etc., of the Australian Film Development Corporation and also from Film Australia. It deals with procedural matters involved in employment by the Commission of people now on the staff of the Australian Film Development Corporation and in the winding
Adjournment

7 October 1974

The Minister for Labour and Immigration, Mr. Bowen, yesterday in his Budget speech


down and final reporting upon the operations of
that Corporation. As is the normal practice for
statutory authorities, the Commission is required
under the Bill to report annually to Parliament
through the Minister. As indicated before, finan-
cial statements accompanying the annual report
will be reported upon by the Auditor-General
before the report and financial statements are
placed before each House of the Parliament. The
Commission will be required to furnish such
reports as the Minister requires and it may fur-
nish such other reports as it thinks fit.

The Bill also provides for the Governor-
General to make regulations under the Act. The
Bill as amended by the Senate and now pre-
tended to this House has a considerable number
of weaknesses in it which have been forced upon
the Government by the Senate Opposition. The
Government therefore intends to introduce
amendments to the Bill which will correct certain
deficiencies that have resulted from the pro-
visions deleted from the Bill. This Bill has the
potential to be the cornerstone on which a
healthy and viable film industry may be built
and I commend the legislation to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr Katter) adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

National Safety Council—Regional
Employment Development Scheme—Great
Barrier Reef—Unemployment—Julius
Dam—Political Appointments—Simulated
Cigarettes—‘Noongah’ Fund

Motion (by Mr Morrison) proposed:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr MACPHEE (Balaklava) (10.15)—I wish
to raise a matter which I would have raised yes-
yesterday in the debate on the estimates for the
Department of Labor and Immigration had time
 permitted. I shall concentrate my remarks pri-
marily on division 300, subdivision 3, item 04 of
the estimates of that Department which concerns
the grant to the National Safety Council. The
explanation of this item of expenditure in the De-
partment’s explanation of these estimates
records unequivocally the Department’s high
regard for the National Safety Council and
acknowledges:

It is a voluntary non-profit organisation which has existed
for many years. Its aim is the promotion of safety in every
sphere of activity.

The Department’s explanation records further
that for its promotion of safety and the training
and advisory services which the National Safety
Council provides it receives a measure of support
from State governments. By far the largest single

amount it receives is from the Queensland State
Government Insurance Office. This amounts to
$175,000 and goes to the Queensland Branch of
the National Safety Council. The Department
records also that the balance of the Council’s
income is derived from subscriptions, donations,
the sale of promotional material and fees for ser-
dvices from those companies which engage the
National Safety Council.

In 1973-74 the grant by the Department of
Labor and Immigration to the National Safety
Council was $100,000. This year it is raised, in
money terms, by $10,000. In real terms this
amounts to a lower grant because inflation is
running at a rate which will be well in excess of
the 10 per cent increase in the grant. This situa-
tion simply is not good enough. In saying this I
am well aware that by implication I am being
critical of previous Liberal-Country Party
governments for having given so little to the
same cause. It is one of the sad hallmarks of
governmental action that attention is rarely di-
crected to preventative measures. This is a valid
criticism of areas of scientific and medical
research as well as in the matter of industrial
safety. However while I am, by implication,
being critical of previous governments I believe I
am well justified in being critical of the present
miserable allocation to the National Safety
Council.

When one considers that last week in this
House we had rushed through a piece of legis-
lation to provide for a national compensation
scheme at a cost to Consolidated Revenue of
hundreds of millions of dollars does not the sum
of $110,000 for industrial safety now seem paltry
and absurd? The Special Minister of State (Mr
Lionel Bowen) when introducing the National
Compensation Bill said that the correct order of
priorities for the Government in a national pro-
gram was, firstly, safety; secondly, rehabilita-
tion; and, thirdly, compensation. I asked then
why it was that we had a Bill concerning com-
pensation first. I also asked when we would re-
ceive legislation on the other 2 matters. At that
time the Minister gave no satisfactory reply. I
agree with the Government’s list of priorities. I
believe that legislation regarding safety and
rehabilitation is needed. I trust that when it is
introduced it will lie on the table long enough for
the Opposition to make constructive comments
on it. Last week I asked a question regarding the
administration of this scheme of national com-
pensation, a matter upon which the Bill itself was
silent. Again one hopes that when the adminis-
tration of this safety and rehabilitation legis-
lation is considered we will have an adequate op-
portunity to make comments. One hopes that 
when the administration is considered regard 
will be had for the role of existing agencies and 
that the Government will avoid the creation of a 
massive bureaucracy and will work through 
extisting agencies, the foremost of which is cer-
tainly the National Safety Council.

It would seem appropriate to say to the Minis-
ter for Labor and Immigration now, in case we 
are confronted with a fait accompli and find job 
advertisements in the newspapers setting out 
details of the bureaucracy, that he may not be 
consulted in any substantive way about the Bill 
when it eventually comes into the form of a 
national safety and rehabilitation scheme. It is 
worth drawing the Minister's attention to the fact 
that if his Department sees fit to make a grant it 
presumably has the high regard which the ex-
planatory note says the Department has for the 
National Safety Council. In volume 2 of its 
report the Woodhouse Committee was most 
complimentary to the National Safety Council. I 
believe that what the Committee said in volume 
2 at page 130, paragraph 377, is worth quoting. 
That paragraph provides a very concise sum-
mary of the task ahead of employers, employees 
and governments in the area of occupational 
safety. The paragraph concludes by saying:

The National Safety Council of Australia has an impor-
tant role to play in occupational safety.

I trust that the Government will have regard to 
that as well as to existing State legislation and 
existing State activities in the field of industrial 
safety. I urge the Minister to ensure that in any 
legislation pursuant to the Woodhouse Com-
mittee report the persons preparing the scheme 
utilise the expertise of the National Safety Coun-
cil to the full and do not contemplate any organi-
sation which duplicates the fine work of that 
Council and the work which it can do. It is worth 
saying, when referring to the work which it can 
do, that because of its lack of financial resources 
it has not had the opportunity to do what in fact 
it's potential has always foreshadowed.

I urge the Minister to have officers of his De-
partment to have discussions with the National 
Safety Council to find ways and means of finding 
additional funds to supplement the meagre grant 
given by this Government to the National Safety 
Council. It should not be difficult for senior 
officers to find other moneys available in the cur-
rent Budget. The senior officers are convinced of 
the worthwhileness of the National Safety Coun-
cil. They participated in a conference held by the 
present Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr 
Lynch) when he was Minister. Everyone under-
stood the fundamental value of spending money 
on safety in order to save money in the long run. 
In both human terms and economic terms, 
money is saved by spending money on safety. It 
seems to me that the Government would do well 
to examine its own estimates for the Department 
of Labor and Immigration to find ways of trans-
ferring funds to the National Safety Council in 
the short term. It is a fact that large companies 
and medium sized companies with several hun-
dred employees have a better safety record. 
These are the companies which engage the 
National Safety Council. It is the small com-
panies, which have the bad safety record and 
which have neither the awareness of social and 
safety matters nor the funds to engage the 
National Safety Council, which need the help. 
They can get the help by the Government pro-
viding money to the National Safety Council.

It stands to reason that this voluntary non-
profit organisation does need money, and if the 
Government were prepared to provide money on 
a massive scale for a few years it could produ-
ce results which in fact would be quite sensational. 
It would help industry to take a voluntary view of 
its own obligation to provide safe conditions of 
work. This voluntary assumption of responsi-
bility, backed up by safety inspectors, is likely to 
bring a better response from industry and more 
practical programs than is any other means. 
Compulsion is usually resisted and inspectors 
tend to be too rigid, overbearing and impractical 
in their demands. Perhaps the Minister could 
find funds from his allocation to the trade union 
training program. Last year the Department 
spent only $35,391 on trade union training and 
one cannot imagine that this year even the most 
generous government department could in fact 
spend $3m, which is the allocation in this Bud-
get. I suggest that the Minister for Labor and 
Immigration give serious thought to transferring 
part of the $3m allocated for trade union training 
to industrial safety, because often it is the union-
ists who need to be made aware of the need for 
industrial safety. They have a contribution to 
make. It would be a most valuable part of trade 
union training to teach them an awareness of 
industrial safety.

Mr DAWKINS (Tangney) (10.26)—I rise to 
draw attention to a rather unfortunate set of inci-
dents which have occurred primarily in Western 
Australia. They relate to the continued alle-
gations by a Minister in the State Government of 
Western Australia of political patronage in relation 
to the disbursement of funds under the
regional employment development scheme. All honourable members will know that that scheme has been introduced in an attempt to alleviate the worst excesses in unemployment where they occur in recognisable and definable pockets. If I give a catalogue of the events which have occurred it will give some indication of the malevolence of the Minister to whom I refer.

Honourable members will know that the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron), in a Press release on 11 September, announced the details of the scheme. These details were broadcast widely around the country. On 13 September, 2 days later, the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) wrote to all State Premiers inviting them to nominate representatives to a joint State-Federal committee to help administer the fund at the State level. By the end of September all local government authorities had been circularised with the details of the scheme. In Western Australia the first allocation was made early in October to the Shire of Kwinana, partly as a result of my own efforts. On 17 October we first had the allegation of political patronage in a question from the honourable member for Petrie (Mr Hodges) who said, inter alia:

Does the Minister concede that some Labor Party political patronage has taken place under the regional employment development scheme with the ad hoc allocation of funds?

The Minister for Labor and Immigration replied, inter alia:

I would challenge any person to say truthfully in this Parliament that the RED ministers have shown any favouritism as between one area and another. We have not rejected one single project that has complied with the criteria set down by the Ministers and which have been published for everyone to see.

I should mention that on 17 October, when the Minister answered that question, allocations were made to the local government authorities in Bussleton and Mandurah. It is well to point out that both those areas are represented in this Parliament by Liberal members. One area is represented by the honourable member for Forrest (Mr Drummond) and the other by the honourable member for Canning (Mr Bungey). However, this did not seem to concern Mr Rushton, the Minister for Local Government in Western Australia, who on 20 October addressed a meeting of the Local Government Association. The ‘Sunday Times’ reported Mr Rushton’s speech. Mr Rushton indicated what the RED scheme was and said that there had been no approach to the State Government to co-ordinate the program. He was angered, he said, by the Commonwealth’s attitude. The article states that he said:

It is discourteous and rude, and destructive to State Government efforts to co-ordinate State and local projects in generating much needed employment throughout Western Australia.

I should remind the House that this was said in spite of the fact that the Prime Minister had written to Sir Charles Court more than one month previously. As a result of those remarks by the Minister for Local Government, the Local Government Association was moved to reflect that it appeared that preference was given to a local authority fortunate enough to have a Labor politician in its area. I would not dispute that any local authority which has a Labor representative is indeed fortunate, but it is ridiculous to say that that has anything to do with the allocation of these funds. They went on to say that this view was borne out by several Press reports of council grants received. I might mention that at that time only 4 grants had been made to Western Australia, two to areas in Labor seats and two to areas in Liberal seats.

It was not until 21 October that the Premier of Western Australia finally got round to replying to the Prime Minister, that is, about 6 weeks after the Prime Minister had written to the Premier. That indeed meant that Western Australia was the last State to respond to the Prime Minister’s invitation. However, Mr Rushton was not set back by this. When he was addressing the Western Australian division of the Institute of Municipal Administration Mr Rushton accused the Federal Government of indulging in political horse trading in the distribution of unemployment relief funds. Allegations of this sort are quite incredible in an area of such sensitivity and national importance.

I would have let the matter rest there and I would not have bothered raising it in this House, if it had not been for the fact that Mr Rushton continued to make these vicious allegations. On 25 October he is reported in the ‘West Australian’ as saying that he is interested in co-ordinating the applications in Western Australia. Nobody has any objection to that. In fact, it was the Prime Minister’s intention that this indeed should happen. But Mr Rushton asked all local authorities to provide information because of his suspicion that the Federal Government was being unduly selective in choosing councils to receive unemployment relief. He said that the Commonwealth had made direct approaches to local authorities in Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton and Kwinana but had not told him anything.

I might again remind the House that on 13 September the Prime Minister had written to the Premier inviting him to participate in the
scheme. The article in the 'West Australian' states:

Mr Rushton said that it did not make sense for the Commonwealth to bypass the State Government in dealing directly with councils over the relief program.

That is quite an incredible sort of statement to make in view of the facts as I have indicated them to the House.

I should like to indicate a fact of which Mr Rushton should have been well aware, namely, that the funds were made available first to those areas which were nominated as a result of a perusal of unemployment data showing isolated areas where the pockets were greatest and the problem was greatest. In fact those areas in Western Australia were the first areas to receive relief. The only reason why I had to have anything to do with the application of the Kwinana shire was that that shire had first filed its application via the State Government. But after the first allocations were made and announced it was discovered that Western Australia had not received anything and it was at that stage that I moved in to support the application of the shire of Kwinana. Whilst that shire had made its application well in time, the application had not been forwarded by the State Government to the RED Ministers in order that an allocation might be made.

I mention in passing that when I went to the office of the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) I was treated extremely courteously not only by the Minister but also by officers of his Department who were available to talk to all honourable members. It is worth mentioning that while I was in the Minister's office the honourable member for Cowper (Mr Ian Robinson) was also there receiving the same sort of courteous treatment as I received from the officers of the Minister's Department.

I think that it is an absolute outrage that responsible people, Ministers of a State government, should try to make a political football out of the plight of the unemployed. Everybody acknowledges that unemployment is a serious problem whenever and wherever it occurs. When a Government makes strenuous efforts to provide unemployment relief in a form which gives jobs which are of some meaning to the people who are doing them and also of some meaning to the community, and which provide some valuable contribution to the development of those communities, it is indeed appalling that a State Liberal Minister should continue to make these baseless allegations and try to undermine the scheme.

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (10.34)—I intended to speak on 2 matters very briefly but the honourable member for Tangney (Mr Dawkins) has encouraged me to comment on an attribute which the Government has which is interesting, which is clear and which is regrettable. That is its unique ability, distasteful ability, to provide jobs for the boys. I am not suggesting for one moment that the matter that the honourable member for Tangney dealt with has any relationship whatsoever with my brief comment. But what has struck me and, I think, every member in this House is the fact that there is a complete backlash, a complete indignation, a complete dropping in morale in the Public Service of this nation. It has been stimulated by appointments such as those of Mr Grassby and Mr Menadue which have created in the Public Service a clear impression that there is no longer any reward for devotion to service, for length of service, for capacity, for ability. It is purely a matter of someone being brought in and plonked in a position that earns him $26,000 a year. Seniority and so on are of no consequence whatsoever. It is most regrettable. The Government is paying the penalty for it in the tremendous defeat that it suffered in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, and these are only a beginning.

I want to discuss 2 matters, both quite brief. One concerns the Great Barrier Reef in north Queensland. What the people of Queensland, the Queensland Government and I are wondering is when the Wallace report will be made available. This Commission was set up quite some time ago. My goodness, the sort of campaign that the people involved fought in Queensland. They had little old ladies ringing up on open line programs crying laments about the Barrier Reef. The used every possible means to gather protests about the Barrier Reef and what was happening to it. Lately there has been a very strange silence, a fascinating silence. The reason for it is that this report has been ready now for many months. One may ask why it is not being released.

I thought that the Special Minister of State (Mr Lionel Bowen), as Acting Leader of the House, would have been here; otherwise I would have suggested to him that he might like to hear my comments. I would ask him to ask his Prime Minister and the Government just when we might expect the release of this report on the Barrier Reef. We can see no reason why it has been delayed. We know it has been available for many months. Is there some sinister motive? I might even be uncharitable enough to suggest that there is a political motive. Maybe an event
on 7 December is causing this report to be held within the secret confines of Government circles.

The other matter is quite brief. It concerns the Julius Dam. I am getting a little parochial, but not entirely parochial because the activities of the principal city of my area, Mt Isa, and the advantages of the operations of that great complex overflow to all Australians wherever they may live. In one way or another they derive some benefit from the overseas earnings of this huge mining complex. What concerns me is not the huge mining complex—it can well and truly look after itself—but that the ratepayers of my city are to be strained to the absolute limits, as though they are not that at the moment, in order to meet the cost of the repayments on the Julius Dam. If I might explain to you, Mr Speaker, it is a very large complex which would provide water primarily for the people of Mt Isa and the operations of Mt Isa Mines Ltd. Someone will get up and scream multi-nationals again. I forewarn them that the company has provided some millions of dollars, the local authority has provided quite considerable funds, the State Government has provided significant grants, and the Federal Government has provided a loan, I think of $2.4m—I am not sure of the figure. I will say that this Government has slightly improved—under absolute pressure and consistent barrage from the Premier of Queensland—the repayment conditions of that particularly lousy old loan. I strongly urge the Government to consider increasing the loan. After all, it is spending unbelievable sums of money on paintings. I do not want to go too far into that subject because it sickens me and I would like to sleep well tonight. I do not want to be nauseated by the thought of all that money going down the drain on the purchase of these second rate paintings. I understand that even the good old ‘Blue Poles’ is starting to flake and fade. I do not know whether the same thing is happening to ‘Woman V’.

The point I make is that only a little more than $2m is involved and if the Government were to do more in this regard it would make a great contribution to the earning power of this nation and would remove a heavy load from the ratepayers concerned who sweat and toil without the advantages of those living in more favoured areas on the coast but who yet make an immeasurable contribution to the earnings of this nation.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State)—Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—Yes. The honourable member for Kennedy misrepresented me in his remarks about the royal commission into drilling on the Barrier Reef. He said that he could not understand why I was not present in the chamber while he was speaking. The simple answer is that he did not inform me that he intended to raise this matter. He said also that there was something sinister in the fact that the royal commission’s report had been available for some time but had not been tabled. Obviously he is completely ignorant on this matter. The royal commission is a joint Federal and Queensland commission. Although the report is ready for presentation it cannot be tabled without the consent of the Governor of Queensland. The honourable member for Gwydir (Mr Hunt) asked me about this matter today and I outlined the position to him. I am amazed to know that a member of the party to which the honourable member for Kennedy belongs has not indicated to him the contents of the report. There is no sinister motive in not tabling the report and it is improper to misrepresent the position.

Mr SPEAKER—I remind the Minister that he is making a personal explanation.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—There has been no delay in bringing down the report. Its tabling is not in the hands of this Government. The report is in the hands of the commissioners and they hand it to the Governor-General and to the Governor of Queensland.

Mr Katter—I rise to order. I said nothing to reflect on the character of the Minister.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—On the point of order, Mr Speaker, the honourable member said that it was a sinister motive. He said that I should have been here to answer his criticism.

Mr Katter—I did not say anything about you personally.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—Yes you did. I heard it on the intercom.

Mr Katter—I said that I wished you were in the House.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—I am here now to rebut the claim that there is a sinister motive. It is not a matter within the control of the Government. Surely to goodness the honourable member for Kennedy knows what the Governor of Queensland has to do.

Mr Katter—You are blaming the Governor for the delay.

Mr LIONEL BOWEN—It has nothing to do with the Government.
Dr GUN (Kingston) (10.44)—It was interesting to hear the honourable member for Kennedy (Mr Katter) discuss the appointments of—

Mr James—Jobs for the boys, he said.

Mr Katter—Menadue and Grassby as well as some others.

Dr GUN—Yes, I know. The honourable member for Kennedy said that these appointments allegedly lower the morale of the Public Service. I did not intend to speak on this subject, but before turning to the matter on which I rose to speak I think it is worth bearing in mind the large number of appointments that were made by a succession of Liberal-Country Party governments.

Mr Collard—Could you enumerate them?

Dr GUN—I could enumerate them but I would need about an hour and a half to speak instead of the 10 minutes which is available to me.

I have been in this House for 5 years and I can remember what happened about a week after I was first elected. At that time 2 obviously political appointments were made. There was the appointment of Mr Gordon Freeth, who had been defeated at an election, as Australia’s Ambassador to Japan. I do not want to cast any reflection on Mr Gordon Freeth as Australia’s diplomatic representative in Japan. But if honourable members opposite want to talk about appointing diplomatic representatives I think they should be reminded of the appointment of Mr Freeth. Mr Chaney was also defeated in the 1969 election. He was appointed as the Administrator of the Northern Territory. Surely if we are to apply the same yardstick we would have to say that those appointments caused very severe damage to the morale of the Public Service.

I recall that Sir Alec Downer from my own State of South Australia was appointed as Australia’s High Commissioner in London. I would not quibble about the role he played and I believe that he did an excellent job. Nevertheless, his appointment was a direct political one. Perhaps the most overt political appointment of the lot was the appointment of the present Chief Justice of the High Court, who was becoming a threat to the then Prime Minister, who felt that his own position was in jeopardy. He also responded to a threat to his own position by promoting sidewise those who threatened him or by kicking them upstairs—percussive sublimation as I think it is sometimes referred to. I remember the former honourable member for Riverina, Mr Roberton, who was appointed as Australia’s Ambassador to Ireland.

Mr England—What happened to the other honourable member for Riverina, Al Grassby?

Dr GUN—The honourable member for Riverina (Mr Sullivan) was sitting in the House a few minutes ago. Perhaps he does not have any taste for criticism of the former Government. I notice that he has now withdrawn from the chamber. Perhaps he has some business elsewhere. As I have said, the examples of political appointments by previous governments are too numerous to cover at this stage. There was Sir Howard Beale and Mr Roger Dean, who I believe was also appointed as Administrator to the Northern Territory.

Mr James—And to San Francisco.

Dr GUN—as my friend the honourable member for Hunter reminds me Mr Roger Dean was also appointed to San Francisco. I suppose the most recent example was the appointment of Dame Annabelle Rankin as High Commissioner to New Zealand.

The reason I rose to speak to the House was to raise a matter which I regard as being of considerable importance and on which I believe it is within the power of the Australian Government to take appropriate remedial action. I refer to the very unfortunate and very dangerous practice of the sale to children of chocolates which are packaged to resemble cigarettes and which are put in packets which look like very authentic replicas of the most commonly sold brands of cigarettes. I do not think I can do better than to quote from a letter which was written to the editor of the Adelaide ‘Advertiser’ last week. The letter states:

We bring to the notice of all concerned with the well-being of children the insidious encouragement to smoke by the presentation of chocolate lollies in a seemingly authentic cigarette wrapping and box.

In an interview on Channel 2’s ‘This Day Tonight’ (21.10.74) with the headmistress and children of the Magill Infant Demonstration School the variety and number of simulated cigarettes available were shown.

The letter went on to state:

Our headmistress . . . and the Mothers’ Club are concerned that such immoral, unethical and insidious advertising should be levelled at young children. The power of advertising was highlighted by the interviewer’s report that the children showed preference for one brand of chocolate because of its association with the catchy TV and radio commercials for that brand of cigarette.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Have a Winfield.

Dr GUN—I have no doubt that the honourable member for Wannon regards this matter as
amusing, but I think this is a particularly pernicious practice. The letter continues:

We are aware that children are happy to copy adults, and it is therefore to be expected that the pleasant chocolate flavour of the simulated cigarettes would not only confound the warnings that 'smoking is a health hazard' but prove a very subtle indoctrination at their most receptive age.

The reason I have raised this in the Federal Parliament is that my understanding of the situation is that most of these chocolate simulated cigarettes are imported and therefore this is a matter on which this Government could take very appropriate remedial action and very prompt action. I do not think it would bring up any cries of centralism from any parochial minded State governments, but even if it were to do so I think this action would be justified, and certainly justified as a matter of urgency. I think it is a simply appalling situation that such blatant encouragement of young people to take up or copy the practice of smoking should occur. As the Government has power to prevent this practice by putting a total import embargo on this product, I would suggest that this action be taken by the Government at the earliest opportunity. I hope that the responsible Minister who is in another place can take very prompt action because I am sure that this is causing concern to a very large number of parents in Australia. The Government is concerned to do everything it can to discourage people from taking up smoking. There is conflicting evidence in respect of which many people argue about the effectiveness of these various anti-smoking campaigns. But surely to goodness we should not be allowing anything like this to go on. It is directly encouraging people to take up this habit or to regard the habit of smoking by adults as something that children should emulate. I hope that the Government will take the appropriate action on this at the earliest possible opportunity.

Mr MacKELLAR (Warringah)—I wish to make a personal explanation.

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

Mr MacKELLAR—I do, inadvertently. On page 3064 of yesterday's Hansard there appear some phrases which are attributed to the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser). They should have been attributed to me. The honourable member was sitting beside me. I know that Hansard does a tremendous job, but we were sitting close together at the time and Hansard must have been mistaken.

Mr SPEAKER—Is this in the daily Hansard?

Mr MacKELLAR—Yes.

Mr SPEAKER—I will have it corrected.

Mr MacKELLAR—The phrases in question are as follows. After Mr Cameron said:

I then said:

I was told in Sydney.

Hansard records Mr Cameron as saying:

You were told in Sydney?

I then said:

By one of your departmental people.

Mr Cameron went on to say something and I said:

Quite separately.

I should like the Hansard to be altered, if possible.

Mr SPEAKER—I am sure that Hansard has taken a note of what the honourable member has said.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER (Wannon) (11.53)—I would like to read a couple of paragraphs of a public document which starts in this way:

The second matter I want to refer to is one which is, in a sense, personal but it is a matter which I think I should place on record. In the normal manner, after my appointment to the bench, I have decided to retain associations only with bodies of a charitable, professional, or sporting nature.

Among the charitable bodies was one known as the Noon-gah Disaster Committee, a charity registered under the New South Wales Act and the Income Tax Assessment Act. It was established after the sinking of that vessel and the tragic loss of life of crew members, in order to raise money to assist the dependants, particularly the children.

After the fund had been established and some funds collected in 1969, I was asked and agreed to become an honorary trustee, the other trustee being a Sydney chartered accountant.

When, as Deputy President of the Arbitration Commission, the maritime industry was assigned to me, I discussed that position with some representatives of the shipowners. They assured me that they did not see any embarrassment to themselves in my continuing as trustee of the fund.

I have reconsidered the position. I now feel that occasions may arise for members of the committee of that fund, who include several officials of the maritime unions, to communicate with me in my capacity as trustee. I think that would be undesirable during the conduct of this Royal Commission. I therefore resign my position as trustee.

I have decided to make this statement because I think it was widely known that I was a trustee of that committee . . .

Those remarks were made by Mr Justice Sweeney. At the end of his remarks Mr Elliott said:

With some embarrassment, I ask you this question pertaining to the last subject——

His Honour said:
I do not propose to hear any submissions on that, Mr Elliott.

That prompted a question from me—

Mr James—I raise a point of order. With the greatest respect to this House, is not the Royal Commission over which Mr Justice Sweeney is presiding still sitting and is not this matter sub judice and not subject to debate in this House?

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—This is a public transcript of the proceedings.

Mr SPEAKER—Everything is in order. The honourable member is in order as long as there is no reflection on the appointment of the Judge and so long as he says nothing that would prejudice the Royal Commission hearing.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—There is nothing of that kind at all, Mr Speaker. That prompted a question from me to the Minister for Transport (Mr Charles Jones), which he answered in part in this way:

... I assume that he is talking about the fund which the Seamen’s Union of Australia was able to establish by collections from its members and money raised by other methods, I understand, from other people. I know of only one instance in which it was able to obtain money from a shipping company. As to what it got from all the shipping companies, I would not have a clue.

That was the response from the Minister in relation to a question by me on this matter as to whether the Minister would say or could say to the House what funds had come into or out of the ‘Noongah’ fund. On 25 October the Minister wrote to me and said that the Crown Solicitor’s Office had advised his Department that an inquiry into a State registered fund, such as the ‘Noongah’ fund, may present constitutional difficulties. He said additionally—

Mr James—Who was the other trustee? Was it Mr Sinclair, father of the—

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—The other trustee was not in charge of the Royal Commission.

Mr James—I will be replying to you the next chance I get.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—The other trustee is not the chairman of the Royal Commission. As I said, the Minister advised me by letter that the Crown Solicitor’s office had advised his Department that an inquiry into a State registered fund such as the ‘Noongah’ fund may present constitutional difficulties. He said that additionally the matter could fall within the terms of reference of Judge Sweeney’s inquiry. In view of what the Minister also said in this House when he said that it fell outside the terms of the inquiry I ask the Minister—I advised him that I would be raising this matter tonight—what occurred between 25 October when the Minister sent a signed letter to me in which he said that the ‘Noongah’ fund could be involved or fall within the terms of reference of Judge Sweeney’s inquiry and 30 October when it is reported that so far as the ‘Noongah’ fund is concerned the Minister believed that it had nothing to do with the inquiry. He had changed his mind between 25 October and 30 October. This House has a right to know why the Minister changed his mind.

Secondly, the letter to me from the Minister said that there would be constitutional problems in determining what payments had been made into or out of the fund. Presumably those constitutional problems would be enduring problems and would therefore prevent the Minister discovering what payments had been made into or out of that fund. If that is so, what could the Minister find out within the period of 5 days which would make him change his mind about the fund possibly coming within the terms of reference of the inquiry? The Minister has got himself into this particular trap. He has contradicted himself on 2 counts. On 25 October he said it could have something to do with the inquiry. On 30 October he said it would not have anything to do with the inquiry. On his own admission he said that there are constitutional problems in finding out what payments were made into the fund or out of the fund. That being so, in what other way could he find out whether or not the fund fell within the terms of reference of the inquiry?

The Minister has a good deal to explain in this matter and I think he should explain. I came into this House earlier this afternoon and apologised to the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia and to the Minister on a matter which as a result of public reports I had accepted in good faith but later found to be inaccurate, namely, that International Labour Organisation arrangements, International Transport Federation arrangements and flags of convenience were a quite different matter from the matters under examination at the present time.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! It being 11 o’clock the House stands adjourned until Tuesday 12 November at 10.30 a.m. or such time thereafter as Mr Speaker may take the chair unless Mr Speaker shall, by telegram addressed to each member of the House, fix an earlier day of meeting.

House adjourned at 11 p.m.
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

The following answers to questions upon notice were circulated:

1974 Elections: First Preference Votes
(Question No. 713)

Mr Keating asked the Minister for Services and Property, upon notice:
Referring to the House of Representatives Elections on 18 May 1974; (a) how many first preference votes were recorded for each candidate, and (b) what was the percentage of first preference votes to formal votes recorded for each candidate in each Subdivision of each Electoral Division in Australia.

Mr Daly—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:
The information which has been collated for the Honourable Member is too lengthy and complex to be published in Hansard. Copies are available at the Table Office of the House of Representatives.

Ministerial Councils: Contact with States
(Question No. 48)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Services and Property, upon notice:
(1) Will he provide a list of all formal committees, councils, etc., that have been established which enable him or officers of his Department to maintain contact with State Government Ministers or State Government officers.
(2) When was each body established and by whom.
(3) What is the (a) composition and (b) function of each body.
(4) On what occasions has each body met in the last 2 years and for what purpose.

Mr Daly—The answer to the right honourable member’s question is as follows:
I refer the right honourable member to the Prime Minister’s reply to question No. 41 which appeared in Hansard 3 October 1974, pages 2233-2239.

Department of the Media: Research Grants
(Question No. 77)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Minister for the Media, upon notice:
(1) Will the Minister provide a list of all grants, to any organisation or individual, that are provided from moneys appropriated to his Department, or authorities under his control, to undertake research.
(2) To what bodies have such moneys been advanced, and what was or is the nature of the research being undertaken as a result of the grants in each of the last 3 years.

Mr Morrison—Senator McClelland, the Minister for the Media, has provided the following answer to the right honourable member’s question:
(1) No grants are made to any organisation or individuals from moneys appropriated to the department.
(2) Not applicable—see part 1 above.

Postmaster-General’s Department: Inter-departmental Committees
(Question No. 394)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:
With reference to the answer to question No. 1490 (Hansard, 13 December 1973, page 478) in which it was indicated that the Postmaster-General’s Department maintains a record of inter-departmental committees in which it participates, does the list include (a) ad hoc and (b) standing committees.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answer to the right honourable member’s question:
It was indicated by my predecessor in reply to Question No. 1490, that details of inter-departmental committees are available in the records of my Department. These records include both ad hoc and standing committees.

Postmaster-General’s Department: Inter-departmental Committees
(Question No. 396)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:
When did the Postmaster-General’s Department first begin to maintain a list of inter-departmental committees in which it participates.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answer to the right honourable member’s question:
As indicated in the reply to Question No. 394, the records of my Department contain details of inter-departmental committees in which it participates. If the right honourable member wishes to have information about a specific committee on which my Department is represented, I will assist him as far as possible having regard to the replies by my predecessor in 1973 to Question Nos 1313 and 1369.

Tasmania: Chief Electoral Officer
(Question No. 479)

Mr Hunt asked the Minister for Services and Property, upon notice:
(1) What is the name and age and what are the qualifications of the newly appointed Chief Electoral Officer for the State of Tasmania.
(2) Was this appointment made from within the ranks of the Australian Electoral Office; if not, why not.
(3) Has the appointee ever been a member of the Australian Labor Party.
(4) Did the appointee at any time seek pre-selection as an Australian Labor Party candidate for any electoral Division within the Commonwealth of Australia.
(5) If the answer to part (3) or (4) is in the affirmative, does this equip the officer to discharge his duties in a bipartisan manner.

...
Mr Daly—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) (i) John Richard Lennard; (ii) 48 years; (iii) Bachelor of Arts, University of Tasmania.

(2) No. Applications were invited from within and without the Australian Public Service and the Interviewing Committee recommended that the appointee was the most suitably qualified person for the subject vacancy.

(3) Yes.

(4) No.

(5) Yes.

'Australian Post Office News'
(Question No. 1118)

Mr Hyde asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

(1) What is the cost of producing and distributing the 'Australian Post Office News'.

(2) How many copies of each issue are printed.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(1) Production costs for each issue of 'APO News' are $8781. The yearly cost for 11 issues is therefore $96,581, which amounts to a unit cost of approximately 1.7 cents.

(2) 560,000 copies of the paper are printed each issue. They are distributed on the basis of 120,000 to staff, 100,000 to post offices for distribution to the general public on a 'please take one basis' and 340,000 pre-wrapped are delivered by postmen to managers of business houses, professional people, schools and other organisations.

Postmaster-General's Department: Research and Development Staff
(Question No. 878)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

(1) How many officers or employees of the Postmaster-General's Department or of authorities under the Postmaster-General's control are employed on research and development work.

(2) Where are they employed.

(3) What is the nature of the work being undertaken.

(4) What is the total expenditure per annum in maintaining this research and development program.

(5) Who decides the nature of the programs or projects included in this research and development work.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answer to the right honourable member's question:

(1) There are 430 officers in my Department employed on research and development work including approximately 120 engineers 30 scientists and 180 technical grade staff.

(2) These officers are employed in the Research Laboratories of my Department in Melbourne.

(3) The Australian Post Office Research Laboratories conduct research and development in telecommunications theory and practice; appraise new developments in telecommunications equipment and, in appropriate cases, conduct field experiments; develop apparatus and systems required in the Australian communication network and, to a lesser extent, for mail handling not available from commercial sources; provide certain specialist services and facilities; act as consultant on scientific and engineering matters to the Department; participate in the work of national and international organisations associated with telecommunications research and encourage research and development in telecommunications and allied disciplines in universities and industrial laboratories.

(4) $6m.

(5) The broad fields of work undertaken in the Research Laboratories are specified in the functional statements of the various Sections of the Laboratories and these are approved by the Public Service Board on the recommendation of the Director-General.

Decisions on specific tasks to be undertaken are made generally by the Heads of the five Branches of the Laboratories and these are made within the framework of a 3-Year Plan of Activities which is approved by the Senior Assistant Director-General in charge of the Research Laboratories. Projects of a major nature are approved by the First Assistant Director-General: Planning and Research, or in special cases, by the Director-General.

In order to improve co-ordination between Research and Development work in the Research Laboratories and development work carried out elsewhere in the Department, a new corporate programming procedure for all its technical research, development and innovative projects and activities has been instituted. The first 3-Year Program of Research, Development and Innovation is now being prepared, and in this and future years, the Department's Research and Development activities will be determined and co-ordinated through this new mechanism. The program will be approved by the Director-General.

In respect of the Overseas Telecommunications Commission (Australia), the answers to the specific questions asked by the right honourable member are:

(1) The Commission does not have a specific group of people working in the area defined by the term 'research and development'. The Commission does little, if any, work which would qualify for the title 'research' but specific developmental projects are carried out from time to time. The number of officers associated with a specific project varies between projects but would rarely exceed more than five on any one project. Further, it is unusual for any officer associated with a specific project to be allocated full time to such work.

(2) Officers associated with development projects are normally located at the Commission's Head Office in Sydney.

(3) Typical examples of recent and current development projects include:

(a) Participation in international field trials for a new international telephone signalling system known as CCITT No. 6.

(b) Development of computer programmes to aid the Commission's planning for future provision of facilities for the carriage of international traffic.

(c) Participation in international field trials for a new technology to provide improved efficiency or utilization of communications satellites; the new technology is known as TDMA (Time Division Multiple Access) and action is currently in hand to purchase the necessary equipment for field trial participation purposes.
These projects are related to the development of new techniques and methods in the technical and planning areas of international communications.

(4) An average of $167,000 for the last two financial years.

(5) The programmes or projects of the nature outlined above generally require capital expenditure of such a size as to require approval of the project by the Commission itself.

Television and Broadcasting Licences
(1) What was the cost of collecting the revenue on television and broadcasting licences for the years 1972-73 and 1973-74.
(2) Is it the intention of the Postmaster-General’s Department to pursue the collection of television and broadcast licence fees which were overdue on 17 September 1974.
(3) In view of the abolition of television and broadcast licences, will pending prosecutions for failure to hold these licences be proceeded with.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:
(1) The cost of collecting the revenue on television and broadcasting licences for the years 1972-73 and 1973-74 was $2,654,618 and $3,352,004 respectively.
(2) The Department does not intend to collect television and broadcast licence fees which were overdue on 17 September, 1974.
(3) All pending prosecutions will be withdrawn.

Private Mail Contractors
(1) Does the Postmaster-General’s Department negotiate contracts for a fixed period with private mail contractors for the delivery and collection of mail at a fixed rate.
(2) If so, will the Postmaster-General give consideration to changing this procedure so that there will be rise and fall clauses to take into account increases in fuel prices, licence fees, prices of spare parts and repairs, insurance costs and wages.
(3) If it is decided to change the present procedures, will the Postmaster-General extend the new procedures to all present contracts.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:
(1) The Postmaster-General’s Department does enter into contracts for the carriage and delivery of mail for fixed periods and at fixed rates after publicly inviting tenders.
(2) A review of the mail contract system was recently completed and a number of changes, including a price variation clause in future fixed term mail contracts, have been approved.
(3) Arrangements have been made to invite the present holders of fixed term mail contracts to apply for adjusted rates of payment based on substantiated cost increases.

Fires Brigades
(1) How many Fire Brigade Stations are there in each State and Territory in Australia.
(2) What facilities does the Post Office provide to fire brigades in return for protection, at no charge, of Government properties.
(3) How many bush fire brigades are there in Australia and where are they located.

Mr Daly—The answer to the right honourable member’s question is as follows:
(1) and (3) The answers for these questions are contained in the following lists.
(2) The facilities provided to Fire Brigades by the Post Office are as follows:
Fire brigades receive a $16 per cent reduction in the rental charges for any line and other apparatus connecting Fire Brigades to exchanges for telephone purposes. There is also a special rate of $1 per annum per 1.6 kilometres for telephone lines used for fire alarm purposes (lines from a street fire alarm point to a fire brigade station, from a fire brigade station to an officer’s residence or from an exchange to a station) charged on the aggregate total length of the lines rented, the special rate of $1 per annum represents a reduction of 97½ per cent on the usual rates.

The cost of providing these concessions is shared equally by the Departments of the Postmaster-General and Services and Property.

Australian Capital Territory
Fire Brigade Stations ........................................ 4
Rural Fire Brigades .......................................... 12

Northern Territory
Fire Brigade Stations ........................................ 6
Volunteer Fire Brigades .................................... 4

Queensland
Fire Brigades ................................................ 81
Fire Stations .................................................. 189
Bush Fire Brigades .......................................... 1,159

New South Wales
Fire Stations .................................................. 300
Bush Fire Brigades .......................................... 2,500
(approximately) located in 151 shires, municipalities and cities

Victoria
Fire Stations .................................................. 46
Urban Fire Brigades ........................................ 212
Rural Fire Brigades .......................................... 1,054

Tasmania
Fire Brigades ................................................ 38
Rural Fire Brigades .......................................... 314

South Australia (Fire Brigades Board of S.A.)
Urban Fire Brigades ........................................ 19
Rural Fire Brigades .......................................... 20

South Australian Emergency Fire Service
Urban and Rural Fire Brigades ............................. 440
Western Australia

Metropolitan Fire Brigades .................. 18
Country Centres .............................. 78
Bush Fire Brigades ............................ 910

Australian Capital Territory

There are four fire brigade stations. These are located at:

Forrest
Phillip

Twelve rural fire brigades are equipped by the Australian Capital Territory Bush Fire Council. These are located at:

Hall
Tuggeranong
Tharwa
Naas
Gudgenby
Tidbinbilla

Northern Territory

There are six fire brigade stations located at:

Darwin
Nightcliff
Winnellie

Volunteer fire brigades number four and these are located at:

Pine Creek
Adelaide River

Queensland

The State Fire Services Council, Queensland administers 81 Brigades comprising 189 fire stations. The list of fire stations is as follows:

Brisbane Chermside Enoggera Mount Gravatt Roma Street Windsor Aramac Mareeba Malanda Ayr Home Hill Baralaba Eagle Heights Thangool Kalbar Bundaberg Deception Bay Stratford Augathella Chinchilla Cooktown Dalby Helidon Wallaville Kilwinian Gordonvale Imbil Hughenden Texas Ipswich Harrisville Marburg Toogoolawah Kilsby Woorooloo North Mackay

Queensland


The Rural Fires Board has provided the following list of bush fire brigades. The number of brigades totals 1159.

Glasshouse Mts Lagoon Pocket Dagun Byfields Kandanga Amamoor Caboolture Thangool Langshaw Gordon Brook Dangore Wooroolin Wamuran Basin Nindi Gully Greymare Wamuran Evelyn Wallisford-Portland West Burleigh Morven North Goolgowee West Wyalong Pie Creek Cranada Bimberah Cumnamulla Valetta Bunda Road Clipper Wakefield Ernestina Ducklo Eastern Largo Cooaladdi Strathlea Eulo North Ilfaroome East Darr Apsley Warnambool Leesone Middle Creek Ironpot Gallipoli Luckham Toogoolawah Sandy Ridges Bollon Adavale Summum Cedar Vale Barcaldine Gin Gin Coominglah Acheron Creek Marmor Alton Downs Bracelaw Calliope Butteville Machine Creek Ambrose East End-Mt Veteran Larcum

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Banana Raglan Baralaba Tartulla Jambin Willawua Moura Valentine Plains Wyora Wardsdale Kunioon and Beechel Creek Neheine Mt Murchison Brooloo Dalma Dixalea Wattle Bank Jardine Morella Bouldercombe Werna- Bukali Roesmooy Workingham East Springsure Motar Mt Chatsworth Orange Creek Kybong Dirranbandi Goomeri Kilivian Mundubbera Gayndah Cawarral St Springure Pheasants Creek Bunaru Kalapa Nankin Calliungal Tangorin Oondooroo Barmoya

Answers to Questions
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- Queensland
- Ingleberry
- Basalt
- Cape River
- Prairie
- Penland
- Canning and
- Mosquito Creek
- South Barco
- Yarawa
- Goomburian

- Queensland
- No 1
- Bowen River
- Blackwater
- No 2
- Sesbania
- Corona
- Waterfall Creek
- Balfe's Creek
- Moogoon
- Fernis
- Hibernia
- Barchery
- Coobberie
- Gulf No. 1
- El Arish
- Camp Station
- Collaroy
- Chillagoe
- Banchory
- Hermit
- Mckinlay
- Upper Langlo
- Blythdale North
- Andromache
- No 1
- Iisis
- Woorooloo
- Orion
- Narine
- Selene East
- Kapaldoo
- Kokotungoo
- Logan Reserve
- Retro
- Lime-Hills-Elliot
- Cullin-la-Ringo
- Moggill
- Garonna
- Millaroo
- Yungalla
- Scission
- Cannindah
- Redbank Plains
- Mt Walker
- Morville
- Brookfield
- Redbank Plains
- Adelaide Park
- Road
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- Crystal Creek
- Glenelg
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- Stenye
- Edie
- Galilee
- Woodford
- Cooroy
- Bell
- Stony-Creek
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- Southland
- Waya
- Yandina-North
- Carrum-Eureka
- Dowing Green
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**New South Wales**

The Board of Fire Commissioners of New South Wales, controls a total of 300 fire stations at the following localities:

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- **Armidale**
- **Avalon**
- **Ballina**
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Information obtained from the Bush Fire Council of New South Wales indicates that there are approximately 2,500 bush fire brigades in that State. They are located in 131 shires, municipalities and cities, which are listed as follows: Shires

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Shires, municipalities and cities, which are listed as follows:
Answers to Questions

New South Wales

Wakool Watcha Walgett
Warren Werrington Wellington Wollondilly
Weddion Weeacrobee Wyong Yallaroo
Yarrawoolma

Municipalities and Cities

Albury Blacktown Blue Mountains
Canberra Campbelltown Deniliquin
Fairfield Greater Cessnock Kiama
Ku-ring-gai Lismore Liverpool
Maitland Penrith Port Macquarie
Shellharbour Windsor Wollongong

Victoria

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade Melbourne administers 46 fire stations located in the metropolitan area as follows:

Melbourne West Melbourne Carlton
Nth Fitzroy Richmond Windsor
Nth Melbourne Broadmeadows Coburg
Lalor Preston Northcote
Rosanna Ivanhoe Greensborough
St. Albans Newport Deer Park
Sunshine Spotswood Altona
Footscray Ascot Vale Williamstown
Essendon Malvern Oakleigh
Glenhuntly Brighton Mentone
Moorabbin Sandringham St Kilda
Hawthorn Kew Box Hill
Surry Hills Ringwood Camberwell
Croydon Nunawading Waverley
Templestowe

The remainder of Victoria is under the control of the Country Fire Authority.


A complete list giving the locations of the fire brigades was not obtainable.

Tasmania

The 27th Annual Report (1973) of the Fire Brigades Commission of Tasmania lists 38 brigades. They are located at:

Beaconsfield Burnie Campbell Town
Claremont Clarence Crescent
Currie Cygnets Deloraine
Devonport Fern Tree Franklin
Georgetown George Town Gormans ton
Gravely Beach Hobart Huonville
Kingston Latrobe Launceston
Longford Midway Point/ Moonah
Mowbray New Norfolk Oatlands
Penguin Queenstown Railton
Scotsdale Sheffield Smithton
Somerset Stanley Ulverstone
Wychella Zeehan

The Fifth Annual Report (1973) of the Rural Fires Board lists 314 rural fire brigades as follows:

Burnie Council Moree Moogil Ridgeley
Work Force
Stawport/ Surrey Hills Christmas Hills/ Brittons Swamp
Natone
Circular Head Crayfish Forest/Stanley
Council Reserve
Irishtown Marrawah/Redpa Mawbanna

Tasmania

Montague Nabageena Rocky Cape
Rocky Cape Smithton Topi
Trowutta Caveside Chudleigh/Mersey
Hill
Dunorlan Elizabeth Town Kimberley
Meander Mole Creek Parkham
Quamby Brook Red Hills Reedy Marsh/
Tweedale Council High Plains
Leith Devonport Council Forth
Princess River Council
Beulah Claude Road Gormanton
Mersey-Forth Lower Wilmot Barrington
HEC Nook
Raiton District Roland Sheffield
Wilmot Egg Lagoon Fraser Road
Grassy Loorana Lynwood
Pearslope Pegarah Reekara
Latrobe Council Moriarty Port Sorell
Sassafras Tarleton Wesley Vale
Blyth East Penguin Penguin
Ulverstone Council Melbourne Municipal
Waratah Boat Harbour). Beach Works Force
Elliott Flowerdale Sulphur Creek
Meunna Milabenna Strahan
Myalla Precienna South Arm
Sisters Creek Table Cape Takone
Beach
Upper Calder Upper Mt Hicks Yolla
Bridgenorth Deviot/Loira Glengarry
Gravelly Beach Legana/ Rosevears
Creeks
Riverside Rowella/ Sidmouth Winhoflo
Evandale Nile Avoca/Royal
Falmouth Fingal George
Rossarden/ St Marys Mathinna
Stoys Creek St Marys Scamander
Cape Barron Emi nita Lackrana
Lady Barron Memana Whitemark
Hillwood Lefroy Low Head
Pipers River Launceston City
Launceston Walking Club
Council Reserve
Dilston/ Karoola
Windermere Loddon
Lilydale Lilydale Council Nabolwa
Woddle council
Woorree

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Montague Nabageena Rocky Cape
Rocky Cape Smithton Topi
Trowutta Caveside Chudleigh/Mersey
Hill
Dunorlan Elizabeth Town Kimberley
Meander Mole Creek Parkham
Quamby Brook Red Hills Reedy Marsh/
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Beulah Claude Road Gormanton
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Lilydale Lilydale Council Nabolwa
Woddle council
Woorree

31 October 1974 REPRESENTATIVES 3273

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Creeks
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Launceston Walking Club
Council Reserve
Dilston/ Karoola
Windermere Loddon
Lilydale Lilydale Council Nabolwa
Woddle council
Woorree

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Tasmania

White Hills
Scottsdale
Frankford/Birrallah
Westbury
Bothwell
Bagdad South
Broadmarsh/Elderslie
Tea Tree
Epping
Lower Marshes
Bashan/Victoria Valley
Hamilton
Ouse
Kilderry/Hayes
Maydena
Mt Field
Tunbridge/Woodbury
Ross Township
Cambridge
Clarence Council
Clarence Council
Clarence Council
Mt Rutherford
Seven Mile
Bicheno
Mayfield
Colebrook
Copping
Dunally
Sorell Council
Forestry
Eastern Tiers
Spring Bay
Nubeena
South Bruny
South Esperance
Collinsvale
Claremont
HCC Botanical Gardens
HCC Reserves Dept
Maryln Road/Stuckland Avenue
Braeside
Judbury
Lennavale

Lands
Bracknell
Hadsen
Westwood/Rosevale
Bothwell Township
Bridgewater
Dromedary
Barton
Lake Leske
Hunting Ground
Melton Mowbray
Lawrenny
Lachlan
Molesworth
Oatlands/Jericho
Woodside/Levendale
Eastern Ross
Clarence Council
Clarence Council
Clarence Council
Rokeby
South Arm/Beach
Coles Bay
Swansea
Richmond
Dodies District
Primrose Sands
Surges Bay
City of Glenorchy
Four Wheel Drive
Gates
Nelson
Glen Huon
Brighton/
Pontville
Broadcloth
Elizabeth
Macquarie
Kempton
North Bagdad
Greta
Liapoosta HEC
Westeryey/Feton
Magra
Upper Derwent
Parattah
York Plains/
Lamont/
Pawtella
Western Ross
Clarence Council
Clarence Council
Clarence Council
Sandford/
Cromorne
Aplawon
Cranbrook
Swamsea
Campania
Richmond
Coombe
Little Swanport
Buckland
Strathgordon

Tasmania

Longley
Cradoc
Lymington
Wattle Grove
Colebrook
Deloraine
Colconda
Latrobe
Moltema
Paraffah
Seabrook
Western Junction

North West Bay
Cygnet Central
Nichols Rivulet
Burnie
Conara No. 1
Devonport
Hobart
Launceston
Mowbray
Ross
St Marys
Westerway
Wynyard

Taroona
Deep Bay
Slab Road
Claremont
Conara No. 2
Evanalde
Irishtown
Legerwood
New Norfolk
Scottsdale
Uiverstone
Wiltshire

South Australia

The Fire Brigades Board of South Australia administers 19 Urban and 20 Rural brigades as follows:

Urban Brigades

Port Pirie
Adelaide
North Adelaide
Port Adelaide
 Semaphore
 Rosewater
 Gawler
 Glenelg
 Norwood
 Glen Osmond
 Thebarton
 Gepps Cross
 Woodville
 Penfield
 Elizabeth
 St Marys
 Glynne
 Ridgehaven
 Marine Station

Rural Brigades

Port Augusta
Agery/Wetulta
Aldinga Beach
Alorda
American River
Apen
Arno Bay
Athelstone
Avon
Barmera
Barossa Ranges
Belair
Birdwood
Banka
Binning Flat
Blackwood
Booborowie
Boordtown
Brimnock Lake/
Kapinnie
Brown's Well
Burna
Cadell Training Centre
(Prisons Department)
Callington

Taronga
Capunda
Moonta
Kadina
Wallaroo
Tanunda
Balaklava
Burra
Mount Gambier
Murray Bridge
Whyalla (2 stations)
Riems
Birri
Port Lincoln
Eudunda
Loxton
Naracoorte
Peterborough
Victor Harbour

The South Australian Emergency Fire Service administers 440 Urban and Rural Fire Brigades. The Emergency Fire Service does not differentiate between types of brigades. Their locations are as follows:

Adelaide Hills
Aldinga Hills
Aldgate
Incorporated Area
Alford
American River
Apen
Arno Bay
Athelstone
Avon
Barmera
Barossa Ranges
Belair
Birdwood
Blackwood
Booborowie
Boordtown
Brimnock Lake/
Kapinnie
Brown's Well
Burna
Cadell Training Centre
(Prisons Department)
Callington

Agery/Wetulta
Aldinga Beach
Aldinga Plains
Alorda
Andamooka
Appilla
Ashbourne
Auburn
Balaklava
Barmera
Basket Range
Benara
Biscuit Flat
Binning Flat
Blackfellows Creek
Blewitt Springs
Bower
Borrika
Brinkworth
Brookfield
Burna
Butler
Callendale
Cambrai
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<th>Representatives</th>
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<td>Clare</td>
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<td>Clarendon</td>
<td>Cleve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinton (Arthurlton)</td>
<td>Coffin Bay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colebatch</td>
<td>Compton and Gambier West</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concordia</td>
<td>Cooke Plains</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comaundook/Moorlands</td>
<td>Coonalpyn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comalnpyn Dows FFA</td>
<td>Coota</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copeville</td>
<td>Crystal Brook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cungaena</td>
<td>Cumilife</td>
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<td>Currumulka</td>
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<td>Duncan and Gosse</td>
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<td>Edithburgh</td>
<td>East Wooloombool Euchunga</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellioton/Musgrave Association</td>
<td>Evanston Gardens Everard/Mount Templet</td>
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<td>Franklin Harbour (Cowell)</td>
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<td>Furner/Fox</td>
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<td>Geranium</td>
<td>Gilbert Valley</td>
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<td>Gladstwon Prison</td>
<td>Glenburnie</td>
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<td>Keith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Lock</td>
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<td>Lowth</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Minlaton</td>
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<td>Moana</td>
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<td>Mobilong (Murray Bridge)</td>
<td>Monash</td>
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<td>Moody</td>
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<td>Morgan</td>
<td>Morphet Vale/Renella/Hackham Inc.</td>
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<td>Mount George FFA</td>
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<td>North East FFA</td>
<td>Northern FFA</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Joyce</td>
<td>Norton Summit/Ashton Inc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurioopla</td>
<td>Oakbank/Balhannah</td>
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<tr>
<td>O'Halloran Hill (CSIRO)</td>
<td>One Tree Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
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<td>Parawa</td>
<td>Para Wirra</td>
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<td>Paskeville</td>
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<td>Peak D/C FFA</td>
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<td>Perponda</td>
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<td>Sheoak Log</td>
<td>Sherlock</td>
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<td>Snowtown</td>
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<td>South Australia</td>
<td>South Australian Perpetual Forests (Sapfor)</td>
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### South Australia

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<td>Watervale</td>
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<td>Steelton/</td>
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<td>Wisanger</td>
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<td>Wirrega/Lowan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vale</td>
<td>Woodside</td>
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<td>Woaksins Woolsleys/</td>
<td>Whitworth</td>
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<td>Wudinna</td>
<td>Wulkar</td>
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<td>Yacka</td>
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<td>Yokerton</td>
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### Western Australia

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<tr>
<td>Cue</td>
<td>Darley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derby</td>
<td>Darlington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kararra</td>
<td>Davenport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Magnet</td>
<td>Denham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wickham</td>
<td>Derby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverley</td>
<td>Devonport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collier</td>
<td>Donnybrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katanning</td>
<td>Dorset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrogin</td>
<td>Dower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams</td>
<td>Drawtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esperance</td>
<td>Dunns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavenon</td>
<td>Dunross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravensthorpe</td>
<td>Dunstan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Western Australia

Bush fire brigades in Western Australia are formed and controlled by local authorities. The total number of bush fire brigades is 910 and the number in each municipal region is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Council</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bunbury Town</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canning Town</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cockburn Town</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albany</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armadale-Kelmscott</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August-Margaret Rvr</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boddington</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyup Brook</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgetown-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenbushes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broomehill</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunselton</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnarvon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnamah</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittering</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapman Valley</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collie</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranbrook</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuballing</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dardanup</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danaragan</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumbrybrook</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esperance</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowerin</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exmouth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gnowangerup</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gosnells</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katanning</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalamunda</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolganion</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellerberrin</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kondinin</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koolin</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koora</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Grace</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwinana</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Marshall</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt Magnet</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meekatharra</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mingenew</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merredin</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morawa</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mullalow</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukanbuddin</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundaring</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narembne</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nannup</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northam</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrogin</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nungarin</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pingelly</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perenjori</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiarading</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plantagen</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockingham</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravensthorpe</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rostunest</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan-Guildford</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serpentine-Jarrahdale</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamimbilup</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Springs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammin</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toodyay</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Plains</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wandering</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warona</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallaroo</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wickepin</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Arthur</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worang-Ballidu</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Western Australia
Williams 10 Wyalkatchem 3
Woodanilling 8 Yilgarn 7
York 4 Yalgoo 1

Public Service: Rejection of Employment
(Question No. 203)

Mr Snedden asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) Did the present Minister for Labor and Immigration state on 17 September 1972, with the authority of the present Prime Minister, that a Labor Government would adopt submissions made by the Council of Public Service Organisations for an amendment to the Public Service Regulations to provide that, where any person is refused employment in the Australian Public Service, the reason for rejection should be given to the person concerned.

(2) How many people have been refused employment in the Australian Public Service since 2 December 1972.

(3) Has a reason been given to each person for his or her rejection.

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

(1) The right honourable member is obviously referring to a speech entitled "Official Secrecy, Open Government and Making Democracy Democratic" delivered by the present Minister for Labor and Immigration on 17 September 1972. A copy of the speech is held in the Parliamentary Library.

(2) and (3) The Public Service Board has informed me that detailed records are not kept of the number of people who are not successful in their applications for permanent or temporary employment in the Australian Public Service. The Board in its Annual Reports provides considerable detail of the number of people permanently appointed to the various employment categories in the Australian Public Service. Some indication of competition for vacancies is also given—see, for example, pages 80-81 of the Board’s 1973 Report.

I have been further informed that most people are not successful because of their failure to win selection in the open competitive recruitment process. Some may be refused employment for medical or other reasons prescribed in section 34 of the Public Service Act.

As the Public Service Board does not maintain records of the number of people who are refused employment, it cannot certify that each person whose application is not successful has been given a reason for his or her rejection.

The normal practice is for persons not eligible for appointment on citizenship or medical grounds, or who have not been accepted as a result of criminal convictions bearing directly on the duties of the vacancy, to be advised accordingly.

As the right honourable member should know, the policy of previous Governments has been never to provide an individual with the result of any security check made on him. The present Government has set up the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Intelligence and Security Services of the Australian Government, the terms of reference of which provide for recommendations to be made as to the procedures that should be introduced to permit review of administrative decisions affecting citizens which were, or may have been, based on reports of an adverse kind furnished by the security and intelligence services of the Government.

Workers’ Compensation Benefits
(Question No. 1112)

Dr Klugman asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation and Compensation, upon notice:

What was the minimum workers’ compensation benefit payable under the Workers’ Compensation Acts of the States and Territories on 30 June 1974.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Minister for Repatriation and Compensation has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

(a) For total incapacity for work:

- New South Wales and Victoria—minimum flat rate of $43 per week.
- Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory—compensation at rate equal to full sick pay for 26 weeks, then flat rate of $43 per week applies.
- Queensland—weekly wage, or the basic wage plus flat rates of compensation in respect of his wife and children, whichever is greater, for first 26 weeks. Flat rate then drops to $51.20 a week plus the weekly supplements for dependants.
- South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania—weekly compensation is equal to the employee’s average weekly earnings.

(b) the smallest, or minimum amounts payable as lump sum compensation for specified losses of certain parts of the body are related to the least loss such as the loss of a phalanx or joint of a toe other than the great toe for which the payment is $275 in Tasmania. The lowest lump sum amount however is $500 payable by New South Wales.

(c) In the case of the death of a worker, generally dependency has to be established for compensation to be payable and, where only a limited degree of dependency exists, a dependant might receive a very small lump sum. A minimum amount of $2,540 is payable to partial dependants in Queensland. Also in that State, if a minor is survived by either or both parents resident within the State, parents are deemed to be dependants and entitled to $1,970.

Third Party Insurance Premiums
(Question No. 1113)

Dr Klugman asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation and Compensation, upon notice:

What were the total premiums paid by motor vehicle owners under third party insurance in each State and Territory during each of the last 3 years.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Minister for Repatriation and Compensation has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

Figures are not yet available for 1973-74. Total premiums paid as shown in the Annual Statistics of Fire, Marine and General Insurance compiled by the Commonwealth Statistician were:
What sum was paid by employers in premiums under the workers’ compensation Acts in each State and Territory in each of the last 3 years.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Minister for Repatriation and Compensation has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

Figures are not yet available for 1973-74. Premiums paid as shown in the Annual Statistics of Fire, Marine and General Insurance compiled by the Commonwealth Statistician were:

(a) State in which business is written.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State (a)</th>
<th>1970-71</th>
<th>1971-72</th>
<th>1972-73</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>$'000</td>
<td>$'000</td>
<td>$'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>67,119</td>
<td>70,244</td>
<td>72,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>43,572</td>
<td>50,334</td>
<td>56,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>13,209</td>
<td>14,251</td>
<td>15,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>18,328</td>
<td>19,719</td>
<td>15,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>17,622</td>
<td>19,620</td>
<td>20,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,969</td>
<td>2,229</td>
<td>2,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>161,820</td>
<td>176,397</td>
<td>183,026</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dr Klugman asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation and Compensation, upon notice:

(1) How many claims under workers’ compensation Acts had been pending for more than (a) 2 weeks, (b) 4 weeks, (c) 12 weeks, (d) 26 weeks and (e) 52 weeks in each State and Territory as at 30 June 1974.

(2) How many claims for workers’ compensation were rejected in each State and Territory during each of the last 3 years for which figures are available.

(3) How many claims for workers’ compensation required legal action in each State and Territory in each of the last 3 years.

(4) How many of these were settled (a) in court and (b) out of court.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Minister for Repatriation and Compensation has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

(1) The information sought on the number of claims pending is not available.

(2) The information sought on the number of claims rejected is not available.

(3) The information required is not available but the following information in relation to New South Wales received from the Workers’ Compensation Commission of New South Wales may be of some assistance to the honourable member. In the following calendar years, the number of applications filed for determination were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Applications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>5,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>5,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>5,991</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is estimated that these figures represent between 2 and 3 per cent of the annual total number of New South Wales claims.

(4) The information sought is not available.

Workers’ Compensation Claims

(a) State in which business is written.

The Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory data is not collected separately at present and is included in the State figures.

Workers’ Compensation Claims

(Question No. 1114)

Dr Klugman asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation and Compensation, upon notice:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>$'000</td>
<td>$'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>66,661</td>
<td>97,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>70,222</td>
<td>83,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>12,721</td>
<td>17,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>12,197</td>
<td>13,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>15,959</td>
<td>19,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,033</td>
<td>5,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>181,793</td>
<td>236,547</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third Party Motor Vehicle Insurance Claims

(Question No. 1116)

Dr Klugman asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation and Compensation, upon notice:

(1) How many claims under third party motor vehicle insurance had not been settled by the two main insurance companies handling third party insurance in each State and Territory as at 30 June 1974.

(2) What percentage of these claims arose from accidents which had occurred more than (a) 6 months, (b) 12 months, (c) 2 years, (d) 3 years and (e) 5 years earlier.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Minister for Repatriation and Compensation has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

(1) This information is not available. The Committee of Inquiry into Compensation and Rehabilitation in Australia when examining this matter during the course of the Inquiry took its own sample survey in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia, as at 1 April 1974.

(2) The percentage of the claims arising from accidents six months previously is not available. Claims in respect of accidents one, two, three and five years earlier, as revealed by the Committee’s survey are detailed, as set out at pp. 111 and 112 Volume 3 of the Committee’s Report (Tables 6 and 7 of Part 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>3 years</th>
<th>5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Committee's survey did not extend to Western Australia, Tasmania and the Territories.

Workers' Compensation Payments
(Question No. 1117)

Dr Klugman asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation and Compensation, upon notice:

What proportion of premiums collected under workers' compensation payments in each State and Territory was paid out in (a) medical costs, (b) hospital costs, (c) legal costs, (d) administrative costs and (e) payments to claimants in each of the last 3 years for which figures are available.

Mr Lionel Bowen—The Minister for Repatriation and Compensation has provided the following answer to the honourable members' question:

The Committee of Inquiry into Compensation and Rehabilitation examined this matter during the course of the Inquiry, 1971-72 is the latest year for which figues are available. Administration costs for 1971-72 of Workers' Compensation insurance are shown in Table 1 of Part 6 of Volume 3 of the Committee's Report. The corresponding proportion of premiums are also shown. Detailed information on payments and legal costs is available only in New South Wales and Victoria. This is also shown in Part 6 of Volume 3.

Using this information, payments to claimants and medical and hospital expenses together were 57 per cent of premiums in New South Wales excluding self-insurers and 45 per cent in Victoria in 1971-72; legal costs were 6 per cent of premiums in both New South Wales and Victoria.

Separating medical and hospital costs from payments to claimants is only possible in Victoria, in 1971-72, the following payments were made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payments</th>
<th>Proportion of Premium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$'000</td>
<td>per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical costs</td>
<td>5,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital costs</td>
<td>4,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments to claimants</td>
<td>27,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal costs</td>
<td>5,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42,865</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that not all the premiums collected in a particular year are paid out in that year. A substantial proportion in Victoria in 1971-72 were allocated to reserves and provisions for payments in future years.

Ministerial Councils: Contact with States
(Question No. 42)

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

1. Will he provide a list of all formal committees, councils, etc., that have been established which enable him or officers of his Department to maintain contact with State Government Ministers or State Government officers.

2. When was each body established and by whom.

3. What is the (a) composition and (b) function of each body.

4. On what occasions has each body met in the last 2 years and for what purpose.

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

1. (1) to (4) See the Prime Minister's answer to Question No. 41 (Hansard of 3 October 1974, pages 2233-2239).

Ministerial Councils: Contact with States
(Question No. 43)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy, upon notice:

1. Will he provide a list of all formal committees, councils, etc., that have been established which enable him or officers of his Department to maintain contact with State Government Ministers or State Government officers.

2. When was each body established and by whom.

3. What is the (a) composition and (b) function of each body.

4. On what occasions has each body met in the last 2 years and for what purpose.

Mr Connor—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

Ministerial Councils: Contact with States
(Question No. 52)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Northern Development, upon notice:

1. Will he provide a list of all formal committees, councils, etc., that have been established which enable him or officers of his Department to maintain contact with State Government Ministers or State Government officers.

2. When was each body established and by whom.

3. What is the (a) composition and (b) function of each body.

4. On what occasions has each body met in the last 2 years and for what purpose.

Dr Patterson—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

1. (1), (2), (3) and (4) I refer the right honourable member to the details concerning the Department of Northern Development given in the Prime Minister's answer to Question No. 41 published in Hansard of 3 October 1974, pages 2233-2239.

Department of Minerals and Energy: Inter-departmental Committees
(Question No. 275)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy, upon notice:

1. Does his Department maintain a record of inter-departmental committees in which it participates.

2. If not, then how is he aware of all the inter-departmental consultations in which his Department is involved through inter-departmental committees.

3. Will he ensure that such a list is in future available to him.

Mr Connor—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:
(1), (2) and (3) I refer the right honourable member to the Prime Minister’s answer to Question No. 964 on the 1973 Notice Paper (Hansard, 27 September 1973, page 1719) in which he drew attention to the impracticalities of attempting to list all the consultations in which Departments are engaged with other Departments. My Department keeps me properly informed of all important developments—this is a satisfactory procedure for the purposes of my Ministry.

Australian Capital Territory: Variations of Speed Limits
(Question No. 527)

Mr Hunt asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

(1) Is it stated in the pamphlet produced by the Metric Conversion Board entitled ‘Motoring goes Metric on 1 July 1974’ that the present 60 (mph) speed limit signs will be replaced by 100 (km/h).

(2) Have the 60 (mph) speed limit signs been replaced by 80 (km/h) signs on the Federal Highway between Antill Street and the A.C.T./N.S.W. border.

(3) What other variations of speed limits were made in the A.C.T. on the introduction of metric speed signs.

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

(1) The pamphlet ‘Motoring Goes Metric 1 July 1974’ states:

‘The present 60 (mph) speed limit signs* will be replaced by 100 (km/h).

* The above signs give a close equivalence between the old and new figures. The new figures actually chosen may differ in some instance from those shown above’.

(2) Yes but they have since been replaced with 100 km/h signs.

(3) To comply with the decision of the Australian Transport Advisory Council, to which the Australian Capital Territory was a party, generally existing imperial speed limits were rounded to the nearest appropriate metric equivalent of 60 km/h, 80 km/h or 100 km/h. Therefore, the precise values of all speed limits were altered somewhat in the metric conversion. For example, 35 mph speed zones were converted to 60 km/h, the equivalent which is 37.2 mph. In general 40 mph zones were converted to 60 km/h, 45 mph zones to 80 km/h and most 60 mph zones to 100 km/h.

Air Passenger Fares
(Question No. 597)

Mr Berinson asked the Minister for Transport, upon notice:

(1) What is the rate per mile applying to regular air passenger fares on the routes—

(a) Melbourne to Sydney
(b) Melbourne to Adelaide
(c) Melbourne to Brisbane and
(d) Melbourne to Perth.

(2) What is the passenger load factor at the latest date for which details are available in respect of each route.

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

(1) The rates per kilometre for the sector referred are:

(a) Melbourne to Sydney, first class 6.46c, economy class 5.17c.
(b) Melbourne to Adelaide, first class 6.56c, economy class 5.25c.
(c) Melbourne to Brisbane, first class 6.17c, economy class 4.94c.
(d) Melbourne to Perth, first class 5.81c, economy class 4.65c.

(2) The passenger load factors for year ended 31 December, 1973, are:

(a) Melbourne to Sydney, Ansett 73.5 per cent, TAA 72.8 per cent.
(b) Melbourne to Adelaide, Ansett 72.2 per cent, TAA 67.2 per cent.
(c) Melbourne to Brisbane, Ansett 67.6 per cent, TAA 63.7 per cent.
(d) Melbourne to Perth, Ansett 63.0 per cent, TAA 65.7 per cent.

Pipeline Authority
(Question No. 915)

Mr Anthony asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy, upon notice:

(1) Is the Pipeline Authority to exercise only the role of common carrier in the supply of gas from the Gidgealpa reserves to Sydney?

(2) If so, will this role apply to the proposed further extension of the activities of the Pipeline Authority in Australia as regards transmission of gas.

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

(1) and (2) No.

Western Australia: Local Aerodromes
(Question No. 957)

Mr Bungey asked the Minister for Transport, upon notice:

What Local Authorities in Western Australia—

(a) have taken over aerodromes established by the Australian Government; and
(b) have received assistance for the establishment of local aerodromes since 1958.

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

The following Australian Government aerodromes have been transferred to Local Government authorities and have subsequently received financial assistance for development and maintenance works:

Norseman and Leonora transferred in 1960.
Esperance in 1962.
Rottneast Island in 1969.
Wiluna and Roebourne in 1972.

Southern Cross was transferred in 1960 but has subsequently received financial assistance for maintenance works only.

Airport Charges
(Question No. 1004)

Mr Scholes asked the Minister for Transport, upon notice:

(a) Melbourne to Sydney, first class 6.46c, economy class 5.17c.
(b) Melbourne to Adelaide, first class 6.56c, economy class 5.25c.
(c) Melbourne to Brisbane, first class 6.17c, economy class 4.94c.
(d) Melbourne to Perth, first class 5.81c, economy class 4.65c.
(1) Are airport charges, at airports used or available for use by both airlines involved in the two airline agreement, fixed by the same criteria as those for airports from which the Government airline is excluded by State Governments.

(2) What additional financial responsibility do State Governments accept where, as an act of policy, such Governments exclude the Government airline.

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

(1) The Air Navigation (Charges) Act 1952-1973 provides the basis for charging all airlines, including those involved in the two airline agreement, for the use of aerodromes, air route and airways facilities, meteorological services and search and rescue services maintained, operated or provided by the Australian Government. The criteria and scale of charges do not take into consideration whether or not the Government airline is excluded by State Governments from using the facilities provided.

(2) None.

Advertising: Oak Insurance Ltd

Mr Lloyd asked the Treasurer, upon notice:

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the continued lavish advertising of Oak Insurance Ltd, including a double page spread on Monday, 23 September 1974, in the Melbourne Sun.

(2) If so, will his Department investigate the claims in the advertisements, including a judgment on whether the advertisements are misleading.

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

(1) Yes.

(2) Treasury officers have examined the ‘Extra Cash Income Plan’ policy being offered by Oak Insurance Limited. In considering the advertisements of the company, and the claims made in them, the following points might be noted with regard to the company and the insurance policy that it is offering:

(a) the company has complied with the deposit provisions of the Insurance (Deposits) Act 1932-1973;

(b) the type of cover offered by the company is essentially an income supplement sickness and accident policy. It provides cover against loss of income while a person is hospitalised after an accident or for sickness;

(c) there is no reason to believe that the premium rates being charged are unrealistic, given the restrictive nature of the policy offered and particularly that the benefits under the policy are payable only when the policy owner is in hospital;

(d) similar insurance schemes operate in several European countries and in the U.S.A.;

(e) the Insurance Commissioner’s powers under the general insurance legislation are concerned with the solvency of insurance companies. The Commissioner’s functions do not include investigations relating to claims in advertisements.

Department of Foreign Affairs: Green Papers on Policy Issues

Mr Peacock asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

(1) When does the Minister propose that his Department will begin to issue green papers on policy issues.

(2) Are any such papers at present being prepared: if so on what subjects.

Mr Whitlam—The Foreign Minister has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

(1) and (2) No decision has yet been made on this matter.

Austrian Capital Territory: Compensation to Lessees of Rural Land

(Question No. 1184)

Mr Street asked the Minister for the Capital Territory, upon notice:

When does he expect to announce the decision reached, as a result of the consultations he has instigated with the Treasurer and the Attorney-General, regarding the payment of interest on unpaid compensation to lessees of rural land in the Austrian Capital Territory.

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

I will announce a decision as soon as a response is received from my colleagues the Treasurer and the Attorney-General.

Department of Foreign Affairs: Pacific Islands Division

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

(1) Did the Prime Minister give an undertaking in 1972 that a Labor Government would establish a Pacific Islands Division in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

(2) If so, has such a division been established; if not, why not.

Mr Whitlam—The Foreign Minister has provided the following answer to the right honourable member’s question:

(1) Chapter 21 of the Australian Labor Party Platform Constitution and Rules as approved by the 29th Conference at Launceston 1971 stated:

‘Labor will establish a Pacific Islands Division within the Department of Foreign Affairs to second and support skilled personnel requested by Papua New Guinea and other islands of the Pacific for their civil and armed forces.’

(2) In organisational terms a full Division in the Department of Foreign Affairs to handle Australia’s relations with the Pacific Islands and Papua New Guinea is not justified at the present time. Relations with Papua New Guinea will be handled from 11 November by a full Branch headed by an Assistant Secretary and staffed by six other Foreign Affairs Officers. The Papua New Guinea Office, headed by a First Assistant Secretary, will continue to operate for some time.

Relations with other countries in the Pacific are undertaken by the Department’s Americas and South Pacific Branch involving the attention of an Assistant Secretary and five other FAO’s.

The Office of the Australian Development Assistance Agency has a substantial Branch responsible for the provision of skilled personnel for Papua New Guinea and other South Pacific countries. Policy, finance and projects aspects of aid to Papua New Guinea and to the South Pacific are dealt with by the relevant Sections of the Agency.
Nuclear, Chemical and Bacteriological Warfare: Prohibition
(Question No. 1227)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

What action has been taken by the Government to (a) modernise and (b) apply international conventions to secure universal prohibition of (i) nuclear, (ii) chemical and (iii) bacteriological warfare since 2 December 1972.

Mr Whitlam—The Foreign Minister has provided the following answer to the right honourable member’s question:

Since 2 December 1972, the Government has paid close attention to international conventions directed towards securing the prohibition of nuclear, chemical and bacteriological warfare.

(i) Nuclear Warfare

The Government ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear weapons in January 1973. It has been an active member of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and will participate in that Conference when it takes place in May 1975. The Government has participated in many bilateral and multilateral consultations about aspects of non-proliferation including in particular the development of effective international arrangements to govern and control nuclear experiments for peaceful purposes. As the Prime Minister said in his address to the UN General Assembly on 30 September, Australia seeks support for an international arrangement by which all States could gain access to nuclear explosives services under agreed and secure international controls and for peaceful purposes.

(ii) Chemical Warfare

International agreement has not yet been reached on a chemical weapons convention. On 6 December 1973 Australia voted for United Nations General Assembly resolution 3077 (XXVIII) requesting the Conference of the Committee and Disarmament (CCD) to continue negotiations on effective measures for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their elimination from all arsenals of all states. The Australian Government is still examining the reports of the intensive debate on a draft convention on chemical weapons held during this year’s session of the CCD. The Government will continue to pay close attention to the CCD debate on chemical weapons pending consideration of our application for CCD membership (see answer to question No. 1228).

(iii) Biological Warfare

Although a signatory to the Biological Weapons Convention, Australia is not yet a full party. It is, however, the intention of the Government to ratify this Convention as soon as the necessary domestic legislation has been enacted. This legislation is currently under active consideration by departments.

Disarmament Agreements
(Question No. 1228)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

What action has been taken by the Government to establish more effective disarmament agreements, indicating the date, place and participants in each case, since 2 December 1972.

Mr Whitlam—The Foreign Minister has provided the following answer to the right honourable member’s question:

The major international forums in which disarmament discussions take place at present are:

(i) the United Nations General Assembly;
(ii) the Conference of the Committee of Disarmament;
(iii) Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) (which are bilateral talks between the USA and USSR);
(iv) the Mutual Balanced Force Reductions talks (MBFR) (which are regional talks relating to forces levels in Europe);
(v) the UN ad hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean.

In addition,

(vi) important discussions on the question of halting the spread of nuclear weapons capability (non-proliferation) and related matters take place or will take place in certain forums additional to those mentioned above:

(a) the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, due to take place in Geneva in May 1975;
(b) the Preparatory Committee for (a) above, which has met twice during 1974 (April and August-September) and will meet again in February 1975;
(c) at Board of Governors meetings and the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency and in committees associated with the IAEA.

(vii) discussions on weapons which may cause unnecessary suffering or have indiscriminate effects have taken place under the auspices of the ICRC in connection with the Diplomatic Conference of the Humanitarian Aspects of Warfare in Geneva last February and at a conference of experts in Lucerne, September/October 1974;

(viii) as a result of resolutions of the UN General Assembly relating to the holding of a World Disarmament Conference, a Committee has been set up at UN Headquarters in New York to consider that proposal.

The Government strongly supports the objectives of disarmament both because disarmament contributes to regional and global security and the improvement of relations between States, and because real and significant measures of disarmament make possible the freeing of resources which can be then applied to economic and social development.

In accordance with this policy, the Government has been and will continue to be an active participant in disarmament discussions in the bodies listed at (i), (v), (vi)b, (vi)c and (vii) above and will play an active and positive role in (vi)a when the Review Conference takes place.

In addition, during 1974 the Government sought membership of (ii), the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. The CCD until this year has had an active membership of 25 under the co-chairmanship of the USA and USSR. Five more States are to be admitted to membership as from the beginning of next year, subject to endorsement by the UNGA of the CCD recommendation. Membership of the Committee is based on a formula designed to achieve balanced representation between different States groupings. Because arrangements had been made according to the formula of balance for the admission of the five new States (Federal Republic of Germany, German Democratic Republic, Iran, Peru and Zaire) to the CCD before the Australian application was submitted, it was not possible to secure membership of the CCD for Australia this year. As is
noted in the CCD Report to the UNGA for 1974, consideration by the Committee of the Australian request has been deferred with the concurrence of Australia to a later date.

Australia voted for the UNGA Resolution (3183 XXVIII) which established the ad hoc Committee (vii above) on the holding of a World Disarmament Conference but is not a member of that Committee. Australia supports the concept of such a conference but considers that it can only be held when there is widespread international agreement about its agenda and the objectives sought, and when the five nuclear weapon States and other States of major military and political significance have agreed to participate.

The Government also engages in continuing bilateral discussions with other States on disarmament matters. It is not possible to list all the occasions or the participants in each case. In the last few weeks, however, as an example, its representatives have held discussions—in New York, Geneva, Vienna and other capitals—with representatives of, inter alia, the USA, the UK, the USSR, India, Pakistan, Iran, Japan, Sweden, Yugoslavia, Mexico, the Netherlands, China, Romania, New Zealand and Canada.

The Government is concerned also that the maximum number of States should subscribe to existing disarmament agreements in order to increase their effectiveness and extend their applicability. To this end, when the Government assumed office on 2 December 1972 it moved quickly to ratify the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Seabed Arms Control Treaty. Instruments of ratification for both Treaties were deposited in London, Washington and Moscow on 23 January 1973. The only other disarmament Treaty to which Australia is not yet a full party, the Biological Weapons Convention, is currently under active consideration. It is the intention of the Government to ratify this convention as soon as the necessary domestic legislation has been enacted.

The Government has also actively promoted the cessation of nuclear testing through bilateral representations, through its activities in the United Nations and through the action it has taken in the International Court of Justice against French testing in the atmosphere.

Treaty of Nara
(Question No. 1234)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. What progress has been made towards finalising the proposed Treaty of Nara.

2. Has agreement been reached on provisions relating to the export to Japan of Australian minerals.

3. Has Japan proposed an Australian-Japanese Foundation in Tokyo.

4. If so, what did this proposal precisely entail.

5. What has been the outcome of the proposal.

Mr Whitlam—The Foreign Minister has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

1. and 2. Good progress is being made towards finalising the proposed Treaty of Nara. Successive drafts of the treaty provided by each side, and discussions in Tokyo (in July) and Canberra (in October), have brought agreement closer. A further round of talks is scheduled to be held in Tokyo in November.

3), 4) and 5) No. A suggestion for an Australia-Japan Foundation made by the Australian Ambassador to Japan is currently being studied.

African National Liberation Movements: Government Assistance
(Question No. 1278)

Mr Donald Cameron asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs upon notice:

1. Was the decision to make $150m aid available to the African liberation movement made by the Minister’s predecessor, if so, by whom.

2. What method of distribution will be employed.

3. What is the type of aid proposed, and who will be in charge of the administration of the aid.

Mr Whitlam—The Foreign Minister has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

1. No. It is on the recommendation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Government proposes in 1974-75 to provide $150,000 (not $150m as suggested by the honourable member) in humanitarian assistance to certain African national liberation movements.

2 and 3. The general purpose and form of the proposed humanitarian assistance were indicated in an answer to a question without notice of Senator Sim on 24 September by Senator Murphy in his capacity as Minister representing the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs. Further details including those of the administration of the assistance will be announced in due course.

Fitzgerald Report
(Question No. 1291)

Mr Garland asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy, upon notice:

1. Did he commission the inquiries which produced what is known as the Fitzgerald Report.

2. If so, on what date was this done.

3. What were the terms of reference, or contents of any agreement, or letter of arrangement.

4. What was the fee payable.

5. Were there other related expenses; if so, what were the precise details.

6. When did he first receive indication of the contents.

7. When did he receive the final payment.

8. Were the press able to print large sections of the report before it was available to members of Parliament; if so, why.

9. Did he or any of his staff release it in the middle of the election campaign in such a way as to prevent members of Parliament and other persons from obtaining a full copy before the press had given comments on its contents.

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

1. Yes.


3. I asked Mr Fitzgerald orally to assess the contribution by the mineral industry to the national economy.

4. and 7. None.

5. For 3 months ending in December 1973 an Assistant Secretary of the Department assisted Mr Fitzgerald. Stenographic and other office services were provided by the Department.
(8) Yes. Parliament was dissolved on 11 April before I had the opportunity to table the report in accordance with my undertaking of 2 April vide Hansard page 838. Also, see answer to part (9).

(9) Full copies were available without restriction as soon as they were available from the printer—earlier general availability having been denied to honourable members by the action of the honourable member for Farrer on 2 April in objecting to my to my incorporating the total report in Hansard (page 838).

Commonwealth Railways: Compensation to Employees for Loss of Hearing
(Question No. 1395)

Mr Wallis asked the Minister for Transport, upon notice;

(1) What sum has been paid out by the Commonwealth Railways to employees as compensation for loss of hearing?

(2) What sum has been paid out by the Commonwealth Railways for the supply of hearing aids to employees afflicted by loss of hearing?

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

(1) Since payments first commenced in 1966-67, a total of $96,799.44 has been paid by Commonwealth Railways to employees suffering loss of hearing as a result of their employment with the Railways.

(2) During that period, the cost of supplying hearing aids to those employees where such aids were considered necessary was $1,117.32.

Western Australia: Grants for Film, Television and Video Production
(Question No. 965)

Mr Bungey asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

(1) What grants and loans have been approved, by or through the Film and Television Board of the Australian Council for the Arts, for film, television and video production in Western Australia since 30 June 1972.

(2) Who received the assistance, and for what purposes.

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

(1) and (2) The Film and Television Board of the Australian Council for the Arts came into existence early in 1973 when the Australian Government announced new arrangements for support for the Arts.

Grants recipients for Western Australia from the Board’s inception until 24 July 1974 are as follows—

1972-73

(1) Perth Film Festival—Subsidy for screening of Australian Films. $2,289

1973-74

(1) Das Films—To produce a dramatised documentary on Lasseter’s Reef. Interest-free loan. $15,000

(2) Ron Bunney—To develop a script to screenplay stage. $600

(3) Mary Gage—To develop a synopsis of a one half hour television play $360

(4) Gerald Glaskin—To write a second draft screenplay $1,200

(5) Perth Film Festival—For assistance to the Perth International Film Festival (1974) including air fares and accommodation for Australian and International filmmakers, screening of Australian films and administration costs. $8,914

(6) William Warnock—To develop a treatment from a submitted storyline. $1,000

(7) Miriam Howard-Wright—To adapt the screenplay ‘The Wasted Years’ to a television script. $970

(8) B. Oldfield—to make an experimental film. $1,856

(9) R. Pascoe—To make an experimental film. $1,380

(10) J. R. Noble—To make an experimental film. $1,196

(11) Australian Film Institute (for Perth Institute of Film and Television)—For film production equipment for use in training and production activities under the administrative control of the Perth Institute of Film and Television. The equipment will also be available for other non-commercial filmmakers, such as members of a film cooperative and/or recipients of Experimental Film Fund grants. $22,000

(12) Perth Institute of Film and Television—

(a) $11,000 as an advance on salaries. $53,000

(b) $25,000 towards the cost of building and equipping a 130 seat cinema subject to the condition that the cinema and exhibition facilities are made available to other groups generally concerned with films of a non-commercial or minority group basis. $4,000 towards a film mobile provided the balance required is available from an alternative source.

(c) An additional $9,000 for staff salaries including that of an administrator and director. $4,000 for secretarial assistance for one year from 1.1.74.

(d) $4,000 for secretarial assistance for one year from 1.1.74.

(e) Australian Film Institute—To establish a Community Access Video Centre in Fremantle. $24,124
1974-75
Grants approved but not necessarily paid in the current financial year.

(1) Perth City Library—An offer of a $1 for $1 subsidy if required for purchase of film and television books $500

(2) Perth Institute of Film and Television—An offer of $1 for $1 subsidy if required for the establishment of a library collection of technical journals, etc. on the subject of film and television production.

(3) Doug Foley—Treatement to screenplay stage.

(4) Mary Selmark (in association with David Moore)—To produce film on Aboriginals in the Kimberley Region.

Australian Airports
(Question No. 32)

Mr Snadden asked the Minister for Transport, upon notice:

(1) How many (a) domestic and (b) international flights were there (i) in and (ii) out of every airport in Australian capital cities and major territory centres in each of the last 5 years.

(2) How many passengers (a) arrived and (b) departed from each of these airports in each of the last 5 years.

(3) What is the estimated number of visitors to each of these airports in each of the last 5 years.

(4) What is the length of the runways, capacity and size of each of the airports.

(5) What is the size and quality of service provided in each of the terminals at each airport.

Mr Charles Jones—The answer to the right honourable member’s question is as follows:

The information requested is contained in tables under the following headings:

(1) Scheduled domestic and international aircraft movements at Capital City and major Territory Airports.

(2) Scheduled domestic and international passengers arriving and departing at Capital City and major Territory Airports.

(3) Estimated visitors at Capital City and major Territory Airports.

(4) The length of runways, capacity and size of Capital City and Territory Airports.

(5) The size and quality of service provided at Capital City and major Territory Airports.

**TABLE 1**
SCHEDULED DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL AIRCRAFT MOVEMENTS AT CAPITAL CITY AND MAJOR TERRITORY AIRPORTS

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31 October 1974 REPRESENTATIVES 3285
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<td>632,705</td>
<td>1,736,68</td>
<td>287,46</td>
<td>246,53</td>
<td>955,32</td>
<td>91,90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>535,429</td>
<td>634,238</td>
<td>690,774</td>
<td>748,928</td>
<td>944,855</td>
<td>19,901</td>
<td>23,942</td>
<td>27,271</td>
<td>36,370</td>
<td>51,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>248,866</td>
<td>290,450</td>
<td>314,924</td>
<td>365,882</td>
<td>444,116</td>
<td>438,33</td>
<td>54,274</td>
<td>63,337</td>
<td>66,16</td>
<td>78,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>43,832</td>
<td>54,274</td>
<td>63,337</td>
<td>66,16</td>
<td>78,704</td>
<td>6,585</td>
<td>9,167</td>
<td>11,181</td>
<td>14,776</td>
<td>15,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>98,244</td>
<td>104,272</td>
<td>112,759</td>
<td>118,039</td>
<td>171,621</td>
<td>99,434</td>
<td>105,096</td>
<td>113,456</td>
<td>117,500</td>
<td>173,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>1,201,469</td>
<td>1,343,510</td>
<td>1,400,540</td>
<td>1,474,973</td>
<td>1,798,331</td>
<td>27,252</td>
<td>51,035</td>
<td>89,962</td>
<td>135,303</td>
<td>193,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>188,584</td>
<td>232,908</td>
<td>269,292</td>
<td>260,650</td>
<td>293,721</td>
<td>25,642</td>
<td>32,888</td>
<td>41,113</td>
<td>52,862</td>
<td>56,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>1,596,505</td>
<td>1,755,994</td>
<td>1,798,721</td>
<td>1,915,032</td>
<td>346,338</td>
<td>388,389</td>
<td>414,863</td>
<td>454,631</td>
<td>539,428</td>
<td>386,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2**

SCHEDULED DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PASSENGERS ARRIVING AND DEPARTING AT CAPITAL CITY AND MAJOR TERRITORY AIRPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>979,732</td>
<td>1,023,171</td>
<td>1,028,013</td>
<td>1,074,352</td>
<td>1,271,808</td>
<td>6,248</td>
<td>1,268</td>
<td>10,227</td>
<td>12,882</td>
<td>15,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>1,082,093</td>
<td>1,278,915</td>
<td>1,404,927</td>
<td>1,511,752</td>
<td>1,900,184</td>
<td>43,240</td>
<td>71,204</td>
<td>56,257</td>
<td>71,049</td>
<td>107,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>495,401</td>
<td>577,918</td>
<td>624,986</td>
<td>726,362</td>
<td>883,352</td>
<td>6,283</td>
<td>17,833</td>
<td>21,408</td>
<td>27,458</td>
<td>31,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>88,577</td>
<td>108,863</td>
<td>127,384</td>
<td>132,812</td>
<td>159,861</td>
<td>6,248</td>
<td>8,616</td>
<td>10,227</td>
<td>12,882</td>
<td>15,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>197,678</td>
<td>209,368</td>
<td>226,215</td>
<td>235,539</td>
<td>345,010</td>
<td>8,332</td>
<td>6,248</td>
<td>1,268</td>
<td>12,882</td>
<td>15,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>2,431,217</td>
<td>2,701,961</td>
<td>2,811,816</td>
<td>2,949,637</td>
<td>3,582,157</td>
<td>56,064</td>
<td>100,473</td>
<td>185,094</td>
<td>280,235</td>
<td>406,961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>381,839</td>
<td>467,469</td>
<td>541,412</td>
<td>524,258</td>
<td>595,708</td>
<td>28,818</td>
<td>49,438</td>
<td>71,235</td>
<td>90,127</td>
<td>116,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>3,159,672</td>
<td>3,492,674</td>
<td>3,591,112</td>
<td>3,846,704</td>
<td>3,549,495</td>
<td>386,455</td>
<td>734,727</td>
<td>940,704</td>
<td>1,093,923</td>
<td>388,389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3
ESTIMATED VISITORS AT CAPITAL CITY AND MAJOR TERRITORY AIRPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Domestic Passengers</th>
<th>International Passengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year - Out</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2,201,052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4
THE LENGTH OF RUNWAYS, CAPACITY AND SIZE OF CAPITAL CITY AND TERRITORY AIRPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Year - Length of Runways</th>
<th>Capacity (largest aircraft type permitted on a regular normal basis)</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>8,000' x 150'</td>
<td>11,000' x 200'</td>
<td>1,970 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,420' x 150'</td>
<td>5,000' x 100'</td>
<td>1,700 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>7,760' x 200'</td>
<td>12,000' x 150'</td>
<td>3,730 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,020' x 100'</td>
<td>7,500' x 150'</td>
<td>3,200 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>6,800' x 150'</td>
<td>10,310' x 150'</td>
<td>30 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,510' x 150'</td>
<td>8,300' x 150'</td>
<td>DoT area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 5
THE SIZE AND QUALITY OF SERVICE PROVIDED AT CAPITAL CITY AND MAJOR TERRITORY AIRPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Total Area</th>
<th>Passenger and Public Area</th>
<th>Concession Area</th>
<th>Airline and Govt Dept Admin. Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>5,550 sq. m. (59,740 sq. ft)</td>
<td>3,350 sq. m. (36,039 sq. ft)</td>
<td>650 sq. m. (6,997 sq. ft)</td>
<td>1,550 sq. m. (16,684 sq. ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>Int.</td>
<td>3,000 sq. m. (32,292 sq. ft)</td>
<td>1,700 sq. m. (18,299 sq. ft)</td>
<td>380 sq. m. (4,090 sq. ft)</td>
<td>920 sq. m. (9,903 sq. ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Int.</td>
<td>6,500 sq. m. (69,965 sq. ft)</td>
<td>4,140 sq. m. (44,563 sq. ft)</td>
<td>560 sq. m. (6,028 sq. ft)</td>
<td>1,800 sq. m. (19,375 sq. ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>6,260 sq. m. (67,382 sq. ft)</td>
<td>3,500 sq. m. (37,634 sq. ft)</td>
<td>775 sq. m. (8,342 sq. ft)</td>
<td>1,985 sq. m. (21,366 sq. ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>3,100 sq. m. (33,368 sq. ft)</td>
<td>1,160 sq. m. (12,486 sq. ft)</td>
<td>1,440 sq. m. (15,500 sq. ft)</td>
<td>500 sq. m. (5,382 sq. ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>1,300 sq. m.</td>
<td>800 sq. m.</td>
<td>130 sq. m.</td>
<td>370 sq. m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Attorney-General, upon notice:

Will the Attorney-General provide a list of the interdepartmental committees, which have been established since 2 December 1972, of which officers of the Attorney-General's Department are members.

Mr Enderby—The Attorney-General has provided the following answer to the right honourable member's question:

No. On 20 September 1973, my colleague, the Prime Minister, informed the right honourable gentleman in reply to a question without notice about interdepartmental committees that, if he wished to know the composition and function of any particular interdepartmental committee, and for what period of time it had been active, the Prime Minister would be happy to provide him with that information (Hansard, page 1317).

I also refer the right honourable gentleman to the Prime Minister's answer to his further question without notice on this subject on 15 November 1973 (Hansard, pages 3373-4).

If the right honourable gentleman wishes to have information about a particular committee on which my Department is represented, I will assist him as far as possible having regard to the Prime Minister's answers to questions nos. 964 and 1057 (Hansard 27 September 1973, page 1714 and 24 October 1973, page 2665).
### Visitor and Migrant Visas
(Answer No. 522)

Mr Wilson asked the Minister for Labor and Immigration, upon notice:

How many applications for (a) visitors’ visas and (b) permission to migrate to Australia have been (i) received from and (ii) approved for persons resident in (A) Fiji, (B) India, (C) Indonesia, (D) Malaysia, (E) Pakistan, (F) the Philippines and (G) Singapore during each month from 1 January to 30 June 1974.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(a) Visitor Visas</th>
<th>(b) Migrant Visas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(i) Applicants</td>
<td>(ii) Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A) Fiji</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>1,052</td>
<td>1,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1,094</td>
<td>1,094</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>318</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,775</td>
<td>3,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) India</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>149</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>815</td>
<td>809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>542</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>539</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,279</td>
<td>3,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) Malaysia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>1,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E) Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### October 1974 Representative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a) Visitor Visas</th>
<th>(b) Migrant Visas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) Applicants</td>
<td>(ii) Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### April, May, June*

* Not Available

Note: (i) Past experience in other countries including Britain has been that a spontaneous upsurge of unsponsored migrant applications, resulting from unusual circumstances attended by publicity, usually contain a disproportionate number of applications clearly unable to meet normal entry requirements.

(ii) Some applicants withdraw their application prior to determination.

(iii) There are always some applications still waiting assessment.

### Advertising: Pain-relieving Preparations
(Answer No. 576)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

(1) What restrictions does the Government intend to introduce in regard to the advertising of pain-relieving preparations.

(2) When will the restrictions come into operation.

Dr Everingham—The answer to the right honourable member’s question is as follows:

(1) The restrictions on the advertising of pain-relieving preparations to be introduced by the Government are those agreed to, as part of a major proposal for the control of all advertising of therapeutic goods, by the Australian Health Ministers at their Conference in August 1974. A copy of the relevant document will be tabled. Advertisements for minor analgesics directed to the public will be subject to the general provisions in the proposal and, in addition, to the specific and more stringent provisions of Section 211.
(2) A firm date has not been set for applying the proposals to the prior censorship of advertisements to be transmitted on radio and television. One factor to be taken into account is the necessity to give the media and pharmaceutical industries adequate notice of the date, so that advertisements to replace those currently approved may be prepared and submitted to my Department for approval. Implementation of the controls over other forms of advertising subject to the jurisdiction of the Government will require new legislation, or amendment of existing legislation which will be initiated at the earliest opportunity. The need to give industry adequate notice in this area will also be taken into account in setting the effective date for the legislation.

Interim Regional Council for Social Development, Alice Springs
(Question No. 623)

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

(1) Who are the members of the Interim Regional Council (Alice Springs) and what organisations do they represent.

(2) What are the details of their budgetary requirements over the next 3 financial years, including the estimated staff and the percentage of expenditure to be given over for administrative costs.

(3) What are the projects planned by the Council and how many people will be catered for in each project in the first 3 years.

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

(1) The members of the Interim Regional Council for Social Development, Alice Springs, are not designated representatives of particular organisations. As individuals, the members have connections in various fields. For example, service clubs, local government, health, religion and social welfare. Members of the Interim Committee are:

Mr P. G. Howard, Mr T. Williams, Mr L. Marinucci, Mr M. Hurnell, Dr A. Vines, Fr D. Robart, Ms M. Hornsby, Mr Trevor Jenkinson, Mr R. Braidford, Ms M. Waite, Mrs D. Smith, Ms J. Pattenden, Ms S. Wallington, Mr J. Cavanagh, Mr M. Johnston, Mr R. DuBois, Mr C. Sims, Mr E. Heath.

(2) The Interim Regional Council was approved to receive administrative grants only during the pilot period of the Australian Assistance Plan of $2,000 in 1973-74 and up to $40,000 ($30,000 for staff salaries and $10,000 for other administrative costs) in 1974-75, as proposed in the Budget for 1974-75. Funding for 1975-76 has not as yet been determined. Budgetary requirements for the next 3 financial years are unknown as are staff requirements, due to the Council being in a formative stage of development.

(3) No projects have been planned as the Council has not as yet conducted research to determine the needs of the people within the Region.

Outer Eastern Metropolitan Region 16: Australian Assistance Plan
(Question No. 890)

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

(1) Has the interim committee of Outer Eastern Metropolitan Region 16 expressed opposition to the Australian Assistance Plan.

(2) What is his attitude to the claim by the region that the administrative structure of the scheme should be direct through the local government instrumentalities.

(3) What is his attitude to the view of the interim committee that a regional structure for social welfare should be combined with the already established regional structure for the Grants Commission.

(4) What is his attitude to the committee’s view that policy and administrative decisions should be in the hands of elected local government representatives.

(5) What is his attitude to the view put by the committee in its opposition to the Plan that all funds should be channelled through the presently established local government structure.

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

(1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) A number of representations on the Australian Assistance Plan has been received from the Outer Eastern Metropolitan Region 16, including the suggestion that the Plan should be implemented through regional authorities. Because social welfare responsibilities involve all levels of Government and a large variety of voluntary organisations, the development of the pilot stage of the programme has sought to involve representation from all of these sources. Local Government bodies have been involved in helping the establishment of Regional Councils for Social Development. Frequently, the major initiative in preparing a submission for funding under the Australian Assistance Plan has come from municipal social workers or from social welfare advisory committees attached to municipal bodies. Regional councils for Social Development are expected to relate to other regional planning bodies but will require the capacity to undertake independent examination of social welfare proposals and to make recommendations on such proposals for the allocation of funds under the Australian Assistance Plan.

Because of the way in which the programme is being developed it is appropriate that funds should be channelled through the Regional Councils for Social Development.

Wheat Exports: Delays
(Question No. 969)

Mr Hyde asked the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture, upon notice:

(1) To what extent have wheat shipments from Australian ports been delayed as a result of (a) short of shipping space, (b) shortage of handling facilities, (c) shortage of railway capacity, (d) industrial trouble and (e) other factors.

(2) At what ports have delays occurred, and to what extent at each port.

(3) What is the cost to the industry of the delays that have occurred, and what is the nature of those costs.

(4) Will grain once expected to be shipped occupy country storage space at the start of the 1974-75 harvest.

(5) Have any negotiated sales been lost as a result of delayed delivery.

(6) Has any estimate been made of the extent to which future sales have been prejudiced.

(7) Has the Government any plans to deal with the situation.

Dr Patterson—The Minister for Agriculture has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

In respect of questions (1) and (6) the Australian Wheat Board, which has the direct responsibility for the marketing of Australian wheat, has supplied the following information:
1. (a) Delays have not been experience due to a shortage of shipping space.
(b) Shortage facilities presently available particularly at Newcastle and Sydney have been an inhibiting factor in building up port terminal stocks to cope with a heavy grain shipping programme.
(c) There has been a definite shortage of railway capacity, including rolling stock, in New South Wales. Other States' railways have been able to cope with the full movement programme.
(d) Industrial troubles have been experienced in all mainland exporting States except Queensland, with the major effect on exports being from New South Wales.
(e) Other factors which have caused delay to wheat shipments include—
(i) Inclement weather, (rain, winds and rough seas which have hindered vessels' movements).
(ii) Shortage of labour.
(iii) Cleaning and/or fumigation of vessels prior to loading.
(iv) Loading of vessels with other grains at the silo berths.
2. Delays have occurred at all ports from which wheat has been shipped, with the exception of Brisbane and Gladstone in Queensland, from which ports very little wheat was available for shipment last year. Sydney and Newcastle have been the most affected ports with numerous delays throughout the year from all the factors mentioned in (1) above, culminating in a strike of silo employees at both ports for five weeks from 11 July to 15 August. It is assessed that delays in New South Wales from all causes affected the disposal of around 320,000 tonnes of wheat from Sydney and about 320,000 tonnes from Newcastle. At Fremantle (Western Australia) 50 working days were lost (202 ship days) with losses of 3 to 8 working days at the Western Australian ports.
At Geelong serious dislocation occurred to the shipments of wheat to Tasmania due to industrial trouble relating to the 'North Esk' Overseas shipments were affected to a limited extent by bans on Greek vessels and a Waterside Workers' Federation strike. In South Australia more than 130 ship days were lost due to various factors as listed in (1) above.
3. It is virtually impossible to indicate total financial losses to the industry due to the dislocation of the shipping programme this year. The nature of the losses is as follows—
(i) Demurrage paid to shippers to 16 October amounted to 
$548,842 in respect of wheat from Sydney and about $548,842 was incurred at the ports of Sydney and Newcastle. Additionally $2,556,806 demurrage is in dispute with shipowners.
(ii) Interruption to the shipping programme has resulted in delayed receipt of payments from buyers and consequent delays in the making of progress payments to growers in respect of 1974-75 pool wheat by up to two months.
(iii) By reason of the serious delays in shipments from New South Wales the Board has had to seek alternative outlets for New South Wales wheat, not only to maintain shipments against firm sales, but also with a view to clearing country storage to make way for the incoming harvest. 50,000 tonnes of Northern New South Wales wheat is being moved into Queensland for shipment to Brisbane and 40,000 tonnes of Southern New South Wales wheat into Victoria for shipment from Geelong. This will involve extra inter-State freight costs of some $200,000.
4. Yes. The Board initially programmed to clear virtually the whole of the exportable surplus of wheat in New South Wales but, due to the shipment delays, will now carryover at the end of the crop year (30 November) over 600,000 tonnes of wheat. (This quantity is in addition to normal stocks of wheat and wheat equivalent of flour held by the mills).
5. No.
6. It is not practical to estimate the extent to which future sales may have been prejudiced.
7. Some of the problems mentioned above are not in areas of federal responsibility. As regards industrial disputes, the matter has had the attention of the Minister for Labor and Immigration and where appropriate direct representations have been made to the unions involved with the aim of minimising the disruption to wheat shipments. I am glad to say that shipments are currently proceeding smoothly.

Boddington Women's Hospital
(Question No. 1034)

Mr Bungey asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:
(1) Has a decision been made on assistance for hospital improvements at the Boddington Women's Hospital submitted by the Boddington Community Committee to the Southern Region Social Development Board under the Australian Assistance Plan, and subsequently referred by the Social Welfare Commission to his Department.
(2) If so, what is the decision.
(3) If not, when will a decision be made.

Dr Everingham—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
(1), (2) and (3) It was announced in the 1974-75 Budget that the Australian Government had considered the recommendations arising from the Hospitals and Health Services Commission's Report on Hospitals in Australia and agreed to a five-year program of capital assistance for the development of public hospital facilities in the States. For this purpose $25m will be provided in 1974-75.
However, it was one of the cornerstones of the Hospitals Report that expenditure by the Australian and State Governments on hospital facilities should represent a joint initiative aimed at co-ordinated planning on a regional, State and Federal basis. It is proposed that Joint Hospitals Works Councils should be established in each State to set priorities and to plan expenditure. Each Joint Council will comprise representatives from the State and the Hospitals and Health Services Commission and will consider the total public hospital development program for that State. On the basis of this consideration the Commission will make recommendations to me as Minister for Health concerning financial assistance to be offered to individual hospital projects.
I would suggest that the Boddington Community Committee make representations to the Western Australian Government to have the proposed improvements to the Boddington Women's Hospital included in that State's Hospital Program.

Nursing Mothers' Association
(Question No. 1105)

Mr Lloyd asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:
(1) Has the Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia applied for a community health program grant to assist with administration costs.
(2) If so, has the request been approved.

Dr Everingham—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
Department of Health: Civil Defence Procedures

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

1. With reference to the answer to question No. 548 (Hansard 2 October 1974, page 1621) in which the Prime Minister indicated that the form and frequency of exercises in Government Departments in civil defence preparedness are as determined by individual Departments, on what dates in the last 18 months have exercises of this nature been conducted in his Department.

2. Which officers and employees took part.

3. How many officers and employees took part.

4. What was the purpose of each of the exercises.

5. Does he accept that this is an area where the Australian Government can give a lead to other employers.

Dr Everingham—The answer to the right honourable member’s question is as follows:

1. (a) 3-5-1973; (b) 16-1-1974; (c) 23-1-1974.

2. (a) Fire Wardens; (b) Computer Shift Workers; (c) Computer Shift Workers.

3. (a) 20; (b) 10; (c) 10.

(4) (a) Lecture by Fire Brigade officers on fire precautions and evacuation drills; (b) Emergency evacuation of the computing centre; (c) as for (b).

(5) See the answer to Question 548 published on 19 September 1974.

Cattle: Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Eradication

Mr Lloyd asked the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture, upon notice:

1. How will the $6.5 million proposed in the Budget for tuberculosis and brucellosis eradication in cattle be allocated between the two diseases in the various States.

2. What States or parts of States have been declared tuberculosis free areas.

3. What percentage of tuberculosis reactors to total cattle tested was there for each State for 1973-74 or 1973.

Dr Patterson—The Minister for Agriculture has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

1. There is no break-up of the $6.5 million between the two diseases. The allocation amongst the States is specified in the Budget papers for 1974-75.

2. No States have, to my knowledge, been officially ‘declared’ free of tuberculosis. Tasmania is accepted as being free, and has advised all other States that it is free.

3. Figures for testing for the year 1973-74 are not yet available. The attached statistics presented to Standing Committee on Agriculture January/February 1974 show the percentage of tuberculosis reactors for 1972-73.

Analysis of TB Testing 1972-73
(Mainland States and Northern Territory)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New South Wales</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
<th>Western Australia</th>
<th>Queensland</th>
<th>South Australia</th>
<th>Northern Territory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Dairy Cattle—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Herd Testing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number tested</td>
<td>267,325</td>
<td>393,720</td>
<td>29,822</td>
<td>31,122</td>
<td>9,573</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number reactors</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent reactors</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of herds detected</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number tests per reactor found</td>
<td>3,517</td>
<td>10,956</td>
<td>14,911</td>
<td>1,830</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Traceback Testing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number tested</td>
<td>3,765</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number reactors</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent reactors</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number herds detected</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number tests per reactor</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Beef Cattle—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Herd Testing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number tested</td>
<td>638,392</td>
<td>7,670</td>
<td>110,996</td>
<td>1,048,731</td>
<td>190,889</td>
<td>173,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number reactors</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4,097</td>
<td>1,320</td>
<td>3,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent reactors</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of herds detected</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number tests per reactor found</td>
<td>1,793</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>3,469</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Traceback Testing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number tested</td>
<td>64,068</td>
<td>2,340</td>
<td>4,838</td>
<td>134,111</td>
<td>..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number reactors</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2,255</td>
<td>..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent reactors</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of herds detected</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number tests per reactor found</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent reactors</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.524</td>
<td>0.664</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Answers to Questions

Indonesia: Steel Mill Projects
(Question No. 1219)

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to reports that Japan and Singapore and other countries are considering a joint venture steel mill to be backed by several governments or companies in the region and to be established in Indonesia.

(2) If so, has it been suggested that Australia might provide raw materials such as iron ore and coal for the steel mill.

(3) Will he provide details of any information he has on this matter.

(4) Will he also indicate any interest that the Government or Australian companies have so far taken in this matter.

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

(1) I am aware of two major steel mill projects being considered for Indonesia, namely:

(a) Reports early this year indicated that as part of Japan's overseas economic co-operation a proposed integrated steel plant costing some $A600 million over ten years was being examined by Nippon Steel Corporation, Mitsui and Co. and Marubeni.

No further details are available as yet.

(b) Australian and Dutch interests have been examining the possibility of bringing into operation a partly built Russian steel plant located at Cilegon. The plant was supplied about 10 years ago and could possibly form the basis for a 2 million tonne per annum mill.

A West German consortium headed by Ferrostaal Ag, and working in conjunction with the Indonesian state owned steel firm P. T. Krakatau are proceeding with a firm proposal to establish this plant with an initial capacity of 500,000 tonnes of rolled products. The plant is scheduled for completion in 1976. Financing of the project is apparently being handled by an international banking consortium.

In addition to these major schemes the Indonesian Government has approved many mini-mill steel projects.

(2) It is quite possible that Australian iron ore would be supplied to these major projects if they eventuate. Some coking coal may also be required from Australia, but natural gas and steam coal from Indonesia's vast resources could be expected to figure prominently in the fueling plans.

(3) In addition to the Australian group directly involved in the Cilegon project several other Australian firms are understood to be close in touch with the principals. As these commercial negotiations are still in their early stages details have not been announced by the parties concerned. The Department of Overseas Trade and the Australian Trade officials in Jakarta are providing every assistance to firms wishing to be associated with these ventures.

Meat Export Charge: Receipts
(Question No. 1287)

Mr Lloyd asked the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture, upon notice:

(1) Will the Minister explain the escalation in estimated receipts from the Meat Export Charge to $28.7m for 1974-75 from actual receipts of $6.6m in 1973-74 as printed on page 89 of the Treasurer's Budget Speech.

(2) If this higher figure was based on a continuation of high meat exports, what would be a more accurate figure now.

Dr Patterson—The Minister for Agriculture has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(1) The figure of $28.7m set out in the Budget Speech as estimated receipts from the Meat Export Charge for 1974-75 was based on estimates made in April 1974 of meat exports for 1974-75.

Since the estimates were made, industrial disputes in abattoirs, import bans by the EEC and Japan, import quotas by Canada and low prices for imported beef in the United States of America have all affected the estimate.

The receipts of $6.6m for 1973-74 represents collections for a five months period only.

(2) Revised estimates of receipts from the Meat Export Charge for the year, based on the charge of 1.6 cents per lb on beef and veal exported and 1.0 cents per lb for other meats, will be in the vicinity of $20m. Collections for the first three months of the year (July-September 1974) amounts to $3.5m compared with the original estimate of $7.0m for the quarter.

Capital Gains Tax
(Question No. 1298)

Mr Street asked the Treasurer, upon notice:

Where a Testator dies and leaves a life interest in the income from the estate to his or her widow or widower, as the case may be, and on the death of that widow or widower the estate is then to be divided amongst the widow's or widower's children, will capital gains tax be assessed not only at the time of death of the Testator, but a second time when the widow or widower dies and the estate passes to the children.

Mr Crean—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Although my statement of 17 September 1974 indicated that assets will, for purposes of the proposed capital gains tax, be deemed to have been disposed of by a person immediately prior to death it did not deal with what is to happen when a life interest in a deceased estate comes to an end. That is something about which the Government has yet to take a decision.

I can see virtues in a rule that the termination of a life interest in a trust not be treated as a disposal of the relevant assets but that, as a protection against assets being held for unduly long periods in trusts free of capital gains tax, a trust be deemed to dispose of its assets every, say, 15 years at their then current fair market value, and be deemed to immediately re-acquire them at that value.

It may be useful to illustrate how this procedure, if adopted, would apply in the case instanced in your question, assuming the wife survived her husband by 20 years. The trustee would be deemed to have acquired the assets at their value for capital gains tax purposes at the time of the husband’s death. Any increase in the value between that time and 15 years later would be subject to capital gains tax at the later time in the hands of the trustee, and the children would be deemed, on their mother’s death, to acquire the assets at their value 15 years from the husband's death. If the wife survived for less than 15 years, the children would of course be deemed to acquire the assets at their value for capital gains tax purposes at the time of the father’s death.
Department of Agriculture: Interdepartmental Committees

(Question No. 1328)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture, upon notice:

With reference to the answer to question No. 290 (Hansard, 3 October 1974, page 2265), in which the Minister informed me that the Department of Agriculture maintains a record of interdepartmental committees in which it participates, will the Minister provide me with a photocopy of the current record.

Dr Patterson—The Minister for Agriculture has provided the following answer to the right honourable member’s question:

No. On 20 September 1973, my colleague, the Prime Minister, informed the right honourable gentleman in reply to a question without notice about interdepartmental committees, that if he wished to know the composition and function of any particular interdepartmental committee, and for what period of time it had been active, the Prime Minister would be happy to provide him with the information.

If the honourable gentleman wishes to have information about a particular committee on which my Department is represented I will assist him as far as possible having regard to the Prime Minister’s answer previously referred to.

Indonesia: Aid

(Question No. 1414)

Mr Wallis asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. What aid has been given to Indonesia during the last 2 years.
2. In what form has this aid been given.

Mr Whitlam—The Minister for Foreign Affairs has provided the following answer to the honourable member’s question:

1. Australian has provided the following economic assistance to Indonesia during the last 2 years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>$22,070,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>$21,208,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. This aid was in the form of—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>1972-73</th>
<th>1973-74</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Foreign Exchange Support Assistance (Devisakredit, cotton and freight on wheat aid consignments)</td>
<td>5,117,000</td>
<td>2,813,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Economic Development and Technical Assistance projects</td>
<td>8,797,000</td>
<td>7,640,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Training</td>
<td>937,000</td>
<td>937,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Food Aid—Wheat</td>
<td>5,082,000</td>
<td>9,793,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Food Aid—Rice</td>
<td>3,117,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. My colleague the Minister for Defence will provide you with details of Australia’s defence aid to Indonesia during the period in question.

Baltic States

(Question No. 997)

Mr Peacock asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. Did the Minister state on 13 August 1974 that most governments which recognised the U.S.S.R. after World War II in effect granted de jure recognition to the Baltic republics which by then had been incorporated.
2. If so, will the Minister provide a list with dates of recognition by the governments to which he referred.

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

1. Yes.
2. A full list of countries which have recognised the U.S.S.R., together with the dates of recognition, is available in the Parliamentary Library.

Baltic States

(Question No. 998)

Mr Peacock asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. Did the Minister state on 13 August 1974 that Finland and Switzerland were examples of Western countries who have recognised de jure the incorporation of the Baltic states into the U.S.S.R.
2. If so, did the Minister in fact mean Sweden instead of Switzerland.

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

1. Yes.
2. No.

Baltic States

(Question No. 999)

Mr Peacock asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. With reference to the de jure recognition of the Baltic states into the U.S.S.R., did the Minister state on 13 August 1974 that recognition will facilitate the carrying out of certain consular activities.
2. If so, at which places in the 3 Baltic republics does the Australian Government intend to establish Australian consulates.
3. Can he say which other countries have consulates in the 3 Baltic republics.
4. To what particular consular activities was the Minister referring, and how will these be facilitated.

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

1. Yes.
2. The Australian Government has no plans to establish Australian consulates in the Baltic republics of the U.S.S.R.
3. No country has a consulate in any of the three Baltic republics.
4. It is anticipated that the Australian Government will be in a better position to pursue and carry out the normal range of consular functions in the Baltic republics. In particular, we should expect that visits by consular officials to the three
republics will be easier to arrange and that contacts with appropriate governmental authorities will be assisted.

**Baltic States**

(Question No. 1000)

Mr Peacock asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. Did the Minister state on 13 August 1974 that the de jure recognition of the incorporation of the Baltic states into the USSR will facilitate the reunion of families.

2. Can he say whether Sweden which is reported to be one of the countries that has recognised de jure the incorporation of the Baltic states into the U.S.S.R. has been able to achieve this aim.

3. What special device will the Australian Government use to be successful where other governments have reportedly failed.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. Yes.
2. Sweden has not accorded de jure recognition to the incorporation of the Baltic states into the U.S.S.R.
3. The Government does not expect to resort to any 'special devices'. See also answer to Question (4) supra.

**Baltic States**

(Question No. 1001)

Mr Peacock asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. Did the Minister state on 13 August 1974 that most other governments of the world recognise de jure the incorporation of the Baltic republics.

2. Which governments explicit verbs have recognised de jure the incorporation of the Baltic states into the U.S.S.R. and on what dates were the recognitions granted.

3. What form has this de jure recognition taken in each case.

4. Which governments have not recognised de jure the incorporation of the Baltic states into the U.S.S.R.

5. Which governments have not expressed themselves on this matter.

Mr Whitlam—The answers to the honourable member's questions are as follows:

1. Yes.
2 to 5. The information required to give a full reply to each of these questions is not available to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

**Baltic States**

(Question No. 1002)

Mr Peacock asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. Did the Minister state on 13 August 1974 that the interests of NATO countries in Europe are not the same as those of the Australian Government in matters of de jure recognition of the incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R.

2. If so, what is the difference between the interests of European NATO countries and of Australia in matters of de jure recognition of the incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. Yes.

2. The interests of NATO countries in Europe are determined by a number of factors, including their particular geographical location and their commitments to the alliance. Australia's interests are determined by quite different factors.

**Baltic States**

(Question No. 1003)

Mr Peacock asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon notice:

1. Did the Minister state on 13 August 1974 that de jure recognition of the incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R. would make it easier to offer any consular assistance to members of the Baltic communities in Australia to visit their family homeland.

2. If so, what are the present limitations for members of the Baltic countries in Australia to visit their family homeland.

3. What are the restrictions for individuals from abroad to travel in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

4. What areas are restricted to visitors to the Baltic States.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. Yes.

2. From information available to the Department of Foreign Affairs, persons of Baltic origin who have been given permission to visit the U.S.S.R. are able to travel to open areas of the Baltic republics on the same basis as other foreign tourists.

3. No specific restrictions appear to be applied by the Soviet authorities in respect of travel in the three Baltic Republics.

4. As in the other Republics of the U.S.S.R. some parts of the Baltic Republics are open to foreigners and some are closed. Details of these areas are not available to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

**International Women's Year**

(Question No. 1093)

Mr Lloyd asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:

What members of the Australian National Advisory Committee for International Women's Year belong to (a) the Country Women's Association and (b) church women's organisations.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Members of the Australian National Advisory Committee on International Women's Year were selected on an individual basis, so that the best blend and balance of expertise and experience of the problems facing women could be obtained. Members were not selected in the capacity of representing any organisation or sectional group. In these circumstances the question of membership of organisations is inappropriate.
International Women’s Year
(Question No. 1309)

Mr Connolly asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:
(1) What administrative assistance is available to the National Advisory Committee for International Women’s Year.
(2) What funds have been made available for the planning of a program to celebrate International Women’s Year in 1975.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:
(1) See my answer on 24 July 1974 (Hansard p 549).
(2) See the Budget Speech 1974-75 on 17 September 1974 (Hansard p 1281).

International Women’s Year
(Question No. 1341)

Mr Lynch asked the Prime Minister, upon notice:
(1) What are the terms of reference of the National Advisory Committee that has been established to develop a program for Australia’s contribution to International Women’s Year 1975.

(2) Has the Committee yet produced either a report or a series of recommendations.
(3) What is the Australian Government’s projected expenditure for programs related to International Women’s Year.
(4) How many people have been appointed to the Committee, and what are their qualifications.
(5) What recognised women’s organisations are represented on the Committee.

Mr Whitlam—The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:
(1) See my speech of 11 September to the Inaugural Meeting of the National Advisory Committee, Canberra and my Press Statement No. 322 of that date.
(2) No.
(3) Projected expenditure on programs will depend on decisions yet to be taken. Meanwhile, a sum of $2 million has been provided in the Estimates for the 1974-75 financial year. An appropriation will be sought for the 1975-76 financial year as necessary.
(4) See (1) above and my answer on 1 October (Senate Hansard p. 1571).
(5) See my answer to Question No. 1093 supra.