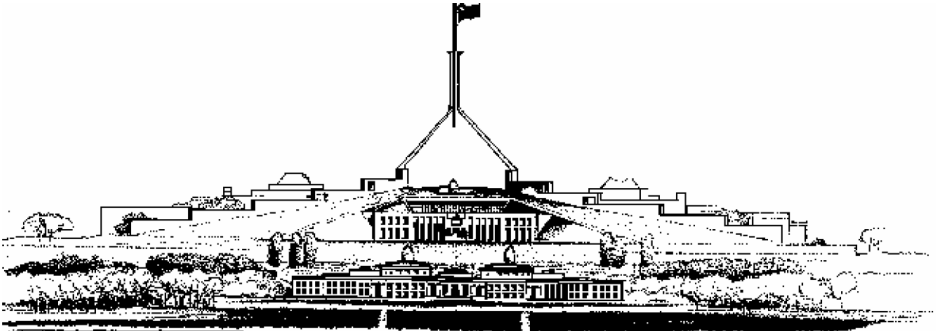




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



House of Representatives

Official Hansard

No. 8, 1975

Wednesday, 19 February 1975

TWENTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—SECOND PERIOD

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUSTRALIA

TWENTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION: SECOND PERIOD

Governor-General

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 10 February 1975)

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

† Minister for Environment from 21 April 1975.

* Attorney-General and Minister for Police and Customs from 27 March 1975.

Second Whitlam Ministry

(From 6 June 1975)

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

Second Whitlam Ministry

(From 2 July 1975)

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

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TWENTY NINTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION: SECOND PERIOD

Speaker—⁽¹⁾ The Honourable James Francis Cope

⁽²⁾ The Honourable Gordon Glen Denton Scholes

Leader of the House—The Honourable Frederick Michael Daly

Chairman of Committees—⁽³⁾ Gordon Glen Denton Scholes

⁽⁴⁾ Joseph Max Berinson

Deputy Chairmen of Committees—Mr Armitage, ⁽⁵⁾ Mr Berinson, Mr Drury, Mr Giles,
⁽⁶⁾ Mr Innes, ⁽⁷⁾ Dr Jenkins, ⁽⁸⁾ Mr Keith Johnson, Mr Luchetti, Mr Lucock, Mr Martin

Leader of the Opposition—⁽⁹⁾ The Right Honourable Billy Mackie Snedden, Q.C.

⁽¹⁰⁾ The Honourable John Malcolm Fraser

Deputy Leader of the Opposition—The Honourable Phillip Reginald Lynch

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

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

Adermann, Albert Evan	Fisher (Qld)
Anthony, Rt Hon. John Douglas	Richmond (N.S.W.)
Armitage, John Lindsay	Chifley (N.S.W.)
⁽¹¹⁾ Barnard, Hon. Lance Herbert	Bass (Tas.)
Beazley, Hon. Kim Edward	Fremantle (W.A.)
Bennett, Adrian Frank	Swan (W.A.)
Berinson, Joseph Max	Perth (W.A.)
Bonnett, Robert Noel	Herbert (Qld)
Bourchier, John William	Bendigo (Vic.)
Bowen, Hon. Lionel Frost	Kingsford Smith (N.S.W.)
Bryant, Hon. Gordon Munro, E.D.	Wills (Vic.)
Bungey, Melville Harold	Canning (W.A.)
Cadman, Alan Glyndwr	Mitchell (N.S.W.)
Cairns, Hon. James Ford	Lalor (Vic.)
Cairns, Hon. Kevin Michael Keirnan	Lilley (Qld)
Calder, Stephen Edward, D.F.C.	Northern Territory
Cameron, Hon. Clyde Robert	Hindmarsh (S.A.)
Cameron, Donald Milner	Griffith (Qld)
Cass, Hon. Moses Henry	Maribyrnong (Vic.)
Child, Gloria Joan Liles	Henty (Vic.)
Chipp, Hon. Donald Leslie	Hotham (Vic.)
Clayton, Gareth	Isaacs (Vic.)
Coates, John	Denison (Tas.)
Cohen, Barry	Robertson (N.S.W.)
Collard, Frederick Walter	Kalgoorlie (W.A.)
Connolly, David Miles	Bradfield (N.S.W.)
Connor, Hon. Reginald Francis Xavier	Cunningham (N.S.W.)
Cope, Hon. James Francis	Sydney (N.S.W.)
Corbett, James	Maranoa (Qld)
Crean, Hon. Frank	Melbourne Ports (Vic.)
Cross, Manfred Douglas	Brisbane (Qld)
Daly, Hon. Frederick Michael	Grayndler (N.S.W.)
Davies, Ronald	Braddon (Tas.)
Dawkins, John Sydney	Tangney (W.A.)
Drummond, Peter Hertford	Forrest (W.A.)
Drury, Edward Nigel, C.B.E.	Ryan (Qld)
Duthie, Gilbert William Arthur	Wilmot (Tas.)
Edwards, Harold Raymond	Berowra (N.S.W.)
Ellicott, Robert James, Q.C.	Wentworth (N.S.W.)
Enderby, Hon. Keppel Earl, Q.C.	Canberra (A.C.T.)
England, John Armstrong, E.D.	Calare (N.S.W.)
Erwin, Hon. George Dudley	Ballaarat (Vic.)
Everingham, Hon. Douglas Nixon	Capricornia (Qld)
Fairbairn, Hon. David Eric, D.F.C.	Farrer (N.S.W.)
Fisher, Peter Stanley	Mallee (Vic.)
FitzPatrick, John	Darling (N.S.W.)
Forbes, Dr the Hon. Alexander James, M.C.	Barker (S.A.)
Fraser, Hon. John Malcolm	Wannon (Vic.)

⁽¹⁾ Resigned 27 February 1975 ⁽²⁾ Elected 27 February 1975 ⁽³⁾ To 27 February 1975
⁽⁴⁾ Elected 27 February 1975 ⁽⁵⁾ To 27 February 1975 ⁽⁶⁾ From 5 March 1975 ⁽⁷⁾ To 27
February 1975 ⁽⁸⁾ From 5 March 1975 ⁽⁹⁾ To 7 April 1975 ⁽¹⁰⁾ From 8 April 1975
⁽¹¹⁾ Resigned 2 June 1975

Members of the House of Representatives

Fry, Kenneth Lionel	Fraser (A.C.T.)
Fulton, William John	Leichhardt (Qld)
Garland, Hon. Ransley Victor	Curtin (W.A.)
Garrick, Horace James	Batman (Vic.)
Giles, Geoffrey O'Halloran	Angas (S.A.)
Gorton, Rt Hon. John Grey, C.H.	Higgins (Vic.)
Graham, Bruce William	North Sydney (N.S.W.)
Gun, Richard Townsend	Kingston (S.A.)
Hayden, Hon. William George	Oxley (Qld)
Hewson, Henry Arthur	McMillan (Vic.)
Hodges, John Charles	Petrie (Qld)
Holten, Hon. Rendle McNeilage	Indi (Vic.)
Howard, John Winston	Bennelong (N.S.W.)
Hunt, Hon. Ralph James Dunnet	Gwydir (N.S.W.)
Hurford, Christopher John	Adelaide (S.A.)
Hyde, John Martin	Moore (W.A.)
Innes, Urquhart Edward	Melbourne (Vic.)
Jacobi, Ralph	Hawker (S.A.)
James, Albert William	Hunter (N.S.W.)
Jarman, Alan William	Deakin (Vic.)
Jenkins, Henry Alfred	Scullin (Vic.)
Johnson, Leonard Keith	Burke (Vic.)
Johnson, Hon. Leslie Royston	Hughes (N.S.W.)
Jones, Hon. Charles Keith	Newcastle (N.S.W.)
Katter, Hon. Robert Cummin	Kennedy (Qld)
Keating, Paul John	Blaxland (N.S.W.)
Kelly, Hon. Charles Robert	Wakefield (S.A.)
Keogh, Leonard Joseph	Bowman (Qld)
Kerin, John Charles	Macarthur (N.S.W.)
Killen, Hon. Denis James	Moreton (Qld)
King, Hon. Robert Shannon	Wimmera (Vic.)
Klugman, Richard Emanuel	Prospect (N.S.W.)
Lamb, Anthony Hamilton	La Trobe (Vic.)
Lloyd, Bruce	Murray (Vic.)
Luchetti, Anthony Sylvester	Macquarie (N.S.W.)
Lucock, Philip Ernest, C.B.E.	Lyne (N.S.W.)
Lusher, Stephen Augustus	Hume (N.S.W.)
Lynch, Hon. Phillip Reginald	Flinders (Vic.)
MacKellar, Michael John Randal	Warringah (N.S.W.)
Macphee, Ian Malcolm	Balaclava (Vic.)
McKenzie, David Charles	Diamond Valley (Vic.)
McLeay, Hon. John Elden	Boothby (S.A.)
McMahon, Rt Hon. William, C.H.	Lowe (N.S.W.)
McVeigh, Daniel Thomas	Darling Downs (Qld)
Martin, Vincent Joseph	Banks (N.S.W.)
Mathews, Charles Race Thorson	Casey (Vic.)
Millar, Percival Clarence	Wide Bay (Qld)
Morris, Peter Frederick	Shortland (N.S.W.)
Morrison, Hon. William Lawrence	St George (N.S.W.)
Mulder, Allan William	Evans (N.S.W.)
(1 st) Newman, Kevin Eugene	Bass (Tas.)
Nicholls, Martin Henry	Bonython (S.A.)
Nixon, Hon. Peter James	Gippsland (Vic.)
O'Keefe, Frank Lionel	Paterson (N.S.W.)
Oldmeadow, Maxwell Wilkinson	Holt (Vic.)
Patterson, Hon. Rex Alan	Dawson (Qld)
Peacock, Hon. Andrew Sharp	Kooyong (Vic.)
Reynolds, Leonard James	Barton (N.S.W.)
Riordan, Joseph Martin	Phillip (N.S.W.)
Robinson, Eric Laidlaw	McPherson (Qld)
Robinson, Hon. Ian Louis	Cowper (N.S.W.)
Ruddock, Philip Maxwell	Parramatta (N.S.W.)
Scholes, Gordon Glen Denton	Corio (Vic.)
Sherry, Raymond Henry	Franklin (Tas.)
Sinclair, Hon. Ian McCahon	New England (N.S.W.)
Snedden, Rt Hon. Billy Mackie, Q.C.	Bruce (Vic.)
Staley, Anthony Allan	Chisholm (Vic.)
Stewart, Hon. Francis Eugene	Lang (N.S.W.)
Street, Hon. Anthony Austin	Corangamite (Vic.)

(1st) Sworn 9 July 1975

Members of the House of Representatives

Sullivan, John William	..	..	..	..	..	..	Riverina (N.S.W.)
Thorburn, Ray William	..	..	..	..	..	..	Cook (N.S.W.)
Uren, Hon. Thomas	..	..	..	..	..	..	Reid (N.S.W.)
Viner, Robert Ian	..	..	..	..	..	..	Stirling (W.A.)
Wallis, Laurie George	..	..	..	..	..	..	Grey (S.A.)
Wentworth, Hon. William Charles	..	..	..	..	..	..	Mackellar (N.S.W.)
Whan, Robert Bruce	..	..	..	..	..	..	Eden Monaro (N.S.W.)
Whitlam, Hon. Edward Gough, Q.C.	..	..	..	..	..	..	Werriwa (N.S.W.)
Willis, Ralph	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gellibrand (Vic.)
Wilson, Ian Bonython Cameron	..	..	..	..	..	..	Sturt (S.A.)
Young, Michael Jerome	..	..	..	..	..	..	Port Adelaide (S.A.)

THE COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION—SECOND PERIOD)

STANDING COMMITTEES

- ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**—Mr Cross (*Chairman*), Mr Clayton, Mr Collard, Mr Dawkins, Mr Fisher (from 20 May 1975), Mr Hunt (to 20 May 1975), Mr Jarman, Mr Ruddock, Mr Thorburn, Mr Wentworth.
- ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION**—Dr Jenkins (*Chairman*), Mr Bouchier (to 16 April 1975), Mr Hodges (from 16 April 1975), Mr Jarman (from 16 April 1975), Mr Kerin, Mr Lamb, Mr Morris, Mr Ian Robinson, Mr Wilson (to 16 April 1975).
- HOUSE**—Mr Speaker, Mr Berinson (to 8 April 1975), Mr Bungey, Mr Donald Cameron, Mr Clayton, Mr Cohen, Mr Holten, Mr Keogh (from 8 April 1975).
- 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 Luchetti (from 8 April 1975), Mr Lucock, Mr Scholes (to 8 April 1975), Mr Viner.
- PUBLICATIONS**—Mr McKenzie (*Chairman*), Mr Erwin, Mr Hodges, Mr Lamb, Mr Mathews, Mr Millar, Mr Oldmeadow.
- ROAD SAFETY**—Mr Cohen (*Chairman*), Mr Bennett, Mr Erwin, Mr Innes (from 5 March 1975), Mr Katter, Dr Klugman (to 5 March 1975), Mr McKenzie, Mr Ruddock.
- STANDING ORDERS**—Mr Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, the Leader of the House, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Anthony, Mr Bryant, Dr J. F. Cairns, Mr Drury, Mr Garland, Mr Hurford (from 8 April 1975), 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*) (to 30 June 1975), Senator Davidson (from 11 June 1975), Senator Devitt, Senator Marriott, and Mr Fisher (to 20 May 1975), Mr Fry, Mr Hewson (from 20 May 1975), 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 (to 16 April 1975), Mr Fry, Mr Giles, Mr Kerin, Mr Killen (from 16 April 1975), Dr Klugman, Mr Lucock, Mr Oldmeadow, Mr Peacock.
- NORTHERN TERRITORY**—Mr James (*Chairman*), Senator Keefe, Senator McLaren, Senator Marriott, Senator Sheil, and Mr Calder, Mr FitzPatrick, Mr Kelly, Mr Wallis.
- PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SYSTEM**—Dr Jenkins (*Chairman*), Senator Sir Magnus Cormack, Senator Drake-Brockman, Senator Gietzelt, Senator McAuliffe, Senator Mulvihill, Senator Rae, and Mr Berinson (to 14 April 1975), Mr Fairbairn, Dr Forbes, Dr Jenkins, Dr Klugman (from 4 March 1975), Mr Morris (from 15 April 1975), Mr Ian Robinson, Mr Scholes (Chairman until membership terminated on 3 March 1975), Mr Young.
- PECUNIARY INTERESTS OF MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT**—Mr Riordan (*Chairman*), Senator Georges, Senator James McClelland, Senator Marriott, Senator Sheil (from 22 April 1975), Senator Webster (to 22 April 1975), 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 Hyde (from 16 April 1975), Mr Innes, Mr McVeigh, Mr Oldmeadow, Mr Wilson (to 16 April 1975).

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:
Table Office—L. M. Barlin
Bills and Papers Office—I. C. Cochran
Sergeant-at-Arms Office—D. M. Piper
Committee Office—G. J. Horsfield

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: SECOND PERIOD)

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Queensland Discriminatory Laws) Act 1975 (Act No. 75 of 1975)—
An Act to make Provision with respect to the Peoples of the Aboriginal race of Australia, and the race to which Torres Strait Islanders belong, for the purpose of preventing Discrimination in certain respects against those Peoples under laws of Queensland.
- Appropriation Act (No. 3) 1974-75 (Act No. 9 of 1975)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sum appropriated by the *Appropriation Act (No. 1) 1974-75* for the service of the year ending on 30 June 1975.
- Appropriation Act (No. 4) 1974-75 (Act No. 10 of 1975)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sum appropriated by the *Appropriation Act (No. 2) 1974-75* for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 1975.
- Appropriation Act (No. 5) 1974-75 (Act No. 31 of 1975)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sums appropriated by the *Appropriation Act (No. 1) 1974-75* and the *Appropriation Act (No. 3) 1974-75*, for the service of the year ending on 30 June 1975.
- Appropriation Act (No. 6) 1974-75 (Act No. 32 of 1975)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sums appropriated by the *Appropriation Act (No. 2) 1974-75* and the *Appropriation Act (No. 4) 1974-75*, for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 1975.
- Appropriation (Development Bank) Act 1975 (Act No. 7 of 1975)—
An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of loans to the Commonwealth Development Bank of Australia.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975 (Act No. 60 of 1975)—
An Act to establish an Australian Bureau of Statistics and for related Purposes.
- Australia Council Act 1975 (Act No. 11 of 1975)—
An Act to establish a Council for Purposes connected with the Promotion of the Arts, and to make Provision for related Matters.
- Australian Film Commission Act 1975 (Act No. 6 of 1975)—
An Act to Establish an Australian Film Commission.
- Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975 (Act No. 57 of 1975)—
An Act to establish an Australian Heritage Commission.
- Australian Housing Corporation Act 1975 (Act No. 25 of 1975)—
An Act to establish an Australian Housing Corporation.
- Australian Industry Development Corporation Act 1975 (Act No. 4 of 1975)—
An Act Relating to the Australian Industry Development Corporation.
- Australian National Railways Act 1975 (Act No. 26 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Commonwealth Railways Act 1917-1973*.
- Australian War Memorial Act 1975 (Act No. 27 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Australian War Memorial Act 1962-1973*.
- Book Bounty Act 1975 (Act No. 5 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Book Bounty Act 1969-1973*.
- Children's Commission Act 1975 (Act No. 51 of 1975)—
An Act for and in Relation to the Establishment of a Children's Commission.
- Common Informers (Parliamentary Disqualifications) Act 1975 (Act No. 28 of 1975)—
An Act to make other Provision with respect to the Matter in respect of which Provision is made by section 46 of the Constitution.
- Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1975 (Act No. 64 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904-1974*.
- Curriculum Development Centre Act 1975 (Act No. 41 of 1975)—
An Act to establish a Curriculum Development Centre.
- Customs Act 1975 (Act No. 77 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Customs Act 1901-1974*.
- Customs Tariff (Anti-Dumping) Act 1975 (Act No. 76 of 1975)—
An Act relating to certain Special Duties of Customs.
- Customs Tariff Validation Act 1975 (Act No. 78 of 1975)—
An Act to provide for the Validation of certain Collections of Duties of Customs in accordance with Customs Tariff Proposals and Gazette Notices.
- Dairy Produce Act 1975 (Act No. 82 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Dairy Produce Export Control Act 1924-1973*.
- Dairy Produce Sales Promotion Act 1975 (Act No. 83 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Dairy Produce Sales Promotion Act 1958-1973*.
- Darwin Cyclone Damage Compensation Act 1975 (Act No. 43 of 1975)—
An Act to provide for Payment by Australia of Compensation in respect of Loss of, or Damage to, Property arising out of the Darwin Cyclone.
- Darwin Reconstruction Act 1975 (Act No. 2 of 1975)—
An Act to establish a Darwin Reconstruction Commission for purposes arising out of the Devastation of Darwin by Cyclone.
- Dried Fruits Export Charges Act 1975 (Act No. 73 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Dried Fruits Export Charges Act 1924-1970* for purposes of Metric Conversion.

The Acts of the Session

- Dried Fruits Levy Act 1975 (Act No. 72 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Dried Fruits Levy Act 1971* for purposes of Metric Conversion.
- Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1975 (Act No. 36 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1974*.
- Family Law Act 1975 (Act No. 53 of 1975)—
An Act relating to Marriage and to Divorce and Matrimonial Causes and, in relation thereto, Parental Rights and the Custody and Guardianship of Infants, and certain other Matters.
- Fisheries Act 1975 (Act No. 3 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Fisheries Act 1952-1973*.
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 (Act No. 85 of 1975)—
An Act to establish a Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and for related purposes.
- Grants Commission Act 1975 (Act No. 59 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Grants Commission Acts 1973*.
- Health Insurance Act 1975 (Act No. 58 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Health Insurance Act 1973*.
- Homes Savings Grant Act 1975 (Act No. 49 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Homes Savings Grant Act 1964-1973*.
- Income Tax Assessment Act 1975 (Act No. 80 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the Law relating to Income Tax.
- Loans (Australian Shipping Commission) Act 1975 (Act No. 44 of 1975)—
An Act to authorize the Raising of a certain sum of Money and to authorize Australia to make certain Moneys available to the Australian Shipping Commission, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Loan (War Service Land Settlement) Act 1975 (Act No. 62 of 1975)—
An Act to authorize the Raising and Expending of a sum not exceeding \$4,000,000 for a Defence Purpose, namely, Financial Assistance to South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania in connection with War Service Land Settlement.
- National Capital Development Commission Act 1975 (Act No. 66 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *National Capital Development Commission Act 1957-1973*.
- National Gallery Act 1975 (Act No. 61 of 1975)—
An Act relating to the Australian National Gallery.
- National Health Act 1975 (Act No. 1 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *National Health Act 1953-1973*, as amended by the *National Health Act 1974*.
- National Health Act (No. 2) 1975 (Act No. 13 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *National Health Act 1953-1974*, as amended by the *National Health Act 1975*.
- National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975 (Act No. 12 of 1975)—
An Act to make provision for and in relation to the Establishment of National Parks and other Parks and Reserves and the Protection and Conservation of Wildlife.
- Northern Territory Supreme Court Act 1975 (Act No. 84 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Northern Territory Supreme Court Act 1961-1973*.
- Pig Industry Research Act 1975 (Act No. 47 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Pig Industry Research Act 1971*.
- Pig Meat Promotion Act 1975 (Act No. 48 of 1975)—
An Act to establish a Pig Meat Promotion Trust Account and for purposes connected therewith.
- Pig Slaughter Levy Act 1975 (Act No. 45 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Pig Slaughter Levy Act 1971*.
- Pig Slaughter Levy Collection Act 1975 (Act No. 46 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Pig Slaughter Levy Collection Act 1971*.
- Postal Services Act 1975 (Act No. 54 of 1975)—
An Act relating to the Provision of Postal Services within Australia and between Australia and Places outside Australia.
- Postal and Telecommunications Commissions (Transitional Provisions) Act 1975 (Act No. 56 of 1975)—
An Act to enact certain Transitional Provisions consequential upon the Enactment of the *Postal Services Act 1975* and the *Telecommunications Act 1975*.
- Privy Council (Appeals from the High Court) Act 1975 (Act No. 33 of 1975)—
An Act to limit further the matters in which Special Leave of Appeal from the High Court of Australia to Her Majesty in Council may be asked.
- Public Service Acts Amendment Act 1975 (Act No. 40 of 1975)—
An Act relating to the Australian Public Service.
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Act No. 52 of 1975)—
An Act relating to the Elimination of Racial and other Discrimination.
- Railways (South Australia) Act 1975 (Act No. 69 of 1975)—
An Act relating to the Acquisition by Australia, with the consent of South Australia, of certain Railways of South Australia and to the Construction and Extension by Australia, with the consent of South Australia, of Railways in South Australia, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Railways (Tasmania) Act 1975 (Act No. 70 of 1975)—
An Act relating to the Acquisition by Australia, with the consent of Tasmania, of the Railways of Tasmania and to the Construction and Extension by Australia, with the consent of Tasmania, of Railways in Tasmania, and for purposes connected therewith.
- Refrigeration Compressors Bounty Act 1975 (Act No. 14 of 1975)—
An Act to provide for the Payment of a Bounty on the Production of certain Refrigeration Compressors.

The Acts of the Session

- Remuneration and Allowances Act 1975 (Act No. 8 of 1975)**—
An Act relating to the Remuneration and Allowances payable to the Holders of certain judicial and other Offices.
- Repatriation Acts Amendment Act 1975 (Act No. 35 of 1975)**—
An Act relating to Repatriation and related Matters.
- Road Safety and Standards Authority Act 1975 (Act No. 30 of 1975)**—
An Act to establish a Road Safety and Standards Authority.
- Sales Tax Act (No. 1) 1975 (Act No. 15 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 1) 1930-1970*
- Sales Tax Act (No. 2) 1975 (Act No. 16 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 2) 1930-1970*.
- Sales Tax Act (No. 3) 1975 (Act No. 17 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 3) 1930-1970*.
- Sales Tax (No. 4) 1975 (Act No. 18 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 4) 1930-1970*.
- Sales Tax Act (No. 5) 1975 (Act No. 19 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 5) 1930-1970*.
- Sales Tax Act (No. 6) 1975 (Act No. 20 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 6) 1930-1970*.
- Sales Tax Act (No. 7) 1975 (Act No. 21 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 7) 1930-1970*.
- Sales Tax Act (No. 8) 1975 (Act No. 22 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 8) 1930-1970*.
- Sales Tax Act (No. 9) 1975 (Act No. 23 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act (No. 9) 1930-1970*.
- Sales Tax (Exemptions and Classifications) Act 1975 (Act No. 24 of 1975)**—
An Act relating to Sales Tax Exemptions and Classifications.
- Ship Construction Bounty Act 1975 (Act No. 79 of 1975)**—
An Act to provide for the Payment of a Bounty on the Production of certain Ships and other Vessels.
- Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Power Act 1975 (Act No. 29 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Power Act 1949-1973* in relation to the Offices of Commissioner and Associate Commissioner.
- Social Services Act 1975 (Act No. 34 of 1975)**—
An Act relating to Social Services.
- States Grants (Advanced Education) Act 1975 (Act No. 67 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *States Grants (Advanced Education) Act 1972-1974*.
- States Grants (Beef Industry) Act 1975 (Act No. 81 of 1975)**—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to Beef Producers.
- States Grants (Universities) Act 1975 (Act No. 68 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *States Grants (Universities) Act 1972-1974*.
- Supply Act (No. 1) 1975-76 (Act No. 38 of 1975)**—
An Act to make interim provision for the appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending on 30 June 1976.
- Supply Act (No. 2) 1975-76 (Act No. 39 of 1975)**—
An Act to make interim provision for the appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 1976.
- Tasman Bridge Restoration Act 1975 (Act No. 37 of 1975)**—
An Act relating to an Agreement between Australia and Tasmania relating to the Restoration of the Tasman Bridge on the Derwent River at Hobart.
- Tasmania Grant (Associated Pulp and Paper Mills Limited) Act 1975 (Act No. 71 of 1975)**—
An Act to Grant Financial Assistance to Tasmania in relation to Associated Pulp and Paper Mills Limited.
- Technical and Further Education Commission Act 1975 (Act No. 42 of 1975)**—
An Act to make provision for and in relation to the Establishment of a Commission on Technical and Further Education.
- Telecommunications Act 1975 (Act No. 55 of 1975)**—
An Act relating to the Provision of Telecommunications Services within Australia.
- Trade Practices Act 1975 (Act No. 63 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Trade Practices Act 1974* to provide for certain Matters to be disregarded in determining whether certain Contracts are unenforceable and in relation to Product Safety and Information Standards and the Sending of unsolicited Credit Cards.
- Trade Union Training Authority Act 1975 (Act No. 50 of 1975)**—
An Act to establish an Australian Trade Union Training Authority, and for Purposes connected therewith.
- Urban and Regional Development (Financial Assistance) Act 1975 (Act No. 74 of 1975)**—
An Act to amend the *Urban and Regional Development (Financial Assistance) Act 1974*.
- Victoria Grant (Seymour Flood Mitigation) Act 1975 (Act No. 65 of 1975)**—
An Act to grant Financial Assistance to Victoria for the purpose of Flood Mitigation Works in relation to the Town of Seymour.

The Acts of the Session

- Wool Tax Act (No. 1) 1975 (Act No. 86 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 1)* 1964–1974.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 2) 1975 (Act No. 87 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 2)* 1964–1974.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 3) 1975 (Act No. 88 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 3)* 1964–1974.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 4) 1975 (Act No. 89 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 4)* 1964–1974.
- Wool Tax Act (No. 5) 1975 (Act No. 90 of 1975)—
An Act to amend the *Wool Tax Act (No. 5)* 1964–1974.

THE BILLS OF THE SESSION

(FIRST SESSION—SECOND PERIOD)

Administrative Appeals Tribunal Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Senate amendments to be considered by the House.

Apple and Pear Levy Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Apple and Pear Levy Collection Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Audit Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Australian Apple and Pear Corporation Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Australian Government Insurance Corporation Bill 1975 (introduced as Australian Government Insurance Office Bill 1975)—

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

Australian National University Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Australian Overseas Trading Corporation Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

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.

Canberra College of Advanced Education Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

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.

Constitution Alteration (Simultaneous Elections) Bill 1975—

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

Constitution Alteration (Simultaneous Elections) Bill 1975—

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

Constitution Alteration (Voting at Referendums) Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Corporations and Securities Industry Bill 1975—

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

Crimes Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Defence Force Ombudsman Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Defence Force Re-Organization Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Bill 1975—

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

Electoral Bill 1974—

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

Electoral Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Electoral Laws Amendment Bill 1975—

Laid aside.

Electoral Re-distribution (New South Wales) Bill 1975—

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

Electoral Re-distribution (Queensland) Bill 1975—

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

Electoral Re-distribution (South Australia) Bill 1975—

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

Electoral Re-distribution (Tasmania) Bill 1975—

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

Electoral Re-distribution (Victoria) Bill 1975—

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

Foreign Takeovers Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Health Insurance (No. 2) 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Housing Loans Insurance Bill 1975—

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

Industries Assistance Commission Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Inter-State Commission Bill 1975—

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

The Bills of the Session

Legal Aid Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Long Service Leave (Government Employees) Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Minerals (Submerged Lands) Bill 1974—

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

Minerals (Submerged Lands) (Royalty) Bill 1974—

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

National Compensation Bill 1974—

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

National Health Bill 1974—

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

National Health Bill (No. 3) 1975—

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

National Health Bill (No. 3) 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

National Investment Fund Bill 1974—

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

Ombudsman Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. In Committee.

Parliamentary Counsel Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Senate amendments to be considered by the House.

Phosphate Fertilizers Bounty Bill 1974—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Privy Council Appeals Abolition Bill 1975—

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

Privy Council Appeals Abolition Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Public Service Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Purchasing Commission Bill 1975—

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

Remuneration and Allowances Bill 1975—

Discharged from the Notice Paper.

Stevedoring Industry Bill 1974—

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

Stevedoring Industry Charge Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Senate amendments to be considered by the House.

Superannuation Act Amendment Bill 1975—

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

Superannuation Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Senate amendments to be considered by the House.

Superior Court of Australia 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.

Telecommunications Bill (No. 2) 1975—

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.

Travel Agents Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

Travel Agents (Deposits and Levies) Bill 1975—

Initiated in the House of Representatives. Second Reading.

United States Naval Communications Station Agreement Bill 1975—

Initiated in the Senate. Second Reading in the House of Representatives.

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Wednesday, 19 February 1975

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

ABSENCE OF MINISTERS

Mr McMahon—Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order. I draw attention to the lack of courtesy shown to you by the absence from the House at the present time of Government front bench members.

Mr SPEAKER—Standing order 41 provides for the Speaker taking the chair if a quorum is present. If a quorum is not present the Clerk of the House so advises me. I am concerned to ensure that Standing Orders are obeyed. I call on petitions.

Mr McMahon—We are concerned that respect should be shown to you, Mr Speaker, and the position you hold.

Mr SPEAKER—No point of order is involved.

Mr Garland—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. With question time about to commence in this House there are only 6 Ministers here and surely the House is entitled to have more Ministers present.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I have called on petitions. Question time has not yet arrived.

PETITIONS

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

Family Law Bill

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

We the undersigned Citizens of the Commonwealth of Australia by this our humble Petition respectfully sheweth:

(a) That the present matrimonial laws are archaic, unrealistic and cruel and the cause of so much distress, bitterness and injustice as to make their continued operation intolerable to the vast majority of fair minded citizens of Australia and that the Family Law Bill at present before Parliament should be passed without delay.

(b) That the ground of Irretrievable Breakdown of Marriage determined by a maximum of twelve months' separation, embodied in the Family Law Bill already passed in the Senate, be the sole ground for divorce.

(c) That there is widespread dissatisfaction with the enormous discretionary powers given Judges in the present legislation and that the non fault maintenance concept (according to need) based on specific criteria, as enunciated in Clause 54 (2) of the Family Law Bill 1974 No. 2, should be tried and we humbly pray Members of the House will restore this concept fully by deleting Clause 75 (n) from the new Bill 'as read a third time'.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Les Johnson, Mr Charles Jones, Mr Armitage, Mr Bennett, Mrs Child, Mr Clayton, Mr Drummond, Mr England, Mr Garland, Mr Graham, Mr Oldmeadow, Mr Riordan and Mr Wallis.

Petitions received.

Family Law Bill

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

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

That marriage is an exclusive lifelong partnership between one woman and one man, which should not be dissolved at the will of one party after 12 months notice nor without a reasonable attempt at reconciliation and

That a husband should normally be responsible for maintaining his wife and children within marriage.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Family Law Bill 1974 be amended

1. To require a reasonable attempt at reconciliation with the aid of counselling at least twelve months prior to the application for a divorce;

2. To specify three objective tests for irretrievable breakdown, namely

- (a) intolerable behaviour,
- (b) desertion for at least 2 years.
- (c) separation for at least 3 years.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Mr Armitage, Mr Graham, Mr Killen, Mr Ruddock, Mr Kevin Cairns, Mr Corbett, Mr Giles, Mr Hurford, Mr Jacobi, Mr McVeigh, Mr Nicholls, Mr Reynolds and Mr Wallis.

Petitions received.

Family Law Bill

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

The humble Petition of the undersigned, all being of or above the age of 18 years as follows:

1. Your Petitioners oppose and seek the deletion of those provisions of the Family Law Bill 1974 which supplant the existing grounds by the introduction of the sole ground of irretrievable break-down, which remove any consideration of fault, and which will weaken the family unit while causing more widespread injustice because:

(a) it imposes on society radical alteration of divorce law far beyond identifiable requirements or desires;

(b) it lowers the status of marriage by permitting people to "drift" into divorce, reduces parental importance and leads to increasing institutionalisation of children with consequential delinquency;

(c) it will not reduce the 'in-fighting' in a divorce suit which mainly occurs over matters of property and custody;

(d) it will not encourage maturity in acceptance of marital and parental obligations and responsibilities.

2. Your Petitioners commend the divorce legislation introduced in Great Britain in 1973, which acknowledges the importance of the family unit, mirrors community requirements, secures justice for innocent people and establishes a realistic definition of irretrievable background, and call for similar legislation to be provided in Australia.

Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled will make provision accordingly.

by **Mr Cross, Mr Drury and Mr Eric Robinson.**

Petitions received.

Family Law Bill

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

We the undersigned Citizens of the Commonwealth of Australia by this our humble Petition respectfully sheweth:

It is granted that the present law respecting divorce is deficient in some of its provisions, and needs reforming.

Your petitioners consider preservation of the family essential to the healthy function of society, and that every effort should be made to preserve traditional attitudes to marriage and child-bearing.

Certain aspects of the Family Law Bill 1974 conflict with these concepts, and endanger the security, welfare, education and development of children.

We request that the Bill be not enacted in its present form, and that consideration be given to our concerns in formulating amendments thereto

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by **Mr England, Mr Lucock and Mr Sullivan.**

Petitions received.

Family Law Bill

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

That there is great urgency to preserve the family as the basic unit in society and therefore the stability of family life requires the urgent attention of Parliament.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that:

(1) The present grounds for Divorce should not be changed.

(2) The present requirement of seven days waiting period after notification of intention to marry should be extended to thirty days to provide adequate counselling and education.

(3) Marriage counselling services to further the cause of reconciliation should be more readily available.

(4) Continued social research into the causes of marital instability should be fostered by the Parliament.

by **Mr England.**

Petition received.

Family Law Bill

Petition to Parliament to promote the permanency of marriage partnerships.

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

1. That the 'Family Law Bill 1974' fails to give the family the protection presumed to be guaranteed it under Section 43, for rather than preserving the lifelong union of married couples to the exclusion of all others, the Bill deals mainly with the legalizing of its destruction through easy and unjust divorce, together with the legalizing of the evasion of responsibility on the part of parents (Secs 43,48,49,50).

2. That the Bill counts the period of 'irretrievable breakdown' as from the first declaration of 'separation', even in cases where a period of cohabitation has interrupted the legal 'separation', evidencing a change of heart and an attempt at reconciliation by both partners (Secs 48,49,50).

3. That in the dissolution process, the Bill refuses to recognize any guilt, and since the Bill gives to parents 'joint custody' of children, the question of actual care and control of children seems to be vaguely left to welfare officers (Secs 61-65).

4. That children of 14 years and over are allowed to choose their guardians, who need not be either parent, in effect contravening the present law that prevents children under 16 years freeing themselves from parental control; and furthermore the Bill specifies that no order regarding such 14-year old children may be made that is contrary to the wishes of the child (Sec. 64).

5. That after the dissolution of the marriage, the wife may be forced to work to support herself and her children, and in some cases her ex-husband, as well as being liable for legal costs (Secs 72-76).

6. That under this Bill the loose term 'irretrievable breakdown' could be used as an excuse for a divorce of convenience or for financial gain in various ways, including increased pensions, thus increasing the burden on taxpayers.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled will do everything possible to promote and preserve the permanency of the married state, and not admit into the law of this land any provision for such easy divorce that threatens the stability of family life—for although the present divorce system has weaknesses, these will not be righted by an even weaker and more unjust 'Family Law Bill'.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by **Mr Hodges.**

Petition received.

Family Law Bill

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

That the Family Law Bill 1974 would be an unjust law if passed since the innocent party could be divorced against his or her will after a year's separation.

That the Bill does not only facilitate divorces but changes the nature of marriage and the husband-wife relationship. Legislation ought to reflect public opinion, not attempt to condition it. Gallup polls indicate 75 per cent of Australians are opposed to the concepts of the Family Law Bill. Therefore Parliament has no mandate from the people to ask such a far reaching change in the nature of our society.

That children need a stable emotional and psychological environment in which to grow up. This stability is upset by divorce. A high proportion of criminals come from broken homes. Consequently any law which makes divorce easier is harmful to society.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Parliament so vote as to defeat the Family Law Bill.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by **Mr Mathews.**

Petition received.

Family Law Bill

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

That grave concern is felt at the imminent introduction into the Commonwealth Parliament of legislation to alter the Laws relating to Family and Marriage.

Your petitioners most humbly pray that the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled should not admit into the laws of this land principle which violates a fundamental right as proposed by the United Nations that the family is the natural and fundamental Group Unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State. (Article 23.1 of the U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.)

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by **Mr Eric Robinson.**

Petition received.

Metric System

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

That the plan to obliterate the traditional weights and measures of this country is causing and will cause widespread inconvenience, confusion, expense and distress.

That there is no certainty that any significant benefits or indeed any benefits at all will follow the use of the new weights and measures.

That the traditional weights and measures are eminently satisfactory.

Your petitioners therefore pray:

That the Metric Conversion Act be repealed, and that the Government take urgent steps to cause the traditional and familiar units to be restored to those areas where the greatest inconvenience and distress are occurring, that is to say, in meteorology, in road distances, in sport, in the building and allied trades, in the printing trade, and in retail trade.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by **Mr King and Mr Mathews.**

Petitions received.

Television Programs: Pornographic Material

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

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

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

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

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

by **Mr Killen.**

Petition received.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE

Mr SNEDDEN—My question is directed to the Treasurer. Does he agree that there should be cuts in Government expenditure? If he does agree that there should be cuts in Government expenditure, will he state in what areas expenditure should be cut? Does he agree that the Government ought to maintain its undertaking to pensioners to increase pensions and to abolish the means test?

Dr J. F. CAIRNS—I can understand how anxious the Leader of the Opposition is to know how to cut Government expenditure because he has been saying around the country now for a number of months that Government expenditure has to be cut but he has been unable to say in what areas. I can understand that he is very anxious to get an answer from me so that he can fill in the blank spaces in his own speeches which have been so apparent for a long time. The second point I want to make is that a great deal of government expenditure, in fact more than half of the increase that has taken place in the last 6 months, is going directly into the private sector to encourage activity in the private sector. I anticipate that in the future even more will have to go in that direction. One-third of the increase is for direct assistance to industry.

Mr Millar—What about the cattle industry?

Dr J. F. CAIRNS—I can hear the sounds of the cattle industry. The matter of government expenditure and the deficit has to be understood in relation to the present conditions of the economy. The present condition of the economy is a condition of recession, as it is around the world, as it is in every country as a result of the same conditions applying in every country. They apply in the United States and Europe, and in Australia just as much. The Opposition does not seem to be prepared to recognise this fact and therefore cannot understand what is happening in the economy. The matter of government expenditure has to be related to that.

I believe that the deficit has to be kept as low as possible so that it does not increase the money supply unnecessarily. But every item of government expenditure has to be considered on its own merits, on its effect on the economy, and the Government will continue to do that. No other government in Australia could fail to do that. I think that there will be increases in government expenditure in some respects between now and

the end of the financial year and that there will be less expenditure in other areas. It will be the intention of the Government to keep the deficit to the lowest possible level mainly because of its impact on the money supply in the economy. But nowhere will the Government reject a proposition for government expenditure if that expenditure will maintain or stimulate employment and increase the level of activity in the private sector.

AIRPORT RENTALS

Mr NICHOLLS—Can the Minister for Transport say what is the position as far as airport rentals are concerned? Has a final decision been made on this matter? Are the complaints about alleged increases justified?

Mr CHARLES JONES—As far as the Government is concerned, the criticisms over airport rentals are completely unjustified. I can give the honourable member some information which would substantiate that statement. First and foremost, as to whether the matter has been finalised, the answer is no. We are still conferring with the airline industry. In fact, a meeting will take place tomorrow afternoon between the general manager of one of the airlines and the Department of Transport.

Mr Nixon—Speak up.

Mr CHARLES JONES—I am sorry. Do not blame me; blame the acoustics. If the honourable member would like me to raise my voice I certainly will do so. I will repeat my reply to the honourable member for Bonython which unfortunately honourable members opposite could not hear. No final decision has been made on this matter of airport rentals. A further meeting will be held tomorrow afternoon with one of the airlines for the purpose of discussing the alternatives. I would like to bring to the attention of honourable members some of the reasons why airport terminal rentals have had to be reviewed. When it is taken into consideration that in 1974-75 the projected total cost of operating terminals including the amortisation of the funds that have been poured into them, is a net \$9m a year and yet the amount of rental that will be received will be only \$2.2m, it can be seen that they are subsidised to the extent of about \$7m a year, or 77 per cent of the total cost of their operation.

To give an example, the rental received from the Sydney international terminal is \$532,551, but the net cost to be recovered of operating that airport terminal is \$3,591,348. Let me give honourable members the breakdown of that amount. The cleaning of the building alone costs

\$525,908. Maintenance of the terminal costs \$442,695. The airport patrol and security costs \$175,144, administration costs \$126,440, electricity and gas charges total \$267,873 and local government rates and water charges come to \$163,420 and so on. If honourable member of the Opposition can justify the general taxpayer meeting those costs, I am afraid we on this side of the House cannot concur with them. This building cost about \$32m which will be amortised over a period of 40 years—that is, at 2½ per cent a year. The interest rates on the amortisation vary between 5½ per cent and 8 per cent a year. These are costs which the airline industry is being asked to carry. I instance another case—I do not propose to name the places—where the rental at the moment is \$2,125 and the cleaning bill alone is \$8,226. At another small airport where the airlines are paying no rental at all, the cleaning bill is \$284. We believe that those people who use the airports should be required to pay for them. If the Opposition believes, as it did when it was in government, in building Taj Mahals like the Sydney International Airport or Melbourne's Tullamarine airport it should realise that somebody has to pay for them.

Mr Donald Cameron—Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Last night this same Minister used an adjournment debate to make a statement. He is using question time in this way now. Why do you not pull him up on the length of his answers?

Mr CHARLES JONES—Why do you not take sensible points of order.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I ask the Minister to make his answer to the question as brief as possible.

Mr CHARLES JONES—In conclusion, Mr Speaker, there were meetings between the industry and the Department of Transport in February, May and October of last year and again this month. There will continue to be meetings, but as far as we are concerned the industry has to pay a fair and reasonable rental for the facilities it uses.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr GILES—Is the Minister for Labor and Immigration aware that during 1974 the unemployment rate in Australia moved from approximately 1.2 per cent of the work force to approximately 4.5 per cent? Is the Minister aware that in our sister nation of New Zealand the unemployment rate for 1974 moved from virtually none to 0.1 per cent of the work force? Does he blame the Australian Government for its poor record in comparison or is the New Zealand Government just better? Alternatively, does he

regard this invidious comparison as all his own work? Does he expect any cutback in the Regional Employment Development or National Employment and Training schemes as implied in the past by the Treasurer? Can he assure the House that as unemployment increases more funds will be found?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—The answer to the first question is yes; to the second it is no; to the third question it is no, and the rest of the questions become irrelevant.

CASUAL SENATE VACANCIES

Dr JENKINS—Can the Prime Minister provide the House with any further information on the issue of the proper and democratic manner in which casual Senate vacancies are filled?

Mr Snedden—Come on Dorothy.

Mr WHITLAM—I am glad that the Leader of the Opposition is here today because this is one of the matters, on which he knows what ought to be done and refuses to do anything. Since last week—

Mr Snedden—Has not the honourable member any pride that he can think of a question for himself instead of doing just exactly what his leader says?

Mr WHITLAM—The right honourable gentleman interjects about pride. Let me quote some of his portentous remarks of last Sunday. He said: I, Billy Mackie Snedden, have no power to determine who that successor will be. I have no power under the Liberal Party constitution. I have no power under the Australian Constitution. I have stated my view clearly, frankly, without fear and without seeking favour. That is my view and I maintain it. But let me go back to what the first leader, the founder, of the Liberal Party, did in this matter.

Mr Nixon—I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition also pointed out honestly what are the facts of the situation, which is more than the Prime Minister did on television on Sunday night.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Gippsland will resume his seat. I warn honourable members against taking frivolous points of order. The honourable member for Gippsland knows that that is a frivolous point of order. The honourable member for Gippsland will remain silent.

Mr WHITLAM—The first casual vacancy to arise after proportional representation was introduced in the Senate arose in December 1951. It occurred in Western Australia. A Labor senator died. The Liberal Premier—

Mr Snedden—Come on. Woof, woof!

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Interjections will cease or I will take the appropriate action. That applies to every member of the House.

Mr WHITLAM—The right honourable gentleman seems to be more than usually hysterical. I have never known even him to giggle so much. He is going ga-ga.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Prime Minister will address the Chair.

Mr WHITLAM—Let me reiterate: The first casual vacancy to occur after proportional representation was introduced in the Senate occurred in December 1951. It occurred through the death of a Labor senator. The Premier of Western Australia at the time was a Liberal. The Liberal and Country League executive met shortly afterwards and carried a resolution agreeing to the appointment of an LCL candidate. The Premier, however, got the executive to agree that he should first consult the Liberal Prime Minister, Mr Menzies. He wrote to Mr Menzies on 20 December. Mr Menzies obviously gave him his view and as a result—

Mr Nixon—I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. This is a clear abuse of the privileges of question time by the Prime Minister. Why does he not make a statement and let the subject be debated?

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

Mr Nixon—A point of order is involved. It is a clear abuse of privilege.

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

Mr WHITLAM—On 10 January 1952 the Liberal Premier of Western Australia, after consulting the Liberal Prime Minister, Mr Menzies, wrote to all the other Premiers indicating a change of mind on his part and he put to the other Premiers this proposition:

This is the first vacancy that has arisen since proportional representation was adopted for the Senate. So whatever action is taken on this occasion could be taken as a precedent in filling future vacancies. I am therefore anxious to obtain the views of all State Premiers as to how they consider the future vacancies should be filled. My own opinion is that, in view of the fact that proportional representation is now the method of election to the Senate, a member of the same Party nominated by the executive of the Party should be appointed when future vacancies arise through death or other causes.

Every other Premier responded positively to that suggestion. There have been 25 subsequent casual vacancies.

Mr McMahon—I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The crucial words there are 'death or sickness or illness', that is, where there is an involuntary retirement. The Prime Minister has a duty to explain that to the House and not to misrepresent the position.

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

Mr WHITLAM—The words used by the Liberal Premier of Western Australia, Sir Ross McLarty, on 10 January 1952 in his letters to all the other Premiers were 'when future vacancies arise through death or other causes'. I do, however, respond to the point of order raised by my predecessor. There have been casual vacancies due to other causes. For instance, his predecessor came to this House and caused a casual vacancy in the Senate. Senator Dame Annabelle Rankin caused a casual vacancy when she received a diplomatic appointment. Senator Spicer, on becoming Chief Judge of the Australian Industrial Court, caused a casual vacancy. The Country Party 2 years ago caused a casual vacancy when Senator Prowse resigned and another Country Party—

Mr Anthony—Through ill health.

Mr WHITLAM—The Leader of the Country Party interjects. When Senator Prowse resigned the Leader of the Country Party telephoned the Labor Premier of Western Australia and was assured by him that the Government of Western Australia would appoint another Country Party man to fill that casual vacancy.

Before these interjections occurred I had stated that not only was the first casual vacancy, that of a Labor senator from Western Australia, filled by another Labor man from Western Australia, but that in the case of all the 24 casual vacancies which have since been filled the new senator belonged to the same party as the vacating senator. In ten of those cases the new senator was a political opponent of the government of the State concerned. Not only was this convention established back in 1951-52 by all the Premiers, it was also supported unanimously by the Constitutional Review Committee in 1958-59.

Mr Snedden—A point of order, Mr Speaker. The Prime Minister is speaking about breaches of convention. It is a gross breach of convention for him to spend 7 minutes of question time with this nonsense.

Mr SPEAKER—I will answer this point of order as I have answered similar points of order on previous occasions: The Chair has no jurisdiction over the length of an answer but I ask the

Prime Minister, as I have asked Ministers previously, to be as brief as he possibly can.

Mr Snedden—Mr Speaker, a point of order: The specific point of order I make relates not only to the length of the answer but also to the question whether you, Mr Speaker, will ensure that the conventions of this Parliament are honoured by the man who is claiming that they should be upheld.

Mr SPEAKER—The Standing Orders are quite specific. I have no jurisdiction over the length of an answer. I recall that on one occasion the Leader of the Country Party took 27 minutes to answer a question.

Mr Snedden—It must have been a very good answer, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER—It was.

Mr WHITLAM—The Hansard record will show that every question time the Leader of the Opposition takes up more time in taking points of order than I take in answering questions.

Dr Forbes—Mr Speaker, you are a good party political speaker.

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

Dr Forbes—Although I feel it very deeply, I withdraw it.

Mr SPEAKER—Thank you very much.

Mr WHITLAM—This convention was established by all the Premiers from both sides of politics in 1951-52. It was unanimously supported by the Constitutional Review Committee of this Parliament, consisting of members of the Liberal Party, the Labor Party and the Country Party. It was unanimously supported by a committee established by the Constitutional Convention in 1973. It was unanimously supported by all the senators last week. As I understand it, every Liberal, including the Liberal Leader in this House and the Liberal Leader in the Senate, supports this convention, but the right honourable gentleman who leads the Opposition here supports the convention and will do nothing to secure adherence to it.

Mr Anthony—It requires a bit of honour, though.

Mr SPEAKER—The Leader of the Country Party will remain silent. He will contain himself.

Mr WHITLAM—There was nothing in the Liberal Party constitution to prevent Mr Menzies in 1951 telling the Liberal Premier of Western Australia the right thing to do. There was nothing in the Australian Constitution to prevent the Liberal Prime Minister of Australia telling the

Liberal Premier of Western Australia what to do in 1951. It is only now under this new Liberal leadership, leadership which the Liberal Leader is always proclaiming, that the Federal Leader of the Liberal Party is without power and without influence.

BEEF EXPORTS

Mr HUNT—Can the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture inform the House whether the volume of Australian beef exported to the United States of America has continued at a high level? What are the comparative quantities exported to the United States for the years ended 31 December 1973 and 31 December 1974? In view of the reported surplus of beef on the United States market, is it possible that cheap Australian beef is being processed and exported to some of our traditional customers? Will the Government consider establishing an independent inquiry to ascertain the final destination of cheap Australian beef and to ensure that there is not an international racket at the expense of growers?

Dr PATTERSON—It is a fact that in the last 12 months a decline has occurred in exports of beef to the United States of America. In 1973 the total amount of beef exported to the United States was approximately 340 000 tonnes. In 1974 the figure was about 240 000 tonnes. This represented a decline of 100 000 tonnes. But since October last year there has been a very sharp increase in the amount of beef exported to the United States. In the last 4 months it has averaged about 30 000 tonnes per month, which is relatively high. The decline is understandable because the c.i.f. prices in 1973 reached a peak of well over 200c per kilogram as compared with about 100c per kilogram now for boneless cow beef.

I cannot answer the other part of the question as to whether it is possible for importers to be re-exporting beef in processed form to Japan. But I will say this: I also have heard these allegations. They may be only rumours. On the best information I can get, this is not happening, Japan itself has an embargo on the import of beef from Australia and the United States in this form.

Mr Hunt—Fresh or processed?

Dr PATTERSON—Both. On the other hand I will make inquiries about the matter because, from my experience over the years, the ramifications of exporters engaged in the international meat trade are so extraordinary that there may be ways in which it is possible to beat a general policy. One thing that disturbs me is that when

one looks at the cattle prices now in New South Wales and Queensland and the way they have dropped to bedrock levels and compares those levels with the price that the housewife still has to pay, it is clear that there are still some unknown quantities in this area. It is pretty obvious to me that the producer is not getting a fair price in relation to what the consumer is paying.

Mr Anthony—What a lot of nonsense. Why do you not get down to it and do something for them instead of whingeing. What about the costs in the meatworks?

Dr PATTERSON—When we tried to do something about it 2 years ago, it was the Leader of the Country Party—

Mr Anthony—Why do you not recognise that—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Leader of the Country Party will remain silent. He will cease interjecting.

Dr PATTERSON—When beef prices went through the ceiling 2 years ago, this Government tried to do something and it was told by the Leader of the Country Party to mind its own business. Now he is telling us to do something about it. What I am trying to say, for the benefit of the honourable member for Gwydir, is that the processing costs are approximately \$100 per beast or about 20c per lb. That means that there is a substantial difference between the total processing costs plus the producer's price and what the consumer is paying. It could be that some rackets are being worked with the wholesaling and exporting of meat. I can assure the honourable member for Gwydir that I will raise the points that he has made and that we will be having a close look at some of these margins again.

TASMANIAN BEEF EXPORTS

Mr SHERRY—My question is directed to the Prime Minister. By way of preface I congratulate the Prime Minister on a most successful and productive visit to Hobart last week. The kites and crows of the Australian Country Party are in good form this morning. I now ask the Prime Minister: Is it a fact that the economy of the Tasmanian rural industry would be seriously threatened if the call by that extraordinary and ubiquitous Premier of Queensland for the exclusion of Tasmanian beef exports to Japan were to be carried out? I further ask: Is it also a fact that there has been a very dramatic and, quite rightly, a condemnatory response from the Leader of the Liberal Party in Tasmania to this extraordinary proposition?

Mr WHITLAM—I noticed that the week before last the Premier of Queensland went to Tasmania to assist the Leader of the Australian Country Party in this Parliament in an effort to resuscitate a Country Party in Tasmania. Of course, he has now gone back to Queensland and has shown what contempt he feels for Tasmanians by specifying Tasmania in his statement about beef sales from Australia to other countries. He said that he wanted to sell Queensland beef; he did not want people buying their beef from New Zealand or Tasmania. He spoke as though Tasmania were a separate country. There is no doubt that everywhere in Australia, not just in Tasmania, there has been resentment at the intrusion by the Premier of Queensland into matters of overseas marketing—the crudest form of resources diplomacy, which I believe it is called on the other side of the House.

The honourable member for Hotham, Mr Chipp, issued a Press statement condemning the very things which Mr Bjelke-Petersen is advocating. By an extraordinary piece of timing, Mr Chipp and Mr Bjelke-Petersen made their statements—completely different one from the other—on the same day. I believe that the honourable member for Kooyong has differed from Mr Bjelke-Petersen. I am not sure whether the Leader of the Opposition has expressed himself on this matter or whether he is allowing a consensus to emerge. As honourable members know, Liberal leadership has declined somewhat over the last 2 decades. I was giving an instance where constitutional conventions are concerned. Not only did Mr Menzies make his views known but he made them effective. But the present Liberal Leader says that there is nothing in the Liberal Party constitution which permits him to influence State Liberal leaders; there is nothing in the Australian Constitution which permits him to influence State Liberal leaders; and of course there is nothing in the Liberal Party constitution which permits him to influence Country Party leaders, whether they are in a State parliament or in this Parliament. Again, there is nothing in the Australian Constitution which permits that. There is always an excuse for Liberal leadership these days to do nothing or to defer any action.

I will be astonished if on this occasion the Leader of the Opposition comes forth with a firm, prompt statement asserting Australia's interests in international trade. He is so scared of dissension in this House between his Party and the Country Party, dissension between his State leaders and himself, dissension between Country Party leaders in the States and Liberal Party leaders, that he is reduced to inane interjections.

He can ask a question whenever he likes. The one thing that he can do with his followers is to pre-empt their question time.

Mr Snedden—Will you give an increase in pensions?

Mr WHITLAM—The right honourable gentleman can ask a question whenever he likes.

Mr Snedden—Will you give an increase in pensions?

Mr WHITLAM—The right honourable gentleman can ask this question or any other whenever he likes.

Mr Snedden—You will not answer it.

Mr WHITLAM—The right honourable gentleman contents himself with inane interjections. Outside the Parliament and inside the Parliament he never says boo or moo to the Country Party leaders within the House, within the Federal Parliament or any of the State Parliaments. It is an abysmal demonstration of national leadership.

URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr RUDDOCK—I direct a question to the Minister for Urban and Regional Development. The Minister will no doubt be aware of the Prime Minister's commitment to curtail Government expenditure, finally adopting another of the positive proposals of this Opposition. To what extent does that commitment mean that each of the programs for area improvement schemes, sewerage, umbrella legislation, Darwin reconstruction expenditure, growth centres and land commissions will be limited or curtailed?

Mr UREN—The honourable member should know that one of the Australian Government's major priorities is urban and regional development. The Prime Minister has at all times supported those programs. He was the original initiator of them as far back as 1968. He tried to show the then Australian Government the deterioration of the Australian cities. The Government, so far from cutting expenditure in the areas from which the honourable member comes, will be able to divert an extra \$4m above the Budget allocation this year into local government in the western region of Sydney through the Regional Employment Development program.

Mr Ruddock—The program has been approved, has it? Has the RED scheme been approved for Parramatta?

Mr UREN—The honourable member asks: 'Has Parramatta been designated for the RED

scheme?' I use the term 'the western sector of Sydney' which takes in some 10 municipalities. Certain municipalities, such as Blacktown and Fairfield, have been designated. Because this Government works on a regional basis we are diverting some of the people who are unemployed in the Fairfield and Blacktown area into other areas of the western region where we think such a diversion is necessary to satisfy regional priorities. I want to make it quite clear that I am working with the Prime Minister and other Ministers to examine Government expenditure closely. But major priorities for urban and regional development have not come under any criticism at all within the Government; they are still a major priority.

PENSION INCREASES

Mr WILLIS—I ask the Minister for Social Security: Has his attention been drawn to a report that there has not been a very significant real increase in pensions during the Whitlam Government's term of office? Will the Minister inform the House whether there is any validity in this report? Can he indicate the extent to which the real level of pensions has been increased by the present Government?

Mr HAYDEN—I have some reservation about criticising the person responsible for that comment. He was asked last week: 'Do you believe the Whitlam Government has given sufficient real increases in pensions during its term of office? Mr Snedden answered: 'Obviously no, if you judge it on one day'. Today might not be the sort of day when he is feeling unhappy and he may not care to stand by that sort of assertion. Today might be the sort of optimistic day when he thinks his followers would at least walk on warm pebbles on a sandy beach, if not on hot coals through the Valley of Death.

The facts are that there have been more substantial real increases in pensions under this Government than under any previous government in the past 2 decades. For instance, under this Government the married rate of pension has increased by more than 49 per cent. The increase in the consumer price index in that period was a little over 31 per cent, which means that the increase in pensions was 60 per cent greater than the increase in the consumer price index. The increase in pensions was considerably greater than the increase in average weekly earnings. The single rate of pension increased by 55 per cent. Again the consumer price index increase in the period was only a little over 31 per cent. This was also the position with the standard rate of the class A widows pension. Classes B and C of

this pension were increased by nearly 80 per cent. The married rate of unemployment and sickness benefits was increased by 106 per cent.

Mr Sinclair—It hardly kept pace with inflation.

Mr HAYDEN—Obviously the honourable member does not listen. He has his ears stuffed with some of the wool he cannot get rid of. The increase in the standard rate pension was 60 per cent greater than the increase in the consumer price index. The standard rate of pension as a proportion of average weekly earnings, in spite of inflation and in spite of the fact that some months have passed since the last increase in the pension rate, still stands as the highest proportion of average weekly earnings, seasonally adjusted or according to the ordinary index, at any time for the past 2 decades. The only occasion on which the standard rate of pension as a proportion of average weekly earnings has been at a higher level was in the 1940s under the Chifley Labor Government.

There will be further substantial increases in pensions in the course of this parliamentary session and these increases will lift those relationships again. This Government is determined, unlike its predecessors, that pensioners will not carry the brunt of economic policies, whatever their nature might be, and it will not force mean larders on to the most dependent people in this community.

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE

Mr SNEDDEN—I address my question to the Prime Minister. Did the honourable gentleman say that any proposal to cut Government expenditure would amount to economic vandalism? Has he now totally changed his mind about proposals to cut Government expenditure? Did he have the courage to stand up for what he formerly believed? Did he have the courage to say to the Minister for Urban and Regional Development: 'You can have your money because I have been saying to the Australian public all along that we will not cut Government expenditure'? Did the Prime Minister one night in September 1973—

Mr Armitage—Ask the question.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Will the right honourable member ask his question?

Mr SNEDDEN—Mr Speaker, the interjection was: 'Ask the question'. The Prime Minister took 10 minutes to denigrate me. Let him have a bit of his own medicine if he can take it. Let him take a bit. I will tell the truth, Mr Speaker, about him. I will not invent insults.

Mr Daly—I rise to order. My point of order is that it is possible for honourable members to make a brief explanatory introduction to a question they wish to ask, but the Leader of the Opposition is now proceeding on one of his rare speeches in this House. I suggest that he should ask his question.

Mr SPEAKER—I ask the right honourable gentleman to ask his question.

Mr SNEDDEN—Did the honourable the Prime Minister consistently, positively and continuously assert—

Mr Clyde Cameron—I rise to order. Mr Speaker, is it not very rude as well as being contrary to the Standing Orders for the Leader of the Opposition to speak with his back to the Chair looking across at the Country Party while he asks his question?

Mr SPEAKER—There is no point of order involved.

Mr SNEDDEN—Did the Prime Minister persistently and continually say that wages had no influence on inflation in Australia? Has he now said that wages are the central cause of inflation in Australia? Did he ever acknowledge that Government expenditure climbing at the rate of 43 per cent must cripple the private sector? Is it not in the private sector that unemployment has occurred? Has the Prime Minister said any one thing on the economy within the last 12 months that agrees with what he says today?

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable gentleman will ask his question.

(Government members interjecting.)

Mr SPEAKER—Order! Honourable members would know that the Leader of the Opposition has always been allowed some latitude in asking a question. This has always been the custom of the House no matter who the Leader of the Opposition has been but the fact is, I think, that the honourable gentleman has had a good go in regard to a preface to the question. I ask him to put his question.

Mr SNEDDEN—I am asking it as a question. Did the Prime Minister say that it would be an act of economic vandalism to reduce taxes in this country?

Mr Daly—Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition continually complains that Ministers' answers are too long. Does he expect the Prime Minister to take as long to answer this question as he is taking to ask it?

Mr SNEDDEN—Yes, I do.

Mr Daly—I further draw attention to the fact that the right honourable gentleman is ignoring your ruling, Mr Speaker, and making a speech instead of directing the question. I ask you, Sir, to rule it out of order.

Mr SPEAKER—I ask the right honourable gentleman to make his question as brief as possible.

Mr SNEDDEN—Mr Speaker, I am asking the question. Under the Standing Orders I can ask a question and I am doing so. I ask the Prime Minister: Did he say that to cut income tax in Australia would be an act of economic vandalism? Did the honourable gentleman agree to adopt a taxation cut of \$1,000m which was advocated by the Opposition?

Mr Daly—On a point of order, Mr Speaker; for how long must we tolerate the right honourable gentleman making a speech during question time? May I suggest that he should not defy your ruling and that he should be directed to ask the question or to resume his seat?

Mr SPEAKER—I ask the right honourable gentleman finally to put his question to the Prime Minister.

Mr SNEDDEN—I am putting the question, Mr Speaker, with respect.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I have asked the right honourable gentleman on 3 occasions to put his question to the Prime Minister.

Mr SNEDDEN—Mr Speaker, if you will listen to my words you will find there is a question. Did the Prime Minister when he did that remarkable somersault in relation to income tax have opposition from any member of his Cabinet about the cut in income tax?

Mr Sherry—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. May I suggest that the honourable member for Wannon, who is at least articulate, put the question in place of the right honourable gentleman?

Mr SPEAKER—That is a frivolous point of order.

Mr SNEDDEN—I ask the Prime Minister: Did he in September 1973 have the then Treasurer, the honourable member for Melbourne Ports, and the then Deputy Prime Minister, the honourable member for Bass, at a meeting at the Lodge on a Sunday night and did the three of them then take a decision which was announced on the Sunday night that they would increase interest rates, and as a result of that positive decision by the Government or by those three men without consultation with the rest of

the Cabinet or the Caucus were interest rates raised by three, four, five and six per cent?

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The right honourable gentleman will finally put his question otherwise I will have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr Daly—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. I point out that the honourable member for Mackellar has gone to sleep.

Mr Wentworth—Mr Speaker, I have been most grievously misrepresented. Not content with falsifying Hansard, the Leader of the House misrepresents me entirely.

Mr SNEDDEN—Will the Prime Minister say whether it is true that tax collections in Australia in the first 7 months of this financial year increased by 53 per cent over those of last year? Will he say whether it is true that interest rates have gone up by not less than 3 per cent and, in housing areas, very often by 5 per cent? Will he say in what specific areas he proposes to cut Government expenditure? Will he give a total undertaking that there will be an increase in pensions and that pensions will be exempted from any Government expenditure cut?

Mr WHITLAM—Those sitting behind the right honourable gentleman showed by their somnolence and their grimaces how much they are impressed by his rantings and his ramblings. If only his public relations officer would say how he performs when he is really switched on! I have not said that there would be cuts in Government expenditure or that Government expenditure would be curtailed. I issued a Press statement on 28 January—3 weeks ago yesterday—and nowhere do those words appear. It is true enough that the right honourable gentleman, through all these months in opposition, has been advocating cuts in government expenditure. If we had cut government expenditure when and as he advocated, we would have exacerbated unemployment in the public and private sectors. What I said was this:

Any new expenditure proposals which are brought forward outside the Budget decision-making framework will be considered by the committee established by Cabinet.

I said this:

The Government has decided that there ought to be a general presumption against further increases of government expenditure. Any such increase must meet the criteria adopted by Cabinet.

I also said:

Priority for expenditure in the public sector will be given to those proposals which provide a boost to under-employed sections of the private sector through demand for materials and which create employment quickly.

Far from there having been a cut or a curtailment in public expenditure, there has been some increase in public expenditure where that would bring about an increase in employment or an increased use of idle resources. The most recent example of that was at the Premiers Conference. The right honourable gentleman points out the increase that has occurred in public expenditure. He forgets to point out that the biggest increases in public expenditure have been in areas of expenditure not by the Federal Government at all but by the State Governments—this financial year they will be spending 49 per cent or 50 per cent more than they did last year because my Government has made the money available to them—and secondly, in social services.

The right honourable gentleman has not responded to my challenge—I think that would be the term he would use—to ask a question on the matter in relation to which he was interjecting. But I believe that I should illustrate his failure here because if he does not ask a question here he can bring out a more convincing, terse statement in the media. We see how he performs on his feet in this Parliament. We see, if we have sufficient patience, how he performs on the box. But, of course, people who read his Press statements do not know whether they are his, whether he has just signed them, or whether he has even read them. The biggest increases in expenditure by my Government have been in areas of expenditure by the States—there will be housing, roads and other employment-maintaining and creating activities—and secondly in social services. Wherever else the effects of inflation may fall, there is no question that a national government has the right and the option of sheltering those who depend on social services against the results of inflation. My Government has certainly done so.

Mr Wentworth—You are to blame for this.

Mr WHITLAM—In a couple of months the honourable member for Mackellar will himself be receiving an age pension without means test. The right honourable gentleman who interjected so constantly knows quite well there is provision in the Budget for an increase this April in social service payments. There will be no cut or curtailment there. It has never been suggested. It is a figment of his imagination or of those who manipulate him or pull the strings when he cannot be on the box. The Government has undertaken that there will be an increase every spring and autumn. In the last Budget we said that there would be an increase this April and there will be.

FRUIT INDUSTRY SUGAR CONCESSION COMMITTEE

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory)—Pursuant to clause 8 of the Sugar Agreement 1969, I present the report on the operation of the Fruit Industry Sugar Concession Committee for the year ended 30 June 1974, together with the Committee's financial statements and the Auditor-General's report on those statements.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! There is too much audible conversation.

Mr Garland—Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Will the Minister repeat that statement? It was impossible to hear him.

Dr PATTERSON—I will not repeat it. You should have been listening.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I ask the Minister to repeat the statement because there was too much audible conversation for it to be heard.

Dr PATTERSON—It was on the other side.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The Minister will withdraw that.

Dr PATTERSON—I withdraw it. Pursuant to clause 8 of the Sugar Agreement 1969, I present the report on the operation of the Fruit Industry Sugar Concession Committee for the year ended 30 June 1974, together with the Committee's financial statements and the Auditor-General's report on those statements.

AUSTRALIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Dr CASS (Maribyrnong—Minister for the Environment and Conservation)—For the information of honourable members I present the fourth report of the Australian Advisory Committee on the Environment entitled 'Land Use in Australia', dated December 1974.

QUESTION TIME

Mr Sinclair—Mr Speaker, as a point of order, I ask your attitude towards the degree to which during question time in particular there seems to be a remarkable level of personal denigration engaged in by members of the Ministry. The Premier of New South Wales was referred to in a most derogatory fashion during question time today. I believe that the Leader of the Opposition was similarly denigrated by the Prime Minister. I ask your attitude, Mr Speaker, towards that type of personal abuse. It would seem to me to be quite outside the normal procedure and actions in this Parliament.

Mr SPEAKER—The Chair has no responsibility for remarks about persons outside this House.

Mr Garland—On a similar point or order, Mr Speaker, much of that personal abuse is not in direct response to the question asked. I believe and I would, with respect, put to you, that when a Minister answering a question gets away from the subject matter of the question you might call him to order more quickly.

Mr SPEAKER—The Chair has no jurisdiction over such remarks coming from an answer to a question about persons outside the House, excepting of course in those cases mentioned in the Standing Orders.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

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

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

Mr SNEDDEN—Yes, I do Mr Speaker, in a report in yesterday's 'Sydney Morning Herald'. I regret that the Minister for Education is not here at the moment. It is not usual for me to claim that I have been misreported in any newspaper, but in this case I saw the misreport. I did not bother to follow it up; but a question was asked in the House of the Minister for Education by the honourable member for Holt, Mr Oldmeadow, based on that misreport. The report said that I would 'probably abolish the free tertiary education and the present structure of living allowances for tertiary students'. That was picked up by Mr Oldmeadow, who asked this question:

Has the Minister for Education seen the report on a proposal for the abolition of free tertiary education and free tertiary student allowances? What would be the effects of such a proposal?

The initial report was wrong. The basis of the question expanded it. Then Mr Beazley dealt with the question on that basis. The actual words I used at the time were recorded. They were used in answer to a question. My answer was:

I am not satisfied that the Australian Government is distributing the education dollar right. I think that the scholarships operate unfairly to a great number. Of the 2 systems I prefer the old system.

It will be seen that there was no basis from what I said for the original newspaper report. Mr Oldmeadow picked it up, expanded it and asked a question on it of Mr Beazley, the Minister for Education, who dealt with it on that basis. It is important that the matter be cleared up. Certainly I would not be permitted to debate it. I make no further explanation about it.

The other matter which I regret I have to raise is also a matter of personal explanation. Mr Hayden, the Minister for Social Security, in answer to a question a little while ago about pensions, referred to what was obviously a report in the 'Australian Financial Review' last week of an interview with me concerning social welfare. I was asked questions by an interviewer and he recorded them. So far as I can remember they were accurately recorded. I think that what was recorded was then put in the newspaper in the form of a transcript. I was asked whether I believed that the present Labor Government had made sufficient real advance in the field of pensions. In answering a question this morning Mr Hayden referred to that interview and quoted in part what I had said. He said that I had replied: 'It depends on which day you measure it'. He then indulged himself in a little luxury by saying that apparently it depended upon my mood on the day on which I looked at it. In fact, what I said was: 'It depends upon the day on which you measure it having regard to the average weekly earnings because on the day upon which the increase came about you would get a vastly different percentage of the average weekly earnings than you would before the next pension increase came about'. The variation, if my recollection is correct, is from about as high as 24 per cent of the average weekly earnings on the day upon which the pension was last increased, whereas the percentage of the average weekly earnings which the pension now represents would be down to, I think, something of the order of 21 per cent. So when I said that it depended upon the day on which one measured it the point I was making, which is a very real one, is that the average weekly earnings in the present inflationary situation are advancing so rapidly that the pensioner is one of the groups which are constantly being left behind.

Mr WENTWORTH (Mackellar)—I wish to make a personal explanation, Mr Speaker.

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

Mr WENTWORTH—Yes, Mr Speaker. I refer to something which occurred during question time. Almost by way of a point of order may I point out to you, Sir, that a misrepresentation occurring during question time is re-broadcast later in the day but the personal explanation refuting it is not re-broadcast. May I ask you, Sir, as the Speaker to ascertain whether a refutation should be included in the re-broadcasting time. I think that this is very important. It is only a matter of fairness to those who are maligned or misrepresented by Ministers during question

time. I ask you, Sir, as a matter of fairness to ensure that the same re-broadcasting facilities are provided to those who have to answer these misrepresentations as are provided to those who make them. I think that, as a matter of general fairness, that would commend itself to you and should commend itself to the House. I know that there may be technical difficulties in this regard. The matter may have to be referred to the Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings. I ask you to consider this matter very seriously.

In regard to what occurred during question time today, the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) was kind enough to intimate that I should be grateful for being able to get a means test free pension under the beneficent arrangement made by his Government.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I remind the honourable gentleman that points of order which are later the subject of matters of personal explanation are not included in the re-broadcast of question time; so the honourable gentleman is protected in that respect.

Mr WENTWORTH—As long as the matter is excised.

Mr SPEAKER—I realise that the honourable gentleman was only meditating at the time.

Mr WENTWORTH—Yes, quite. But I was not referring to that; I was referring to what the Prime Minister said.

Mr SPEAKER—Once a point of order is taken and a personal explanation is made on that point of order that matter is not re-broadcast.

Mr WENTWORTH—I would be grateful if that is the case.

Mr SPEAKER—You can rest assured that that is the case.

Mr Daly—Speaking to the point of order, Mr Speaker—

Mr WENTWORTH—Let me finish. The Prime Minister was good enough to indicate that I should feel some gratitude to him for having the right to draw a means test free pension. May I say that if the previous—

Mr SPEAKER—Does this have anything to do with the personal explanation?

Mr WENTWORTH—Yes, it has to do with my age, Sir, and that is of some personal interest to myself, even if not to you. I was about to say that if the previous Liberal-Country Party Government had remained in power, and I was the relevant Minister at the time it was removed from office, by this time all persons over 65 years

of age would have been drawing a means test free pension in accordance with its promise and the policy which it put forward. The Government has already partly welshed on its proposal and I believe that it is proposing to welsh further.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! The honourable gentleman is starting to debate the issue. He will resume his seat.

Mr Daly—Speaking to the point of order, Mr Speaker, during question time—

Mr SPEAKER—No point of order has been raised. The Minister for Services and Property can seek the indulgence of the Chair to make a statement.

Mr Daly—I take a point of order on what has just been said, Mr Speaker. The honourable member for Mackellar said that I implied during question time that he was asleep. In my view he was. When that was pointed out by me the uproar was so great that it woke him up.

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

Mr Wentworth—A point of order, Mr Speaker; the Minister for Services and Property is abusing his privileges as Leader of the House. He is a disgrace.

Mr SPEAKER—Order!

GOVERNMENT'S RURAL POLICIES

Discussion of Matter of Public Importance

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

The effect on productivity and employment caused by the Government's rural policies.

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

(More than the number of member required by the Standing Orders have risen in their places)

Mr SINCLAIR (New England) (11.9)—It is somewhat unusual for 2 matters of public importance to be raised in this House on somewhat the same grounds in a short compass of time; yet such has been done in this instance because of the extreme gravity with which the Opposition Parties view the whole of the deteriorating climate for people throughout rural Australia. The industry that we spoke of last week is one that, of course, is more particularly affected than any,

that is, the beef industry. Those in the beef industry now are no longer confined only to the northern parts of Australia. As a result of the wool depression of a few years ago a significant increase in beef herds and in the people significantly dependent upon beef for their income has spread right throughout the southern parts of this continent. There are today many people in the beef industry who are grievously affected, yet still we wait for action to be taken by this Government to offset the problems which face them.

The matter of public importance which we raise today does not encompass only the beef industry. Not only on beef properties and on rural holdings, but also in every country community, in the cities and towns throughout the Australian countryside, there are deteriorating economic situations which are affecting the lives and livelihoods of individuals who live in those areas and which indirectly will prejudice the very future, in terms of supplies and the adequacy and quality of those supplies, of the many consumers in our big metropolises.

The reason this matter of public importance is raised today is that I think this House needs to identify the effect in the 2 areas to which the matter refers—productivity and employment—of the policies which this Government has introduced and which have so prejudicially affected those people. Certainly markets affect the general profitability of people in country communities, as equally do seasons, but those who have been involved in country communities in Australia have traditionally come to accept that there will not always be good seasons. We have lived with fires, floods and droughts, and we have lived with plenty. Given the overall sympathy of a government we have always been able to overcome the adversity which has faced us. The degree to which this Government has contributed towards the run down of the assistance which has been provided in the past has aggravated the position of the people of whom I speak today. This matter of public importance today is concerned, firstly, with the direct effects of this Government's policies on people in country areas and, secondly, with the by-products of those effects on all people in the Australian community.

We all remember that shortly after this Government took office it appointed Dr Coombs, a man who had been a distinguished senior public servant, to chair a committee whose function was to make recommendations in areas within which Government expenditure could be curtailed. The first Labor Budget, the Budget for

1973-74, contained a range of significant variations in concessions which had been granted to country people in the past. We all remember the memorable comment of the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), 'You have never had it so good', which was made at a town in which the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) spoke so much more sense yesterday. The Prime Minister demonstrated how little concern the Government really had for rural people. I am afraid that the ambit of the Government's rural policy must be considered in the whole context of the adverse economic policies that this Government has pursued. These policies have led to a high inflation rate, a shortage of money, high interest rates and an almost total withdrawal of the meaningful assistance schemes which Liberal-Country Party governments introduced to encourage people to overcome the adversity which faced them during the climatic and seasonal swing to which I referred a moment ago.

The Coombs report, followed by the Government's 1973-74 Budget and its 1974-75 Budget, has meant that approximately \$500m has been taken out of the pockets of farmers in the reduction or elimination of direct concessions, and of course it has meant that at least the same amount of money has been added to their costs which have been reflected today in significant increases. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics has referred to an increase of about 27 per cent in farm costs over the last 6 months. If that figure is followed through it means that costs, which have been significantly affected by the policies which this Government has changed, will increase by approximately 54 per cent over a 12 month period. Mr Hogan, President of the Australian Farmers Federation, has estimated that farm costs will increase by at least 25 per cent over the same 6 months period. Let us make no mistake: The whole position of country industry and of country people has been affected by the very real increase in costs to which this Government has contributed. Where does that leave the Australian people? I refer to 'Treasury Information Bulletin' No. 77 of January 1975 which at page 7 states:

With wool and meat prices well below the levels of a year earlier the total value of live stock products was forecast to fall by 29 per cent in 1974-75 to \$2,630,000. Overall the gross value of rural production was forecast to decline by 7 per cent in 1974-75 to \$6,028,000.

So we have the impact not only of costs but also of reduced incomes. We need then to look at the overall picture to see just where that leaves us. One of the reasons that some elements of returns have increased, particularly in respect of rural exports, has been that very high prices have been

paid, in particular, for a range of specialist commodities. This certainly applies to sugar and to grains in general. Some elements of grain returns have risen to a greater degree than have others. If we look at those industries we might say that the natural thing for a thinking government to do would be to try to see what we can do in a period when we are told that there is a short term expectancy of better returns in order to take advantage of those short term better returns. What does this Government do? In one area in which the Government could have stimulated production it took off the superphosphate bounty. It is true that in terms of the escalation in price of superphosphate to the consumer, the increases in the price of phosphate rock have been an important element. Let us make no mistake: Although there has been more than a 100 per cent increase in the cost of superphosphate to farmers, only about one-half of that increase has resulted from an increase in the price of phosphate rock. The other one-half of the increase is a direct result of the withdrawal of the superphosphate bounty.

I have put to this Parliament on a number of occasions—I put it to the Parliament again—that it is important that the farming community should be given the opportunity of using superphosphate in the first 6 months of this year if any advantage is to be taken from the high grain prices which presently prevail. A suitable stimulus would be provided if the old superphosphate bounty were restored immediately and retained until such time as the report of the Industries Assistance Commission on the future of the bounty is known. This Government's rural policy is not concerned about the realities of what will happen. The Prime Minister is long in rhetoric and short in commonsense.

Mr England—There are only 4 Government members here.

Mr SINCLAIR—There are 4 members of the Labor Party in the chamber. I beg your pardon, Mr Speaker, there are 5 members of the Labor Party, including yourself, in the chamber. That is typical of their concern about the rural community. It is important to realise that this Government just does not care. It is important that people in country areas are not neglected. To me it is imperative that the whole of this superphosphate story should be analysed quite critically and not just left until a report is presented sometime in July. Very briefly on the superphosphate story, the 'Age' of 18 February last referred to the position of Electrolytic Zinc

Co. of Australasia Ltd. The whole of the Tasmanian superphosphate industry, which produces 183 000 tonnes of superphosphate a year, is to be closed down. The managing director of that company said that supply is plentiful because there are no orders. A spokesman for that company said that normally sales were about 50 000 tonnes a month but that now orders were running at less than 8000 tonnes a month. The managing director of Australian Fertilisers Ltd has said that its dispatches are the lowest for at least 15 years. He added that they had not even bothered to go any further back. That is only one part of the industry.

One of the reasons we have included employment in the terms of the matter of public importance is that this Government's policies are prejudicing employment opportunities, and perhaps that is illustrated most effectively by referring to the superphosphate industry. During the last 15 years a tremendously effective aerial agricultural industry has grown in Australia and has contributed very much to the level of production. In areas such as my own thousands of acres are returning a significantly higher volume of production and a significantly better quality of production simply through the application of superphosphate. About 80 per cent of that superphosphate is spread from the air. At the moment there are no orders outstanding for the spreading of superphosphate, but last year there were orders totalling 100 000 tonnes on the books. Already about 100 pilots have been laid off, and I am informed that in the next few weeks about another 150 pilots will be suspended from duty. Men in all major superphosphate works throughout Australia are being stood down from employment.

The aerial agricultural industry is not comprised only of pilots; there are also engineers and truck operators. The whole industry has grown in a remarkable way. It has grown from being very much of an embryo, a new experiment, to being an extremely efficient industry which applies top dressing from the air. The tragic mortality rate of pilots engaged in aerial spraying 10 years ago was about one in ten. Today the safety record is better there than in commercial aviation. The average age of superphosphate pilots is about 40 years. It is an industry which has developed from nothing, and this Government is destroying it. The re-establishment of such an industry, once it is destroyed, will take about the same period as its original establishment took.

If one looks not just at that industry—that is one industry about which this Government has

done nothing—but at the general statistics of unemployment in country areas, one sees that they are absolutely frightful. Members on this side of the House have spent 2 years trying to tell the Government that the old rural unemployment relief scheme, a magnificent scheme designed to provide emergency relief, should have been preserved. The Minister for Unemployment—I beg his pardon; he is called the Minister for Labor and Immigration, but one would never know that labour is his responsibility. The Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron), refused even to consider the continuation of rural unemployment relief. He has now introduced the RED scheme and the NEAT scheme, both of which demonstrably are failing to correct the tremendously regrettable level of unemployment in country areas. In New South Wales 43 per cent of the total numbers of unemployed come from country areas; in Victoria 30 per cent; in Queensland 54 per cent; in South Australia and the Northern Territory about 22 per cent; in Western Australia 25 per cent; and in Tasmania 52 per cent. Yet not one Tasmanian member of the Australian Labor Party is in the chamber even to participate in the debate. The level of rural unemployment in their State is at 52 per cent and they could not care a whit.

This is the tragedy of the situation. This Government is just letting the country run and it is not doing anything about it. Rural unemployment is at a worse level today than it has ever been in Australia's history, and this Government is causing it. Its withdrawal of support for rural industry, its failure to provide meaningful decentralisation assistance, its withdrawal of fuel price equalisation schemes, its destruction of what was a reasonably efficient country communications system and its withdrawal of significant aid for country road construction apparently are all part of this Government's objective of destroying Australian productivity and creating unemployment in country areas so that, in accordance with its socialistic objectives, men can be diverted into the city.

We have even heard the President of the Australian Labor Party say that this would not be bad if Australia became more dependent on New Zealand rural exports. Let us compare Australia with New Zealand. It is worth while to do so. New Zealand has a government of a similar political persuasion to the Australian Government, but at least it has provided a superphosphate bounty which ensures that the cost to the consumer is no more than \$24 per tonne. Consider what it has done for the beef industry. As I understand it, the interest rate

structure in New Zealand for the time being is suspended in respect of money being provided for its beef industry. What does this Government do? It provides \$20m but increases from 6¼ per cent to 11½ per cent the interest rate payable by those who receive the money. That type of policy is the reason why the average housewife in Australia needs to recognise that foodstuffs will be in short supply and will be dear, and that this Government is causing that situation. It is making us depend on imported foodstuffs. It is refusing to consider the problems of the whole country. I am afraid that, unless there is an immediate reversal of the Government's policy, the future for the whole of this country, not just the rural areas, is very bleak. It is no exaggeration to say that the blame for the accelerating inflation and the crisis that exists in this country lies directly at the feet of the Prime Minister and the members of the Labor Party, only five of whom are present even to sit in on this debate.

Dr PATTERSON (Dawson—Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory) (11.24)—Rarely have I heard such sanctimonious nonsense as has been talked by the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party, the honourable member for New England (Mr Sinclair). What the Deputy Leader of the Country Party attempted to say when talking about unemployment in rural areas was that that unemployment is due directly to the economic condition of rural industries. Everybody knows that the major proportion of unemployment in rural areas is directly concerned and correlated with the manufacturing and processing industries.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—It is directly due to your policies.

Dr PATTERSON—I listened in silence. I would expect that the honourable member would do so too; otherwise, he should sit back on the front of the Opposition bench where he belongs. The Deputy Leader of the Country Party commenced his speech by referring to the deteriorating economic climate throughout the rural industries. He mentioned the beef industry. What other industries did he mention? He did not mention one other industry in the whole of his speech.

Mr Sinclair—I did.

Dr PATTERSON—What other rural industries did he mention?

Mr Sinclair—I mentioned the wheat industry, the wool industry—

Dr PATTERSON—The wheat industry is experiencing one of the greatest eras of prosperity in its history. He mentioned unemployment in the wheat industry! He mentioned superphosphate and the unemployment that he alleged existed among the pilots who spread superphosphate. But he did not tell us of the amount of superphosphate that was sold in the last 6 months of last year. He did not tell us that every farmer's shed throughout the country is stocked with superphosphate. He did not tell us about the number of hours flown in the 3 months before Christmas by pilots of aircraft that spread superphosphate. They are maintaining their aircraft now. Why tell us half-truths about these figures? Everybody knows that statistics can lie. The honourable member should get the true figures.

Mr Sinclair—What about the wool industry? How is the wool industry doing under your Government?

Dr PATTERSON—This Government has done more for the wool industry in 2 years than the Liberal-Country Party Government did in 23 years—

Mr McVeigh—Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order. I draw the attention of the House to the complete inaccuracy of the statements of the Minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berinson)—Order! No point of order is involved.

Mr McVeigh—But you have not heard it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member referred to inaccuracies. That does not raise a point of order.

Mr McVeigh—The point of order I want to make is that the Minister said in his speech that every farmer's shed in the country was full of superphosphate. That is untrue.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order!

Mr McVeigh—He does not know what he is talking about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Darling Downs will resume his seat. I point out to the honourable member that he interjected at least 5 times in the first 3 minutes of the Minister's address. He cannot compound that by taking points of order on non-existent grounds. I ask him to control himself for the balance of the Minister's speech.

Dr PATTERSON—At least the Deputy Leader of the Country Party was gracious enough to admit that markets have something to do with economic conditions in rural industries.

By way of interjection, he referred to the wheat industry, claiming that it was in trouble. Where is the wheat industry in trouble? This year the wheat industry had the biggest quotas since quotas were introduced. Almost an unlimited go applies in respect of the production of wheat now and every grower in Australia knows that. The Deputy Leader of the Country Party had the graciousness to refer to the sugar industry. Throughout Australia the sugar industry is experiencing its greatest era of prosperity. This is because of the markets available to it. The honourable member mentioned also the wool industry. When he interjected on that point, I said that this Government has done more for the wool industry in 2 years than the Liberal-Country Party Government did in 23 years of office.

Mr Sinclair—What rot!

Dr PATTERSON—In fact, \$350m has been injected into the wool industry.

Mr Sinclair—Nonsense.

Dr PATTERSON—I can show the honourable member letters by the hundreds that have been received from organisations and growers thanking this Government for what it has done with respect to stability and security in the wool industry.

Mr Sinclair—Nonsense.

Dr PATTERSON—Who will forget the protest meetings that were held when the Liberal-Country Party Government was in power, by people in the wool industry condemning the Deputy Leader of the Country Party and the Leader of the Country Party (Mr Anthony)—

Mr Sinclair—Where? Where were they held?

Dr PATTERSON—In Melbourne and throughout the country. There were protest meetings by farmers throughout the country.

Mr Sinclair—Nonsense.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berinson)—Order! I draw the attention of the Deputy Leader of the Country Party to the fact that his contributions to this debate by way of interjection now outnumber those of the honourable member for Darling Downs. I ask the Deputy Leader of the Country Party please to restrain himself also. I call the Minister.

Dr PATTERSON—Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was saying that in the course of the reign of the Liberal-Country Party Government Australia was full of protest meetings against that Administration. That was, understandably, at a time when wool prices were low. The same

position applies with respect to the beef industry now; there are protest meetings. Let us at least be gracious enough to recognise now that market conditions play a major part in all export dominated industries such as the sugar industry, the beef industry, the wool industry and certain grains industries.

The main purport of the matter of public importance raised by the Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party was an attempt to refer to the Labor Party's policies in regard to rural industries. Let me refer to the opening address made by the Hon. J. D. Anthony at a conference in 1970 on national rural policy. He said:

This is a symposium on 'national rural policy'. From what some people tell me, they would see this as a mythical topic, because they say we haven't got a national rural policy. I suppose I could state some kind of generalised policy, but it wouldn't mean much unless we looked at it in the context of particular rural industries.

That is what the Deputy Leader of the Country Party has failed to do. Then the Leader of the Country Party went on to say:

But what is the position we find ourselves in today?

That is when he and the Deputy Leader of the Country Party were Ministers. At that time he said:

But what is the position we find ourselves in today? Despite the application of the policies I've described, the rural industries, with one or two exceptions, are in real difficulty.

They were in real difficulty under the previous Government. Honourable members opposite now have the colossal hide to tell this Government that its rural policies are causing the difficulties in the wheat, wool, beef, fruit and sugar industries. Has one ever heard such arrogant nonsense? The Leader of the Country Party went on to say:

Now, it's easy to look for scapegoats, and some people have little trouble in finding them.

If the cap fits, honourable members opposite should wear it, because this is exactly what the Deputy Leader of the Country Party is trying to do.

He referred to the beef industry. I believe that one of the biggest problems we face will be what happened in the wool industry. There is an analogy here. Members of the Country Party are now going around the countryside stirring up trouble amongst the beef producers of Australia, holding protest meetings and condemning this Government but never putting forward anything constructive. We saw this happen with the wool industry. Until the wool industry leaders virtually tossed the politicians aside, sat down and put forward a coherent, unified policy, nothing

was done to help the wool industry under the previous Government. The Country Party is attempting the same thing with the beef industry. Its members are going around the countryside stirring up trouble, holding protest meetings everywhere and condemning this Government. It is the rank and file cattle producers throughout Australia who are suffering because of the hypocrisy of the Country Party. It does not care at all about the beef producers. If it did it would help the beef producers put forward a coherent price stabilisation plan and incomes stabilisation plan. The Country Party should do something constructive. I said yesterday in this House that for a long time the biggest beef exporting State in Australia has been Queensland. What has the Queensland Government put to the Australian Government in order to assist the beef industry in Queensland? Nothing.

Mr Sinclair—What have you done?

Dr PATTERSON—The honourable member does not know what the Government has done. Only last week I announced—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berinson)—Order! I have already asked the Deputy Leader of the Country Party to refrain from interjecting. I ask him again.

Dr PATTERSON—The Deputy Leader of the Country Party just asked me what I had done. Only last week I announced that the Government had officially concluded a \$24m beef roads scheme for Queensland. Queensland is receiving more money each year for beef roads than it ever received under the previous Government. The honourable member asked the question and I give him the answer. Let me continue. I agree with the Leader of the Country Party that if one is going to analyse rural policies one has to analyse them in the light of the economic conditions and one must analyse the individual industries. Let us take the fruit industry. Would anyone say that the fruit industry is in serious trouble in Tasmania or in any other State? Under the previous Government it was in serious trouble. If one looks at the assistance given to the fruit industry in Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria one will find that this Government has given more structural and financial assistance than the previous Government ever gave. There is the dried vine fruits stabilisation scheme.

Mr Sinclair—Who began it?

Dr PATTERSON—A previous Government did—we admit it—but we have carried it on. Is that industry in trouble? Of course it is not. Is there any unemployment in that industry? Is the

industry complaining to the Opposition that it is in trouble?

Mr Sinclair—Yes. Costs are running up against it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berinson)—Order! The Deputy Leader of the Country Party will cease interjecting.

Mr Sinclair—I was asked a question.

Dr PATTERSON—I tabled a report this morning relating to the canning fruit industry. The report shows that canneries have been able to pay returns to the growers faster than they have been able to do for many years. We did not hear one word about the wheat industry. For example, we did not hear about the quota that the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt) has initially provided to the wheat industry at its request. Is that industry in trouble? Is there unemployment in the wheat industry? Let us consider the wool industry. This Government has underpinned the wool industry by providing \$350m. The wool industry is experiencing stability and security. What did it experience under the previous Government? As I said before, protest meetings were held throughout Australia and for years the Liberal-Country Party Government did nothing. I repeat that this Government and the present Minister for Agriculture have done more for the wool industry than the Liberal-Country Party Government did in the whole of its 23 years in office.

Mr Nixon—You are a joke, a big joke.

Dr PATTERSON—If I had a head like yours I would be one.

Mr Giles—Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order. If I might help the Minister, the name of the body which he mumbled was the Fruit Industry Sugar Concession Committee—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member may not help the Minister in that way. He should be seated. There is no point of order involved. It is an abuse of the Standing Orders to raise a matter in that way.

Dr PATTERSON—It is significant that the Deputy Leader of the Country Party referred to the sugar industry only in passing.

Mr Sinclair—Tell us about the brandy industry.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! I have already warned the Deputy Leader of the Country Party. I assure him that this is the last time I will request his assistance. Any further interjections will lead to him being named.

Dr PATTERSON—The Deputy Leader of the Country Party mentioned the sugar industry only in passing. Is there any unemployment in the sugar industry? Are there any problems of productivity in the sugar industry? Has he any knowledge of the record productivity achieved by the sugar mills last year? Does he know that at the present time the industry is geared for a major expansion throughout New South Wales and the coastal areas of Queensland? Does he know that every sugar town in Australia is geared to the greatest level of economic prosperity in real terms that it has ever had before? Of course he knows it, but he conveniently forgets it. I could go on and on. Let it be said categorically which industries are in trouble.

Mr Hunt—Sheep.

Dr PATTERSON—I accept that the sheep and beef industries are in trouble. I accept that there are problems with wool marketing.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—You are responsible for beef and wool.

Dr PATTERSON—Has one ever heard such an idiotic interjection—that the Government is responsible for the international marketing conditions in the wool industry? That shows the calibre of the person who is destined, in his own mind apparently, to become the next Leader of the Opposition. He is not even coherent in his interjections. Let me conclude by saying that there was more unemployment in the rural industries under the Liberal-Country Party Government than there is under this Government. If that is not so, the Deputy Leader of the Country Party should name the specific rural industries. Is it the wool industry? He cannot name them. He is saying 'the rural areas', but the rural areas are involved with processing and manufacture.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berinson)—Order! The Minister's time has expired.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER (Wannon) (11.39)—The Minister for Northern Development (Dr Patterson) who has just spoken has done the best he could to avoid the main substance of the debate and to avoid being turfed out of his own electorate whenever the next election is held, because he knows very well that if he speaks the truth about rural industries his electorate will not stand a bar of him for a minute. He avoided the beef industry and the wool industry. He said that there was no problem in the fruit industry in Tasmania. He again ignored the fact that half the acreage has been grubbed out under the policies of this Government over

the last 2 years. What the Government has done to the fruit industry has been to reduce it by half and say, therefore, that it is a prosperous industry. The brandy industry is not taking on grapes because of the taxes and stock revaluation policies of the present Government. Specifically it is the beef industry and the wool industry that are in major trouble. They are the greatest decentralised industries that Australia has had or ever will have.

The Minister for Northern Development goes to Europe to talk about sugar, which admittedly is not in trouble this year, at the very time when the beef industry is crying out for help. He talks about income stabilisation but does nothing but argue with the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt) about who would run it. His Government has been, over many areas, the greatest demolisher of confidence in private industry that we could possibly have seen. We have the circumstances in which markets in Japan and the United States of America for beef have been very substantially reduced and jeopardised by the direct actions of this Government. There was a time when the United States Administration would have had some interest in arguing against their cattlemen's association in keeping their markets open for us. But after the Deputy Prime Minister (Dr J. F. Cairns), the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron), the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) and other Ministers hurl abuse across the Pacific at the United States, what interest has the United States Administration in keeping the access to that market for beef that we once had?

The Minister, as a part of a government that has been responsible for that, the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor) to whom he is now talking, and the Prime Minister on their first great and glorious visit to Japan when the famous Treaty of NARA was to be announced did more than any other Ministers have ever done to destroy access to the Japanese market for beef. The way the Minister for Minerals and Energy behaved in relation to resources diplomacy certainly caused Japan to diversify her sources of raw materials, to move out into other markets and to have much less interest in keeping Japan open to Australian beef than would otherwise have been the case. So the problems of the beef industry I attribute quite directly to the actions of the Prime Minister, the Minister for Overseas Trade and the Minister for Minerals and Energy, who are so warmly supported by the Minister for Northern Development, who spoke for the Government in this debate.

The Minister seems to be unaware of the fact that he has a duty to assist industries in trouble and not to ignore them as he has sought to do. He is unaware of the impact on wide sections of Australia of the 100 per cent increase in the price of superphosphate, most of which is attributed either to the inflationary policies of this Government or to the reduction of the subsidy by the Government. Total rural costs, according to the figures of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, are rising at an annual rate of more than 54 per cent a year, directly attributable to the policies and the wages policies of this particular Government. There was an accelerated buying before Christmas. But total sales this financial year are likely to be about half those of last financial year. There will certainly be much greater unemployment as a result. There is already a reduction of stock carrying numbers as a result of the Government's policies—because of cost increases and taxation policies and because farmers cannot afford to pay for superphosphate as they once could. There will be a reduction in sheep numbers and a reduction of cattle numbers over many of the pasture improved areas of Australia. This is in a world which is short of food and basically short of fibres. There are some international obligations in these matters which the Minister for Northern Development, the Minister for Minerals and Energy, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Overseas Trade utterly ignore.

The Minister for Northern Development said something about wool marketing. If he had wanted to do something about wool marketing the Government, with one stroke of the pen or one word from the Minister or the Prime Minister, could put a great deal of confidence back into the wool industry and could lift sheep prices, which have fallen 70 to 80 per cent in the last month, generally by \$2 a head. All the Government would have to do would be to do what we have done and say that the 250c a kilo for 21 micron wool base price will continue beyond 30 June 1975. The Minister knows—does he delight in it—that in the present circumstances people are staying out of the market believing they can buy wool, as a result of the statements of this Government, after June more cheaply than they now can. This puts a greater burden on the Australian Wool Corporation than would otherwise be the case, and robs the present farmers, who are forced to sell because of seasonal circumstances, of returns that should properly be theirs.

The Minister for Northern Development says the Government has provided \$350m. The growers have borrowed this at a 10, 11 or 12 per

cent rate of interest against the security of the clip and the levies on the clip. It is the growers' money; it is not Government money. It is growers' money paid for by growers with no subsidy element in it at all. The Government claims credit for that. What is happening at the present time is that the Corporation is buying substantial amounts of wool, certainly, but the volume of wool held by the Corporation and the total volume of stocks held around the world at the present time is about the average of stocks held over the last 10 years. So there is nothing to be concerned about there. I would sooner have wool held by the Corporation on the part of growers than by speculators and merchants in other parts of the world. Why the government cannot re-establish confidence in this industry by saying that the marketing plan will continue I just cannot understand.

In the wheat industry future markets have been jeopardised by bowing to the maritime unions and to those who would prefer the communist philosophy to any other by saying that we cannot sell to Chile, our fifth or sixth best market.

Mr Hunt—Because of the communists.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Yes, because of the communist philosophy that says we cannot trade with that particular country. There is no other reason. That word is not meant to be used in this Parliament but it happens to be a fact of life. It is time that the word came back into the political vocabulary once more. There are many actions that the Government could take to assist the beef industry with special proposals to help the liquidity problems throughout this year but not at a usurious rate of interest of 11 per cent; by establishing a rural bank; proper income stabilisation; by seeing that canning capacity is operated; and by seeing that there is special assistance for eastern European sales. But the Government has refused to act on any of these things in a realistic and sensible manner. Indeed, there is a good deal to suggest that markets for the beef industry were deliberately held up because of a refusal to allow a Russian veterinary surgeon to come into the country to examine shipments until after the Prime Minister had been to Russia. If that story is confirmed, as I believe it most certainly will be, it is a disgraceful use of the Government's immigration power and its visa power to give the Prime Minister an apparent trade victory as a result of that particular venture.

The Minister for Northern Development tried to say that there was not a great deal of unemployment in rural areas in Australia at the

present time. There are 23 000 people out of work as a result of structural change and policies initiated by the Government. Those are the figures of the Department of Labor and Immigration. At the present time in rural areas around Australia there are 115 000 unemployed—many more than the average level of unemployed throughout the whole of Australia when we were in office. I repeat that there are 115 000 out of a total of about 312 000 unemployed—more than one-third—in the rural areas of Australia and much of it as a result of Government policies. It was only the Minister for Labor and Immigration who, in January of this year, said that the clothing, textile and footwear industries had no place in Australia. That was contained in his own official statement handed out on 12 January. Many of those industries are in country areas. I repeat that the Minister for Labor and Immigration said they have no place in Australia.

There have been one or two Labor members in the House during the debate but the honourable member for Wilmot (Mr Duthie), the honourable member for Bass (Mr Barnard), the honourable member for Franklin (Mr Sherry), the honourable member for Braddon (Mr Davies), the honourable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr Collard), the honourable member for Grey (Mr Wallis), the honourable member for Darling (Mr FitzPatrick), and the honourable member for Leichhardt (Mr Fulton) have not been here. The honourable member for Dawson (Dr Patterson) was here, and the honourable member for Eden-Monaro (Mr Whan) is here, because he is going to speak.

Mr Hurford—The honourable member for Darling is here.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—I apologise to the honourable member for Darling (Mr FitzPatrick). That just emphasises that the others I mentioned are not here. They could not care less about their rural industries and they know quite well that they run around their own rural electorates saying how terrible the policies of the Government are and what they try to do in Caucus to have those policies changed. Has any one of those honourable members ever stood on his feet and done anything for rural industries in this Parliament or in any other public place? They speak with forked tongues—one voice for their own electorates trying to disown their own Government and another voice in this Parliament where, if they are not utterly silent, they are utterly impotent against a Government that cares nothing at all for anything that happens outside the great cities of Australia.

Mr WHAN (Eden-Monaro) (11.49)—The matter that we are discussing today is defined as:

The effect on productivity and employment caused by the Government's rural policies.

There can be no question what the answer is. This is the first Government that has provided a stable background for the development of rural industries and rural communities. It is the first Government that has commissioned an overall review of the needs and requirements of rural industry. It is the first Government that has paid attention to the social conditions that exist in rural towns. We have heard the Opposition condemn the Government's policy. We have heard a sweeping condemnation which took in things like the fixed reserve price for wool. The Opposition, by making such a sweeping condemnation, obviously objects to the fixed reserve price for wool; the dairy farm reconstruction program and the Government's action taken under the Regional Employment Development scheme to provide funds for rural towns so that an improved standard of living can be provided in those towns. The Opposition in its sweeping charge objects to Government policies.

Let the countryside recognise what will happen on that disastrous day a long way from now when the people opposite take power. Let the country people see what the Opposition objects to today. It objects to a fixed reserve price for wool. This is consistent with its previous objection when it was in Government. It refused over many years to introduce such protection mechanisms in the wool industry. It refused to introduce the one thing that stands between disaster and security for the wool industry today. The Government has provided such a scheme. But this is what the Opposition is objecting to today. The Opposition also objects to the isolated children's grant which is another very important policy initiated and developed by the Government. The Opposition has made sweeping objections. It has objected to this Government's rural policies. Let the rural communities know exactly what it is the Opposition is now objecting to.

What does the Opposition offer? We can see from its history what it offers. Just before the 1972 election the Australian Country Party proposed a rural bank. The Liberal Party disposed of it. Prior to that the Country Party proposed a reserve price for wool. The Liberal Party disposed of it. During the 1972 election campaign the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Snedden) proposed a price freeze on food. The Country Party disposed of that. Before the 1974 election campaign the Leader of the Liberal Party stood for low petrol prices; the Country

Party stood for high petrol prices. All the Opposition can offer are these sorts of contradictions. We know that the Leader of the Australian Country Party (Mr Anthony) is equivocating, that he is moving in all directions and that he says: 'It was an example; it was not really meant'. But the spirit of the whole position is that the price of crude oil at the well head will be increased if the Country Party has its way. Because there is poor leadership now at the head of the Liberal Party we find that the Liberal Party is not sure whether it supports the Country Party on this proposition.

This is what the Opposition is offering to the electorate. We find that the leadership of the Liberal Party is now in extreme stress and is being directly challenged from within that Party. This has resulted in a dismal performance in the House and equivocation on every major issue which would give confidence to the rural sector and other industries. We find too that this uncertainty arising from lack of leadership pervades those people who profess to support the Opposition—the business leaders. Mr Valder, the Chairman of the Sydney Stock Exchange, preaches on and condemns socialism. I wrote to that man and asked him what he meant by socialism. He could not define that term. The people who are supposed to be providing confidence to rural industries as a basis for productivity and increased employment do not even know what they are talking about when they go out to the people with their fear raising tactics.

The tactic of the Country Party is to create the myth and the lie and then to raise fear in the minds of the rural communities. The Country Party is doing this now in regard to the detail of the contract price for meat to be exported to Russia. The honourable member for Wannon (Mr Fraser), who was the previous speaker in this debate, condemned the fact that criticism was levelled at the United States of America on the grounds that we supported the Communist Party. But in the same speech he complained that we would not allow the Russians to come in and inspect meat. What does the Opposition expect to find in the electorate? It will find the confusion that it has created. It will kick the Communist can when it suits it to do so. But it will then complain when we cannot sell meat to the Communist countries. If ever there was a time when we needed to adopt a rational and sensible attitude towards foreign affairs it is right now. The rural industries need confidence to create the basis for increased productivity and employment.

I now turn to the policies that this Government has engendered into the industry. When this

Government came to office the dairy industry was severely hampered by an inefficient organisation within the industry and was geared to a market that was historically out of date. This Government took the initiative to rationalise the industry and to provide assistance to individual producers and factories so that they could direct their efforts into more productive and rewarding areas. It was this Government that provided the insurance to the wool industry which was the only thing really deficient in the provision of a stable base for its development. It was this Government that provided some assurance against fluctuating prices in the wheat industry. It was this Government that consolidated the position of the sugar industry in world markets. These are the steps that this Government has taken to increase productivity and employment opportunities in rural areas. We stand proudly on our record.

We heard again today the honourable member for Wannon floating a rumour. The honourable member said that as a result of statements this Government has made people think they can buy cheap wool after June. I challenge the honourable member for Wannon to produce those statements. I challenge the honourable member for Wannon to demonstrate his credibility to this House and produce those statements. We find again that the attitude of creating fear in the minds of the electorate has ricocheted on the Country Party. I wonder how the beef industry feels about the evidence that was given by the Country Party to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Prices on 22 June 1973. I wonder how the industry feels about the quotation from page 282 of the proceedings of that Committee where the Country Party said:

The Country Party believes that Government policy inasmuch as it relates to the beef industry should be directed to

(a) encouragement of production

I wonder how the beef producers of Australia feel about that advice given to the Government by the Country Party just 18 months ago?

Another point on which the Opposition needs clearly to define its position is what exactly it is going to do about the superphosphate bounty. Would the Opposition reduce the price of superphosphate to the producer to the price that existed prior to the bounty being lifted? If so, the Opposition needs to realise that this action would cost the government in office \$200m in subsidy. The Opposition needs to face up to the implications of its vague assertion that it would restore the superphosphate bounty. Is it really saying that it would restore the bounty to a level that would reduce the price of superphosphate to

where it was before the bounty was lifted? If this is the case the Opposition needs to realise that it would be committing itself to an expenditure of \$200m. How does that square off with its philosophical position to cut government expenditure? Let us see the Opposition's balance sheet. Let us just understand exactly what it is that the Opposition is on about in its vague statement in regard to the superphosphate bounty. Does the statement mean, as most farmers believe, that the Opposition would reduce the price of superphosphate to the level it was before the bounty was lifted? If this is so, let the Opposition be honest and declare its hand. Let the Opposition show its balance sheet and how it would incorporate this extra expenditure of \$200m in its program of reducing overall government expenditure.

In conclusion, the report on poverty in Australia shows that the Government inherited a position where 14.4 per cent of the rural community were classified as very poor and 10.8 per cent were classified as rather poor. Therefore, when we took office some sections of the rural sector, which is the largest component of any sector in our society, were poor and destitute. That was our inheritance from the previous Government. We have concentrated our efforts on social areas such as those involving isolated children, education and improved community facilities. These are policies which the Opposition has condemned in its sweeping statement. The Opposition stands against the Government and its policies. It has declared its hand today for all the people in the rural communities to see.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berinson)—Order! The discussion has concluded.

NATIONAL HEALTH BILL 1975

Assent reported.

· LOAN (WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT) BILL 1975

Bill presented by **Mr Stewart**, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr STEWART (Lang—Minister for Tourism and Recreation and Minister assisting the Treasurer) (12.0)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I apologise for the absence of the Treasurer (Dr J. F. Cairns) who is engaged on urgent and important discussions. This Bill provides for the borrowing of \$4m and its application for the continued operation of the war service land settlement scheme. The sum sought is the amount

estimated to be required for the scheme in 1975-76. Of the total, it is estimated that \$2m will be required for the operation of the scheme in South Australia, \$1.2m in Western Australia and \$800,000 in Tasmania. In respect of other States, Queensland withdrew from the scheme in the early 1950s and the Australian Government's obligations to New South Wales and Victoria are limited, by agreement, to the financing of certain operational losses.

The bulk of expenditure for which funds are now sought is for the provision of short term loans to soldier settlers for working capital, stock and replacement plant and equipment as part of the normal operation of the settlers' properties. A small amount is for the development of drainage works serving settler blocks in the Loxton settlement area in South Australia. I commend the Bill to the honourable members.

Debate (on motion by **Mr McLeay**) adjourned.

NATIONAL HEALTH BILL (No. 2) 1975

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

Second Reading

Mr HAYDEN (Oxley—Minister for Social Security) (12.2)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill before the House provides for the removal or reduction of the waiting periods that must be served by 2 classes of new contributors to health benefits funds before they become eligible for fund benefits. The classes of contributors are pregnant women and uninsured people who become recipients of social security unemployment, sickness or special benefits. At the present time a woman who becomes a contributor to a medical or hospital benefits fund when pregnant is not entitled to benefits in respect of fees incurred in connection with the pregnancy. This results from exclusion rules applied by the private health benefits organisations. For the individuals involved, being deprived of the benefits has resulted in anxiety and financial hardship. Therefore I find it necessary for the Government to provide for the payment of the benefits in the Bill before the House.

The Bill enables a health benefits organisation operating a special account to transfer to that account a woman who becomes a contributor to the fund when pregnant. The contributor will then be eligible for benefits, both Australian Government and fund, after serving the normal waiting period for new contributors of 2 months.

The use of the special account in these circumstances will mean that the Australian Government will be required to meet almost the entire cost of the benefits paid. Although the increase in cost to the Australian Government will be minimal in view of the small number of persons involved, the payment of benefits will lift a great burden from the individuals concerned.

I shall turn now to the group of uninsured people who become recipients of social security unemployment, sickness or special benefits. The National Health Act at present provides that these people must generally serve a waiting period of 2 weeks from the time they become unemployed or incapacitated before they are eligible for medical and hospital benefits under the subsidised health benefits plan. The requirement to serve this waiting period means that in many cases people are deprived of benefits at times when they are incurring heavy medical and hospital fees and are least able to meet such expenses. The Bill before the House provides for the abolition of this iniquitous waiting period which was introduced by the previous Government. The Government sees the provisions in the Bill as eliminating two of the areas where the failure to pay benefits under the present scheme is most inequitable and unjustifiable. I find it strange that the previous Government was prepared to tolerate this sort of injustice for so long. However these provisions are only interim measures pending the full introduction of Medibank. The present scheme is so inadequate, inequitable and costly that a commitment to its further modification would represent a commitment to futility and extravagance. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate (on motion by Mr McLeay) adjourned.

**AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL BILL
1975**

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

Second Reading

Mr LIONEL BOWEN (Kingsford-Smith—Special Minister of State) (12.6)—I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill enables the commemoration at the Australian War Memorial of Australians other than members of the Services whose deaths are attributable to any war or war-like operations in which Australians have been on active service. It brings within the scope of the Australian War Memorial Act those Australians who served in the forces of other Commonwealth countries or

with allied forces, those who were members of the Australian Merchant Navy or who were civilians who served with Australian forces, e.g. Australian Red Cross, Australian Comforts Fund, Young Men's Christian Association, war correspondents, photographers. The present Act restricts commemoration to members of the Services. There have been representations, particularly in respect of merchant seamen, that all Australians whose lives were lost in the course of their war-time duties should be honoured by the Memorial. This Act also allows the War Memorial Board to invest available moneys to greater advantage than at present.

The amendment will enable investment on fixed deposits with an approved bank, in securities of the Australian Government or any such other manner as the Treasurer approves. The Investment Fund has been built up over many years from the sale of war histories and other publications and it has enabled the Board to acquire exhibits without seeking Government funds. Clauses 5 and 7 make ancillary amendments. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

Debate (on motion by Mr McLeay) adjourned.

**MINERALS (SUBMERGED LANDS) BILL
1974 [No. 2]**

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 February on motion by Mr Connor:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr DALY (Grayndler—Leader of the House)—Mr Deputy Speaker, may I have the indulgence of the House to raise a point of procedure on this legislation. Before the debate is resumed on this Bill I would like to suggest that it may suit the convenience of the House to have a general debate covering this Bill and the Minerals (Submerged Lands) (Royalty) Bill 1974 (No. 2) as they are related measures. Separate questions will, of course, be put on each of the Bills at the conclusion of the debate. I suggest therefore, Mr Deputy Speaker, that you permit the subject matter of the 2 Bills to be discussed in this debate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berinson)—Is it the wish of the House to have a general debate covering these measures? There being no objection, I will allow that course to be followed.

Mr VINER (Stirling) (12.9)—These 2 Bills now being dealt with in a cognate debate were introduced into this House and into the Senate in July last year. They are being introduced again,

as the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor) pointed out in his second reading speech, after a lapse of 3 months since the Senate failed to pass them in July 1974. I mention that because I am rather intrigued why the Government should have waited in fact for 7 months before reintroducing these Bills. It is apparent that along with other Bills which it is now reintroducing and which had previously been rejected by the Senate or had failed to pass the Senate, the Government is reintroducing these 2 Bills. Whether it has in mind a double dissolution and whether this action on its part is a prelude to a double dissolution, of course I do not know. But if that is the intention of the Government it ought to be prepared to say so. If it is looking upon the reintroduction of this legislation as merely a formality, expecting that it will be opposed again by the Opposition in this House and rejected again by the Senate, let it make quite clear what its position is.

This legislation is of considerable importance to the mining industry in areas other than petroleum exploration and development, because these Bills deal with or are related only to minerals other than petroleum. Petroleum off-shore is covered by the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act. It is the intention of the Government to deal with minerals off-shore in quite a different manner from that adopted in the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act. At no time has there been any explanation by the Minister for Minerals and Energy of why it is the desire of the Government to treat minerals in a manner which is different from the manner in which it treats petroleum. There may be a key to it in the second reading speech of the Minister. In his second reading speech he said:

... the passage of this Bill will again emphasise the importance we attach to the exercising by the national Parliament of its sovereign powers over the off-shore area in relation to off-shore mining activities.

But it is pertinent to observe, in the light of that remark, that the Seas and Submerged Lands Act, by which the Government seeks to assert and establish its sovereignty over the off-shore areas of this nation, is presently the subject of litigation before the High Court of Australia. Of course, the situation is that, if the High Court holds that this Parliament did not have the power to pass that legislation, then this Parliament has no authority in terms of sovereign rights, to quote the Minister's phrase, over the off-shore area in relation to mining activities. So it is quite a presumption on the part of the Government, when the Seas and Submerged Lands Act is to be dealt with by the High Court within the next 2 months,

I understand, to introduce this legislation. It really can only expect that the Opposition will oppose it, if for no other reason than that it would be a presumption on the part of the Parliament to pass this legislation when such action might be negated by the decision of the High Court. I would fully expect that the Senate would take the same attitude—it has every right to take that attitude—and say to the Government: 'If you have waited 7 months since these Bills were last before the Parliament and rejected, why can you not wait another two or three months until the decision of the High Court is brought down?'

The other question which needs to be asked and has never really been answered by the Minister is why the pattern of joint administration by the States and the Commonwealth over petroleum exploration and development in off-shore areas, as provided for by the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act, has not been followed in respect of other mining activities. In other federations where this same question of the authority of the central government or the provincial or State governments over off-shore areas has been an issue, the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act has been held up as a hallmark of cooperation within a federation instead of a persistent confrontation between the 2 forms of government, which can lead only to divisiveness, a slackening of exploration and outrage by the provincial or State governments at the attempted takeover by the central government particularly because of the financial ramifications of such a takeover.

Indeed, that has been the experience both in the United States of America and Canada. Litigation is still going on in both of those countries in respect of the rights of the central government as against the provincial or State governments over off-shore areas that have not yet been explored. The eastern seaboard of the United States of America has been talked about for many years—particularly recently in the light of the oil crisis—as being highly prospective for oil and gas exploration. But the original States of the United States of America are still asserting a right to control or to administer that exploration on the eastern seaboard. In much the same way, some of the eastern provinces of Canada, because of the historic lateness of their entry into the Federation of Canada, have asserted their right to have exclusive control over the off-shore areas. That litigation is still going on in those 2 great federations, whereas in Australia some six or seven years ago we found a solution to that confrontation between governments in the one

federation. We found the solution in the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act.

Reference could be made, if necessary, to articles written by prominent commentators—both legal and government commentators—on the virtues of that legislation as an instrument of co-operation intended to avoid, as it did for so many years, the devastation of litigation. When the Labor Government came into power in 1972 it took deliberate action to destroy that spirit of co-operation epitomised by that Act. In explanation of the drastic drop-off in exploration off-shore, the Minister says these days that nothing can be done to accelerate exploration until the High Court brings down its decision on the Seas and Submerged Lands Act. Nothing could be further from the truth, because the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act is still in existence and as fully operative as it was before the Seas and Submerged Lands Act was passed by this House. There is nothing to stop the Minister from giving full effect to that legislation and co-operating with the States in accelerating exploration off-shore. Anyone who knows the oil industry in Australia knows that there is the very distinct possibility that there will be not one rig operating off-shore from Australia by March of this year.

I mention these things because the Minister certainly does not have a record of administration in off-shore areas of which he can be proud. If the inadequacies of his administration are to be given legislative effect by the passage of these 2 Bills, then I do not think that Australia has before it a very great future in relation to the exploration and development of minerals in off-shore areas. There are other very good practical reasons why in the exploration and development of minerals off-shore, there should be co-operative administration by the States and the Commonwealth. One needs only put, say, 2 examples. One of these examples was mentioned in the Senate in the debate on the Minerals (Submerged Lands) Bill on 24 July 1974 by Senator Webster. Where there is a coal seam over which a company has been granted a licence by the State—because States have the exclusive authority to grant licences for exploration of minerals on shore—and that coal seam or the continuity of geological structure extends off-shore, the company must apply for a licence, if this Government has its way, from the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government could conceivably under its mineral code impose quite different conditions of exploration and development from those imposed under the terms of the licence or lease given by the State government.

I take as another example oil exploration. Where the permit to explore is for an area which covers both on-shore and off-shore structures—again with a continuity of a geological structure—under this Government's proposal where on-shore licences to explore are the exclusive province of the State government, when it comes to drilling and producing off-shore, the company must go to the Commonwealth Government, under its mineral code, and it could face a totally different set of conditions for exploration and development from those which had been granted to it by the State government. So whatever might be the design or desire of the present Government to exercise what it sees to be the sovereign rights of this Parliament over off-shore areas, there are very good practical reasons why it should approach the exercise of those sovereign rights, if it is shown by the High Court to have them, in a co-operative way rather than in a destructive way.

Right from the inception of his ministry the Minister for Minerals and Energy could have introduced legislation to deal with minerals off-shore in a similar pattern as that which already exists under the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act. Indeed, no doubt he could have immediately sought to reach with the States agreement similar to that which underpins the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act and extended the terms of that legislation and the mining code established by it to minerals other than petroleum. That, one would have expected, would have been a simple exercise in good government because there is an established pattern of co-operation with which the States, up to December 1972, were perfectly happy and with which the Commonwealth government of the time was perfectly happy. Under that pattern of co-operative administration oil exploration in Australia had given to the nation a self-sufficiency in oil of some 70 per cent, whereas since the administration of the Minister for Minerals and Energy although that figure of 70 per cent has for the last 3 years continued to be used, anyone who knows the industry knows that the figure is fast reducing according to the rate of rundown of the reserves of the producing fields because there has been no discovery of oil to increase the known reserves of crude oil in Australia.

At the continued rate of consumption the inevitable must happen—by about the early 1980s the existing reserves will run down to the point where there will not be 70 per cent self-sufficiency. It might come down to something

like 30 per cent with the drastic economic consequences for the nation as a whole of the increasing cost of importing crude oil whereas if there had been a spirit of co-operation in administration by this Government of oil exploration off-shore the oil drillers, given the incentive and the opportunity could have got on with the job, and we might well have been able to maintain a 70 per cent self-sufficiency in crude oil.

From what we know up to now there is a great future for the exploration for and development of minerals off-shore. It will be expensive to explore off-shore and even more expensive to develop the resources. Some off-shore exploration is going on in certain parts of the world. The Hughes organisation, for example, recently took a ship to explore off-shore Hawaii. There is consternation that there is not international agreement on the circumstances in which this off-shore mineral exploration can go on. It is an expensive and highly technical operation. Few countries have the necessary technology, let alone the necessary finance, to accomplish even a small degree of exploration. Not only do we need to have a mining code which establishes a sound basis of administration of these off-shore areas but also we ought to know what the Government plans to do about exploration, to what extent it will promote exploration and whom it will let in to explore. Will it allow, for example, overseas investors with the funds that they can command on an international basis and with the technology which I have mentioned is in such short supply in the world, to enter the off-shore areas of Australia. I do not know of any Australian firms which have the technology and the financial capacity to embark upon that kind of enterprise.

We see no discussion of those kinds of things in the Minister's second reading speech. He really says nothing at all. Regarding the earlier Bills, the Minister has made no attempt to outline the intentions or proposals of the Government with respect to exploration and possible development of off-shore mining areas. So in that vacuum, and having regard to the matters that I have mentioned, I suppose the Minister did not really expect members of the Opposition to change their views previously expressed in July 1974. And we have not changed our views. We continue to think that this legislation is ill-considered and badly timed, more particularly because presently before the High Court is a case involving the Seas and Submerged Lands Act. This case will determine whether this Parliament has any legislative power over the off-shore areas of Australia. Until the High Court makes its

determination I think the Minister ought to withdraw this Bill. If the High Court upholds the powers of the national Parliament in this field he can reintroduce the Bill in a way which is likely to receive acceptance by not only this Parliament but also by the parliaments of all the States of Australia.

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (12.29)—It is notable, with the exception of 3 Ministers who are in the House for formal reasons, that we have one member of the Opposition in the House. This is a repetition of what occurred this morning.

Mr Corbett—One member of the Government.

Mr KATTER—Of the Government, I beg your pardon. I am very thankful to my distinguished neighbour, the honourable member for Maranoa, for the correction. He is going to remain my neighbour despite some of the peculiar suggestions which have been made in regard to redistribution. Once again the House is almost empty of supporters of the Government although a debate is taking place concerning one of the two major industries in this nation which put, or used to be putting, a minimum of something like \$2 billion of \$3 billion into the coffers of the Treasury. Only one supporter of the Government is present in the House, apart from 3 Ministers who are present for formal reasons. I do not intend to speak for more than a few minutes on this Bill. With great clarity, based of course on the knowledge that he has of these matters, my colleague the honourable member for Stirling (Mr Viner) has indicated that we of the Opposition have not altered our attitude to this Bill. If anything our opposition to the Bill has stiffened—and it has stiffened for a number of reasons.

I speak with some authority when I talk about the insecurity of employment opportunities it offers. I shall not bother to talk about the feeling of insecurity of the great mining companies because, as I have said so often in this House, they are well in a position to attend to their own disabilities. Of course, if it is to be the policy of the Government to wipe them out or to put them at a disadvantage which freezes the whole of their activities a recession in the whole of the great mining industry will be inevitable. Our opposition to this Bill has stiffened not only because of the situation it has accelerated in relation to the prospects of the great mining companies but also because of its absolute dissolution of any hope that the smaller mining operations had for the future.

The Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor) throws a few thousand dollars here and a few million dollars there just to create a prototype, just to create a case to which the Government can refer occasionally in the process of acrobatics that it is now following of seizing on the Opposition's policies and presenting them as its own in a last desperate stand to try to sustain itself in office. It is no good the Minister getting up and quoting those one or two cases when the whole of the huge mining industry and the thousands of people engaged in it wonder what the future holds for them. There is one thing that those people—I mean all of them—fear. I think it is pretty well known that my list of acquaintances consists not of those to be found at the top level but those to be found down in the lower hatch, deep underground. That fear of these people—the ordinary working man, the miner—has been indicated very clearly in successive elections. I refer to the electorate of Kalgoorlie for instance. Fred Collard is a good bloke and everybody knows it, but he had to carry the burden of the distrust and the lack of hope that exists in the hearts of everyone associated with the mining industry in his electorate. This is intrinsically associated with what happens in regard to the Minerals (Submerged Lands) Bill because the whole concept is one of: 'Are we going to be nationalised? Are we going to be strangled? Are we going to be able to see at some time where the industry is going? Are we going to have some guidelines which are explicitly pronounced and exhibited or are we going to continue with the nebulous, ad hoc, day-to-day decision making for, in the greater part, political expediency?'

I have indicated that the Opposition is going to oppose this legislation even more vigorously than it has previously. Together with my colleague the honourable member for Stirling, who preceded me in this debate, I do not know whether someone is perhaps infiltrating the Caucus room with some sort of a vapour which has brought about a sort of insanity in the Labor Party, but it has become absolutely unreasonable on certain issues. I cite as an example the absolutely unreasonable attitude adopted by the Minister for Northern Development and Minister for the Northern Territory (Dr Patterson) towards the Darwin Reconstruction Bill. I was terribly disappointed that he could not withhold the passage of the Bill for a miserable three or four days until the people most affected by it could be given an opportunity to express their point of view. I do not want to talk about the Liberal and

Country Parties winning seventeen of the nineteen seats in the election for the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly and I do not want to talk about the other two being Independents. I also do not want to talk about the Australian Labor Party being completely wiped out.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Scholes)—Order! I suggest that the honourable member should talk about this Bill and not about another Bill.

Mr KATTER—I am pleased that you have brought me back on to the tracks, Mr Deputy Speaker. The point I was trying to make in citing what happened to the Darwin Reconstruction Bill is that time was not allowed to the people of the Northern Territory to express their views on its provisions. About 700 or 900 telegrams were sent on this subject by all sorts of people in Darwin. Here today we have an example of an attempt being made to force the passage of legislation concerning a matter which is before the High Court. There can be only one reason for this desperate attempt to get this Bill through the Parliament and the legislation into effect, that is, because the Minister wants to obtain further dictatorial powers. He wants to get a further stranglehold on the industry. He wants to inject into the mining industry at least the serum of nationalisation, the beginnings of it. But the people of Australia do not want that to happen. Given the chance of expressing their point of view they would show that that is the case. That is all I want to say. I could have gone through all of the clinical attention I have given to this Bill previously but I thought that there were only one or two things that had to be said. I hope I have said them. I also hope that what I have said has made an impact upon the Minister. I know that that is a pretty impossible task. No one ever gets to confer with him. He has built a barrier around himself, for obvious reasons. He has done so because he does not want to speak to intelligent people who know the mining industry. The magnificent body that we brought into existence—the Bureau of Mineral Resources—is not even a rubber stamp. It is not even brought into calculation. So we are completely opposed to the Bill. If anything our opposition has stiffened.

Mr WHITLAM (Werriwa—Prime Minister) (12.37)—There have been 2 speakers from the Opposition on this Bill, the Minerals (Submerged Lands) Bill. The first speaker—the honourable member for Stirling (Mr Viner)—pleaded that further consideration of the Bill should be postponed until after the High Court has given its decision on the seas and submerged lands legislation. The honourable member for

Kennedy (Mr Katter) said that he and members of the Opposition will oppose the Bill even more vigorously than in the past. The fact is that this Bill, for better or for worse, is substantially the same Bill as the previous Liberal-Country Party Government promised to introduce as far back as April 1970. Further, this Bill is before the Parliament, at the present Government's initiative, now for the fourth time, that is, for nearly 5 years members of the Liberal and Country Parties have known what has been in this Bill and now for the fourth time members of the Parliament as a whole know what has been in the Bill.

Let me give honourable gentlemen the history of the matter. On 16 April 1970, Sir Reginald Swartz, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, introduced the Territorial Sea and Continental Shelf Bill. In his second reading speech he stated:

The present Bill will be followed later in this session by an off-shore mining Bill by which the Commonwealth will exercise sovereign control, in respect of mining for all minerals other than petroleum, on the seabed and in the subsoil of the whole area to which the authority of the Commonwealth extends.

The off-shore mining Bill which Sir Reginald Swartz promised on 16 April 1970 is substantially the same Bill as this one. It will be remembered that the Territorial Sea and Continental Shelf Bill which Sir Reginald Swartz introduced on 16 April 1970 never came to a vote in that Parliament. There was a change of Prime Minister and the only thing upon which the various factions of the Liberal Party and its colleague, the Country Party, could agree was to stall a vote on the Territorial Sea and Continental Shelf Bill. On the very last day of that Parliament—when it was dissolved at the end of 1972—that Bill still remained on the notice paper in the name of the then Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs.

When my Government was elected, it was elected among other things on the undertaking to proceed with this legislation. In Governor-General Hasluck's speech opening the Parliament, the Government undertook to proceed both with the Territorial Sea and Continental Shelf Bill and the Off-Shore Mining Bill. They were introduced in the one Bill by my colleague, the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor), on 10 May 1973. The Bill was carried by this House and introduced into the Senate on 22 May 1973. The Senate adopted the procedure of deferring debate on it until 1 August 1973. When the Senate failed to resume debate after that date, the Minister for Minerals and Energy reintroduced the composite Bill on 11 September 1973. This House again passed it on 19 September 1973. The Bill was reintroduced into the Senate on 25 September 1973, and the Senate

passed it with the deletion of Part III, Part III being the present Bill.

On 11 July last year, the Minister for Minerals and Energy again introduced Part III in the form of the present Bill. Again it was passed by this House and rejected by the Senate. Now for the fourth time the Minister for Minerals and Energy has introduced this Bill. Twice in 1973 it came into the House as Part III of another Bill. Last July and now this month it has come in as a separate Bill. Part III and this Bill have been couched in the same terms. They are substantially the same as the Bill which Sir Reginald Swartz promised on 16 April 1970. There surely can be nothing objectionable in a Bill which is introduced by my Government and which is in substantially the same terms as a Bill promised by the Gorton Government in April 1970. True, the Liberal and Country Parties stalled the matter. It surely comes very ill from them that they should ask that the matter be further delayed until the High Court has ruled on the legislation which the Parliament has passed.

The whole idea of the original legislation, the Territorial Sea and Continental Shelf Bill 1970, was to make it possible to test this matter in the High Court. It was no fault of the Labor Party that that Bill was not passed. From the outset we proclaimed our support for the Bill. We took many procedural actions in 1970, 1971 and 1972 to secure a vote on the Bill, but the Bill was not brought on for a vote in the Parliament which ended in 1972. There can be no doubt that in that Parliament there was a majority in favour of the Bill. If it had been passed promptly, then the challenge in the High Court would not have been decided in 1975; it would have been decided in 1970 or 1971. The members of the parties which would not allow the matter to come to a vote in the 1969-72 Parliament are now asking that the matter be further delayed. My Government is not responsible for the delay in passing the Bill. We brought it in very promptly. There is a challenge in the High Court. There has been no delay by my Government in facilitating the hearing of that challenge.

Even at this stage the members of the Opposition are not clear in their attitude towards this Bill. One honourable member opposite says that he will oppose it even more vigorously than he did in the past. Did he oppose it in 1970, 1971 or 1972? He was a member of the Ministry at that time. Did he not support the legislation which his Government had introduced and which his Government allowed to remain on the notice paper? Was there anything so obnoxious about this Bill when his Government promised it? Why

is it that it becomes obnoxious only when another Government introduces it? It is substantially the same Bill in 1975 as when it was introduced in 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973 and 1974. Another honourable member says that the Bill should be delayed. For how much longer? It is now nearly 5 years since this Bill was promised. While this delay continues, mining companies must wait patiently for guidance on the conditions under which they may be permitted to operate in the off-shore zone. Investment and employment opportunities must languish. No company can be sure as to its rights. It is not the fault of my Government; it was not the fault of my Party when in Opposition that this matter was not determined earlier.

This Bill, if it were subject to challenge could have been challenged if it had been passed when first introduced in the Senate on 22 May 1973; that is, when this Bill was part of the composite Bill. It could have been challenged again, if the Senate had passed it, when it was reintroduced on 25 September 1973, again as part of the composite Bill. It could have been tested, if it had been passed by the Senate, in July last when it was introduced as a separate Bill. Now that it is introduced for a fourth time, we still have honourable members opposite making the plea: 'Wait until the earlier legislation is determined in the High Court'. If we wait until then and the High Court upholds the legislation, we then have to reintroduce this Bill a fifth time. If, however, the High Court finds that this legislation is invalid and unconstitutional, why not pass it and let the High Court pass judgment upon it at the same time as the other legislation? If we act promptly, this Bill can go through before the Bill at present under challenge comes up for argument and decision before the High Court. There is still time to put this Bill through and have the challenges heard and determined together. But no, honourable members opposite do not want to be expeditious in this matter; they want to stall even longer their own legislation which they promised 4 years and 10 months ago.

In the meantime, how will the mining companies—Australian and foreign—know where they stand? Perhaps some of them may resent the legislation; but I do not believe they should. They did not resent it when it was promised in April 1970. They want the position to be clarified in the courts. They have not objected to the legislation which was introduced in April 1970 and which is now being challenged before the High Court. When the High Court gives a decision on that legislation, the mining companies will know where they stand. They should know where they

stand on this legislation too. Let us put it through and get a decision at the same time. The delay is caused by parties which claim themselves as the champions of the mining companies and which denigrate us as the villains. The people who are behind the delay and the challenges are not the mining companies, not the people who will bring skill or investment or employment; they are the State governments—Labor, Liberal, Country Party.

Put simply and briefly, my Government's position is this: We wish to see established beyond question the control of resources in the off-shore zone. We have, through the Seas and Submerged Lands Act 1973, asserted our belief that the Australian Government has sovereignty in this zone. The State governments, all of them, have challenged that position before the High Court of Australia. Some of them tried to by-pass the High Court of Australia. In 1972, before my Government was elected, two of the State governments asked the British Government to recommend to the Queen of Britain that this question be referred to the British Privy Council. Their ploy was exposed and frustrated. So, the matter has to be challenged before the High Court.

There can be no question that in every country in the world the matter of off-shore resources is one of anxious debate and contention. We have a federal system, which makes it more difficult to solve these matters. But the United States of America, Canada and West Germany have long since made decisions on this matter. Here in Australia for nearly 5 years decisions have been proposed, the possibility of a decision has been before the Parliament and by various devices the decision has been postponed. Australia is fortunate, we believe, in the extent of its off-shore resources. There should be no delay. Nobody in the Parliament should lend himself to a delay in securing a decision on where the authority lies.

Surely, at last members of the Opposition—the members of the Opposition who promised this Bill in April 1970, the members of the Opposition who, when they went into Opposition, opposed it as part of a composite Bill in June and September 1973, in July 1974 and now, for various reasons, are seeking to oppose or delay it—will allow the courts to decide as soon as possible where the jurisdiction lies. Australia's most valuable resources may be involved in this legislation. We should not delay a decision on where the jurisdiction lies. As soon as this Bill is passed a challenge can be made and a decision can be made. If it is passed promptly that argument can take place and that decision can be given in the

same proceedings as now at last are pending before the High Court.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Motion (by Mr Connor) put:

That the Bill be now read a third time.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

Ayes	63
Noes	52
	—
Majority	11
	—

AYES

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

NOES

- Adermann, A. E.
- Anthony, J. D.
- Bonnett, R. N.
- Bourchier, J. W.
- Bungey, M. H.
- Cadman, A. G.
- Cairns, Kevin
- Calder, S. E.
- Connolly, D. M.
- Corbett, J.
- Drummond, P. H.
- Drury, E. N.
- Edwards, H. R.
- Erwin, G. D.
- Fisher, P. S.
- Forbes, A. J.
- Fraser, Malcolm
- Gariand, R. V.
- Giles, G. O'H.
- Graham, B. W.
- Hewson, H. A.
- Hodges, J. C.
- Holten, R. McN.
- Howard, J. W.
- Hunt, R. J. D.
- Hyde, J. M.
- Jarman, A. W.
- Kelly, C. R.
- Killen, D. J.
- King, R. S.
- Lucock, P. E.
- Lynch, P. R.
- MacKellar, M. J. R.
- McLeay, J. E.
- McMahon, W.
- McVeigh, D. T.
- Macphee, I. M.
- Millar, P. C.
- Nixon, P. J.
- O'Keefe, F. L.
- Peacock, A. S.
- Robinson, Eric
- Robinson, Ian
- Ruddock, P. M.
- Sinclair, I. McC.
- Staley, A. A.
- Street, A. A.
- Sullivan, J. W.
- Viner, R. I.
- Wentworth, W. C.

Tellers:
Cameron, Donald
England, J. A.

AYES

- Stewart, F. E.
- Thorburn, R. W.
- Uren, T.
- Wallis, L. G.
- Whan, R. B.
- Willis, R.
- Young, M. J.

NOES

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

PAIRS

- Fulton, W. J.
- Whitlam, E. G.

- Chipp, D. L.
- Snedden, B. M.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

**MINERALS (SUBMERGED LANDS)
(ROYALTY) BILL 1974 [No. 2]**

Second Reading

Consideration resumed from 11 February on motion by Mr Connor.

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Bill (on motion by Mr Connor) read a third time.

Sitting suspended from 1.1 to 2.15 p.m.

NATIONAL HEALTH BILL 1974 [No. 2]

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 February on motion by Mr Hayden:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Dr FORBES (Barker) (2.15)—I will not delay the House long over this Bill. It has been introduced into the House for a second time, and it has been debated before. But I must remind the House that it is a Bill designed to destroy the legislative arrangements which give the voluntary health scheme, as we know it, its existence. As the House and the Australian people know, the Opposition has consistently opposed what it believes to be an act of sheer vandalism, and has opposed it on both practical and philosophical grounds. The Opposition believes that it is supported in this action by a majority of the Australian people and it sees no reason to change its

attitude on this Bill which is designed to administer the final coup de grace to the voluntary health scheme. Therefore it will oppose the Bill.

I should perhaps remind the House of the contents of the Bill. It prohibits the payment of Commonwealth benefits after a date to be proclaimed. It makes it illegal for organisations to continue to provide health insurance from a date to be proclaimed. The penalty will be \$1,000 a day. The Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) has told us that the health funds will subsequently be re-registered, if they want to be, to provide benefits for intermediate and private hospital care, but we have not yet seen the legislation to do this. Given the consistent denigration and sheer hatred and vituperation which the Minister for Social Security has heaped on to the health funds, the Opposition could be forgiven for questioning whether that particular piece of legislation which will permit the private health funds to re-register will ever see the light of day.

Nevertheless, in this legislation we are being asked to give to the Government a blanket power to prohibit the private health insurance funds from carrying on business after a date which the Government is able to choose at will. It authorises the Health Insurance Commission to carry on health insurance to ensure that contributors to funds which cannot meet their obligations are covered. In other words, the Government by its actions, bit by bit over the 2 years it has been in office, has forced many of the funds into a situation where there is a great deal of probability that they will not be able to meet their commitments. It has introduced this measure as a sort of rescue operation. The Bill provides for the Government to take over the funds' liability for nursing home benefits and, finally, it repeals the National Health Act insofar as it related to the voluntary health insurance scheme.

The Minister for Social Security has been threatening everybody. He has been threatening the doctors, the hospitals and the private health insurance funds. This is his way of doing things. In his second reading speech on this Bill in his customary manner he threatened the Opposition that a failure to pass particularly some provisions of the Bill could cause loss and hardship to individuals and that the public would hold the Opposition responsible if that happened. The Opposition totally and absolutely rejects that proposition. The Government is introducing a health scheme which does not have the support of the Australian people. It is introducing it without first ensuring that it has the co-operation of

the key people and institutions which are essential in the operation of any health scheme. There is a good reason, apart from the fact that many of these people have no faith in the scheme, why there is this resistance from doctors, private hospitals and most of the States. Do not let us forget the States because so far four of the States have not been prepared to make agreements in relation to the hospitals scheme. It is this process of confrontation and alienation which the Minister so consistently adopts which has been the principal cause of bringing about this situation.

Would a person co-operate if he were a doctor and he were constantly being told by the Minister for Social Security that he was a parasite? The Minister is continually accusing the medical profession right across the board of performing operations just for the sake of making money. I could instance many other charges which he has levelled at the medical profession. Would a person co-operate? Would he have any faith in the Minister's calls to enter into the scheme? Would he have any faith in the Minister's undertaking, for instance, to retain fee-for-service payments? I would not. I think that the medical profession is right in not having that faith in the Minister from the way he has behaved. The same thing applies to the States, the private hospitals and the health funds. If a person were running a health fund—some of them are great funds which came into existence long before any government health scheme existed—and he has been subjected to the sort of denigration and imputations of bad faith and motives that have been made, would he have any faith in the Minister's assurances?

The point I am making is that the Government is introducing this health scheme—it is committed to introduce it from 1 July—without assuring itself of the co-operation, even at the most elementary level, of those whose support and co-operation is absolutely fundamental to making it work. The scheme is unlikely to have the administrative structure, such as computers in running order, in time to start by 1 July on an efficient basis. The Minister says that it will have it. That remains to be seen. All my experience and everything I have heard leads me to believe that it will not.

The Government has commenced an expensive and misleading publicity campaign which will have the effect of undermining private health insurance and, in particular, the willingness of people to keep up their contributions. It is quite obvious to me, having observed the first part of this publicity campaign, that apart from being misleading it will create enormous confusion in people's minds as to what they are now

required to do. By not following the traditional practice of increasing Commonwealth benefits to cover proper increases in medical fees but making the contributors carry the can for what is the Government's obligation, and with the Minister putting pressure on the reserves of the fund, the Government, as I said earlier, will increase the likelihood of the funds not being able to meet their obligations even before Medibank comes into operation on 1 July.

There will be absolute and complete chaos on 1 July, and subsequently, if the Government goes ahead with its intention to introduce its Medibank scheme on that date. It must surely be one of the most irresponsible acts in the history of government to undermine and destroy a scheme which has worked well for many years without ensuring that the elements essential to the working of the alternative scheme are properly thrashed out and are functioning smoothly, particularly the administrative arrangements and the co-operation of the key people and institutions on which its successful functioning depends. It does not matter whether these institutions are right or wrong in their attitudes. That is not what I am debating at this point though I would be perfectly prepared to do so. What I am saying is that whether these institutions are right or wrong the Government is grossly irresponsible in introducing a new scheme before resolving issues created by its attitude. In my view the public will blame the Government solely for the deliberate way in which it will create the chaos that will inevitably come in medical and health services. The Opposition opposes the Bill.

Dr KLUGMAN (Prospect) (2.28)—I realise the difficulty the Opposition has at the present time in speaking to this legislation. The 2 members designated by the Opposition to speak on health and social security, the honourable member for Murray (Mr Lloyd), and the honourable member for Hotham (Mr Chipp), have decided that the usual parliamentary break is not long enough and have decided to stay away for another two or three weeks. That is fair enough. The difficulty the Opposition has is that Mr Bill Arthur, who was for a short time the honourable member for Barton but was defeated in 1969 and since then has been acting as a lobbyist around this House, has to find someone on the Opposition side to whom he can give his speeches. It is difficult for Mr Arthur to do that. I think Mr Arthur has found that the honourable member for Chisholm (Mr Staley) will accept his speeches. The honourable member for Chisholm has disappeared again but he will probably give

the usual sanctimonious mixture of Staley and Arthur.

It is depressing when we see around this House lobbyists for the Australian Medical Association and for the so-called Voluntary Health Insurance Council, personified by the former honourable member for Barton, Mr Arthur, who lives off that sort of lobbying. It is depressing for the community and for the Parliament itself that one side of the Parliament has to rely on that sort of source for its information.

Let me now deal with the argument used by the honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes). He said that the majority of the population was opposed to Medibank. He bases that proposition on a Morgan poll published in the 'Bulletin' towards the end of last year. The question asked in that poll was a loaded Morgan question, that being the reason why the Morgan organisation lost its relationship with gallup polls. The question was along this line: 'Do you support the present system of voluntary health insurance with a free choice of doctors or a system of salaried doctors paid for out of taxation?' It was that sort of unbiassed question, but even then only about 53 per cent voted for the free choice proposition. I note that the honourable member for Chisholm has come back into the chamber. He has found the speech written by Mr Arthur and he will no doubt follow me.

Mr Hayden—Perhaps it was written by Jack Cade.

Dr KLUGMAN—Jack Cade works via Arthur. That is what Arthur lives on. As we know, this present piece of legislation is introduced to smooth the transition between the present system and the introduction of Medibank. We hear all kinds of dire predictions about Medibank itself, what a terrible thing Medibank will be. I think we will hear that from the honourable member for Chisholm. We heard the prognostications today from the honourable member for Barker about the anarchy and chaos that will result on 1 July 1975.

What is Medibank? Medibank is the Australian health insurance program which will start on 1 July 1975. It is the name of the Health Insurance Commission's medical and hospital benefits scheme. (Quorum formed) I again thank the honourable member for Barker for providing me with an audience. I was outlining what Medibank is. I pointed out that it was the name for the Health Insurance Commission's medical and hospital benefits scheme. The medical benefits scheme will be in operation in all Australian States from 1 July 1975. The hospital

benefits scheme will operate in all States and Territories which accept the Australian Government propositions on funding and other conditions.

Let us deal firstly with the medical benefits aspect of Medibank. It will not be necessary to insure privately for medical benefits after 30 June. The Commission will meet 85 per cent of the scheduled medical fee—in other words the common fee—but, as at present, the patient will pay no more than \$5 for any service charged at the scheduled rate. Medibank will pay for medical services whether performed inside or outside hospital and whether the patient chooses a standard ward, or public ward in some States, an intermediate or a private hospital ward.

There will be 3 methods of payments to doctors, all similar to present methods. Firstly, the patient may pay the doctor and will receive a refund on the receipt which is received from the doctor. Secondly, the patient may forward the unpaid account to Medibank and receive a cheque made out to the doctor. Thirdly, the doctor may direct the bill to Medibank, accepting an assignment from the patient of the Medibank benefit as full payment. This third method, the assignment of benefit, will replace the pensioner medical service, making pensioner medical service patients eligible for the full range of benefits for all private medical services including, for the first time, specialist services. There will be no change in the relationship between patient and doctor. The patient will be free to seek medical treatment from any doctor of his choice.

I now turn to hospital benefits under Medibank. Negotiations are still proceeding between the Australian and State Governments. In co-operating States the State and Australian governments will meet all the costs of public ward treatment on approximately a 50-50 basis. At present the approximate breakdown is the State governments paying something approaching 60 per cent and the patient plus the funds paying 40 per cent. In return the State governments will abolish the means test for these wards. A quite strict means test applies at the present time in New South Wales at least. Patients will still be able to choose intermediate or private ward or private hospital accommodation and will be able to insure themselves for the extra cost. In these cases Medibank will contribute \$18 per day towards the cost of that private accommodation compared with the present \$2 per day Commonwealth contribution and will thus make extra insurance fairly cheap. Patients willing to use standard ward accommodation will need no further insurance. That, of course, will apply to

everyone as the means test will no longer apply in public hospitals.

There will be no contributions to Medibank as it will be funded from general revenue. Originally the scheme was to have been funded by way of a special levy on taxation but as honourable members know the Senate rejected that on the advice of the Liberal and Country Parties. So there will be no direct contributions to Medibank. This compares with the current charges of over \$3 per week for the lowest family rate of the Medical Benefits Fund of Australia Ltd or the Hospitals Contribution Fund of Australia in New South Wales and about \$4 per week for private hospital cover. That is the position at present in New South Wales.

I find it difficult to believe that the New South Wales State Government will refuse to co-operate on the hospital component of Medibank because if the scheme is not allowed to operate people seeking hospital cover, whose taxes will pay for Medibank, will have to continue to contribute at higher rates to the private hospital schemes. I find it difficult to believe that even a fairly insensitive government such as the Lewis Government would continue to stand up to the sort of pressure which would normally be developed from the community at large.

It is important, though not essential, that the changes which are proposed in the current piece of legislation before us to enable the smooth transfer from the current system to Medibank are introduced. I think it is important that this scheme should be introduced for a number of reasons. Probably the most important single reason is that if the legislation before us today is not passed non-pensioner patients in nursing homes would not be eligible for a Government subsidy. I think it is a bit rough on the part of the Opposition to deny to non-pensioner patients in nursing homes the sort of contribution which the Government is intending to make in this legislation. I think as 1 July draws nearer we will see the Opposition capitulate on this legislation.

One of the depressing reactions to the Medibank proposition is the way in which some organised sections of the Australian medical profession have acted. A significant number of medical practitioners, as the honourable member for Barker pointed out a few minutes ago, say that they will not co-operate with Medibank. The operations of Medibank outside of its hospital function will not affect doctors terribly much because all they will have to do is what they do at the present time. They either render an account or they give a receipt. They say on the receipt or

the account what item they have performed. Therefore, as far as the doctor is concerned there is no change. As far as the patient is concerned the only change is that instead of having to contribute large amounts of money weekly to the funds this money will be paid out of general revenue and instead of claiming from the MBF or the HCF and so on the patient will claim on Medibank.

Mr Donald Cameron—Who contributes to general revenue?

Dr KLUGMAN—Everyone contributes to general revenue.

Mr Donald Cameron—So you are giving us nothing.

Dr KLUGMAN—I am not suggesting that anyone ever gives anything, unlike the honourable member for Griffith who offers himself frequently.

Mr Fisher—You said it was free.

Dr KLUGMAN—I have not said it was free. I did not mention the word 'free' in my description. I try to be—

Mr Hodges—But your Government does. Your Government claims it is a free scheme.

Dr KLUGMAN—No, it does not claim it is a free scheme. It makes the point that it is paid out of general revenue. If the honourable member has idiots on his side who think that to be paid out of general revenue means that something is free, those members must come from the Australian Country Party who think that when large amounts of money are donated as subsidies to wool growers and others out of general revenue no one has to pay for it. I think that the honourable member for Petrie was a pharmacist before he came into this House. As such he would have been dispensing free medicine, as he calls it—this would have been on his door—to pensioner patients. However, this medicine was not free. But the honourable member would have called it free medicine because he wanted to cash in on it. It was not free at all.

As the honourable member for Barton (Mr Reynolds)—I am, of course, referring to the honourable member who was a member of this place before 1966 and has been a member since 1969—pointed out, the Government was prepared to specify from where the money would come so that no one could call it free. We wanted a 1.35 per cent surcharge. But the Opposition opposed and voted against this charge and defeated it in the Senate. The Opposition insisted that this scheme be paid for out of general revenue. Senator Steele Hall, the independent

senator from South Australia, pointed out that this was one of the most stupid things that the Senate has ever done, and that chamber has done stupid things—

Mr Cohen—That covers a lot of territory.

Dr KLUGMAN—As the honourable member for Robertson points out, that covers a large amount of territory.

Let me emphasise, as far as the ordinary person is concerned, there will be very little change apart from the fact that he will not have to contribute between \$3 and \$4 a week to a fund. As far as most medical practitioners are concerned, there will also be very little change. I am surprised by the large amount of emotion that has been worked up by people such as Mr Arthur. The only persons who should be emotional about this scheme are the directors of some of the large funds. They are the only people who are going to miss out. They control funds which at the moment have some \$140m in reserves. These are the people who can make themselves good fellows and friends with the finance companies by investing their money in all kinds of projects. These are the people who have lovely trips abroad costing large amounts of money and make friends with Mr Arthur by paying him large sums of money for lobbying for them in this place. They are the only people who will miss out. Why should we be concerned? Why should honourable members opposite be concerned? I would have thought that honourable members opposite would have been just as interested as the Government in giving a reasonable system of health insurance to this country.

Mr STALEY (Chisholm) (2.45)—I was delighted to hear the honourable member for Prospect (Dr Klugman) say that the Government does not claim that the scheme known as Medibank is a free scheme because in one sense he is absolutely right. It is not a free scheme. We, the Australian people, will have to pay for Medibank. An independent actuary recently estimated that the cost of Medibank to the Australian people through general tax revenue would result in an increase of approximately 7 per cent in personal tax rates in a full year. That is not the total cost; that is the increased cost to the Government of this country.

Dr Klugman—That is not the increased cost to the people, is it?

Mr STALEY—It is the increased cost to the Government and the importance of that is that the Government is at the same time promising to lower taxes. The Government cannot have it both ways. It cannot lower taxes, on the one

hand, and promise on the other hand that it will introduce a new health insurance scheme called Medibank which will cost every taxpayer the equivalent of 7 per cent more in his personal tax. It has all been worked out by an independent actuary and the figures are available to the Government. If the figures were subject to challenge we would by now have heard a devastating attack from the Government on them but it has not challenged the figures which an independent actuary worked out for the Australian Medical Association which of course has a vested interest in this question. It has a vested interest in providing and continuing to provide good health care for the Australian community, and the Australian community is fortunate in having a medical profession which has been prepared to make itself unpopular by constantly drawing attention to the inherent dangers in Labor's ultimately socialist scheme. The honourable member for Prospect has commented that the Government does not claim that this is a free scheme. If one turns to the advertisements that the Government is lodging in newspapers throughout this country and placing on the television screen, one finds that it is claiming this is a free scheme. One of the advertisements—a major advertisement—which is appearing throughout the country states:

Everyone will use Medibank at some time in his or her life.

Medibank is the new Australian health insurance program which will be introduced on 1 July.

Medibank will provide free medical insurance cover for every man, woman and child in Australia. And free public hospital care in those States whose governments agree to allow such treatment to be made available.

So what the Government is doing and what the honourable member for Prospect, a leading member of the Government, is deploring is claiming that this is a free scheme. I am convinced that the honourable member for Prospect knows that it is dishonest to claim that the scheme is free when the people pay through one means or another for the scheme. I draw the attention of the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) to the advertisement which, in the words of the honourable member for Prospect, who I believe is the secretary of the Government's health committee, is plainly fraudulent.

Dr Klugman—No, you are wrong again.

Mr STALEY—What position do you hold? Did they sack you? Anyway, the honourable member, a significant contributor to the debate from the Government side, has in fact condemned the Government's own advertising which claims that it is introducing a free scheme for the people of Australia.

Dr Klugman—A non-contributory scheme.

Mr STALEY—No, the Government claims that it is a free scheme and you yourself have said that the Government does not claim that it is a free scheme. I have quoted the words exactly from the advertisement which says: 'Medibank will provide free medical insurance cover'. If it used the words 'non-contributory' I could take your point. I draw your attention to it and I hope you will take it up with the Minister in good faith because I am convinced that you made those comments with an understanding of the fact that it is dishonest to claim that a scheme is free when a scheme is not free. The scheme, in fact, will increase costs, as we have said, in a full year by an extra 7 per cent tax levy on every taxpayer in Australia.

What is Medibank all about? Medibank is the vehicle which puts the Government's national health insurance program in action. What I believe it provides is what might be described as the lowest common denominator in health insurance. It will provide basic public ward cover for all Australians and it will provide extensive medical cover equally for all Australians. It is due to be introduced on 1 July and everybody who knows anything about the Department of Health, the Department of Social Security and the problems facing the Government knows that it would be only with intense difficulty that the scheme could be up and running by 1 July. In fact responsible people reckon that there is no way in which it could responsibly operate before very much later in the year because the Government has found that its ideas about health insurance dreamed up by a couple of academic economists—I am not against academics—in an economic vacuum and placed as policy in the Labor Party books has now become the policy of the Government which has simply and frankly found that all major groups in the Australian community involved in health care will not have a bar of its approach.

I appeal to the Government even at this late stage, in the light of its difficulty in getting the scheme into operation, to take some time off to consider whether it can achieve some of its admirable goals in the field of health care by working with the health care community in Australia to provide Australians with a scheme which will work instead of battling on with a scheme which will not work. We all know and applaud the fact that in recent days the Government has seen the light in terms of the Australian mixed economy. It might only be a brief respite, but the Government has understood that the private sector in Australia needs assistance desperately at the moment and the Government has taken steps to

give it the sort of assistance which it needs. I ask the Government to consider the role of the private sector in the area of health, I suggest that with a moment's thought the Government will understand surely how crucial the role of the private sector is in the area of health care because it seems odd that it would understand the role of the private sector in the normal business community but would reject it in the area of health which is to all people a most intimate area of important human relationships when private relationships, private trust and confidence between doctor and patient, nurse and patient, nurse and doctor, doctor and doctor, administrator and doctor, administrator and nurse and so on, are at the heart of a proper system. So I implore the Government before it is too late, before we have the greatest shambles in health care delivery which this country has ever seen to take a moment off, to swallow its pride, to forget those academic words of the doctors of philosophy in economics who advised it about this scheme, and to go and talk to the people who are delivering health care in this country to ascertain whether it cannot work out a scheme which will work because it is plainly possible to work out such a scheme.

I give the Government credit for having understood that there is a need for extending health insurance coverage throughout the Australian community. There is an understanding among all parties in this House that it is a desirable objective to have all Australians covered for health insurance today. It is not good enough that we have a million Australians uncovered in 1975. It is perfectly possible for a Labor Government to cover all Australians without destroying the nature and basic operations of health care as it exists in this country. The tragedy of the Government's approach is that in order to extend coverage to all Australians it is taking away the rights and freedoms of choice of many Australian people and professional groups involved in health care. It is threatening the autonomy of doctors, nurses, States and public and private hospitals. It has been out to destroy the health insurance funds.

I say to the Government that it is not too late for it to go back to these people and to work out an ingenious way to cover the Australian community through the non-government health schemes. The Government might wish to use a government fund to cover the last small percentage of Australians who are presently uncovered. That is not our approach, but it would be better that the Government should consider even that

proposal than that it should wipe out the non-government funds and the arrangements which have grown up in response to public need and public demand in this country. In a nutshell the Government is saying to the ordinary Australian: 'You can no longer insure yourself as you wish with the fund that you wish. We will insure you at great cost through general taxation revenues, and what you will be entitled to is the doctor, as you have been entitled under the present arrangements'.

But there will be great problems in the future even in terms of the doctor-patient relationship. While the Government does not plan initially to regionalise operations—at least I have not heard of those plans—and to place people in areas so that basically they will get on to a particular doctor's list and be able to go only to that doctor, there is no question but that ultimately the freedom of choice of family doctor will be affected. The spread of doctors throughout the community at the moment is not as good as it should be, but under a central bureaucratic approach fostered by the Government, which will find the ease of administrative relationships becoming a No. 1 goal, we will eventually be placed on lists as patients and we will find that we will be faced with great difficulty in transferring from doctor to doctor.

I move from the question of the doctor and the patient to that of the patient and the hospital. Most Australians at present are covered for something more than a public ward in a public hospital. Most Australians are not yet aware that under Medibank they will be entitled to enter only a public ward in a public hospital. Australian have voted on this matter by means of their contributions to the health funds over the years. The great majority of Australians have voted not only to be in health funds but also for something more than public ward treatment in a public hospital. The Government's 'free' scheme will entitle people only to public ward treatment in a public hospital. What will happen then? It is very simple for all to see. Faced with the great cost of taxation and with the great cost of contribution to health insurance funds, individuals will be driven to drop out of their private insurance schemes. There is a story going around that people will be encouraged by the Government to drop out of private schemes. If the Government encourages people to drop out of private health insurance before the entire Medibank scheme is in operation, it will deserve the gravest censure of this House because it will be utterly and completely defrauding the Australian people who will have no recourse to the

array of choices of hospital cover, which they presently have, if they drop their non-government insurance contribution and are relying on the government.

Where is an individual placed who drops his insurance contribution and is therefore reliant on the government? He is placed in an increasingly long queue at the public hospitals of this country. That will mean that waiting times in Australia for the treatment of non-urgent cases, while presently not perfect but not nearly as bad as in a number of other similar countries, will lengthen to month upon month. People simply will not get their operations when their doctors tell them that they should have those operations. The Government will then turn to the private hospitals in an attempt to do a deal to extend public ward cover into the private hospitals sphere. I do not object to the notion that arrangements are possible between private hospitals and governments in this country for the treatment of people in standard or public wards. I would support such a notion. But one cannot help but fear that one of the key aims of the Government is not to have a reasonable working relationship with the hospitals but in fact ultimately to take over the private hospitals. We have heard that sort of thing from government spokesmen in the past. It is part and parcel of their view that fundamentally there is ultimately no role for the non-government sector in health care.

We in the Opposition have declared again and again that we wish to see reforms so that coverage is extended to low income groups, that we wish to see the full array of services available to pensioners, and that we wish to see countless other reforms. But we know the perils of Labor's ultimately socialist scheme. The Government in its heart knows the perils of that scheme. It cannot but know them when, day by day, it meets intransigent opposition from groups in the Australian community which otherwise are not entirely unreasonable—unless one is to regard doctors, nurses, private hospitals and State governments as entirely unreasonable groups in the Australian community.

So I implore the Government again to consider calling off the troops and trying another approach—an approach through reason, through conciliation, through working together with those groups in the Australian community which, warts and all, have provided a basically first class health system in this country. If we place the entire, or almost the entire, provision of health care on the shoulders of the Government of this country the people will be the losers in the long run, because a government—an

government—on going to the people at an election will fail to find the money and will be unprepared to make the undertaking to find the money for the sort of open-ended arrangement in which we are involved when we move entirely to the provision of health care by the Government. I grant the Government that if it wishes to have an authoritarian system, or even a totalitarian system, it can do it because it just has to lay it down. But in a system which relies upon the goodwill of private people and private groups in the Australian community—disparaged as sectional interests—the Government has to go to them and work things out with them. If entire reliance is placed on governments, in the end the people will suffer and the poor will suffer most of all. The pensioners will suffer—those people who previously had an open go in the public hospitals of this country. They are the ones who will suffer, and that is the tragedy of Labor's health scheme. The Government will hurt most those people it says it seeks to serve, if it goes ahead with the Medibank scheme.

Mrs CHILD (Henty) (3.4)—If the community was not confused about what Medibank means before the honourable member for Chisholm (Mr Staley) stood up to speak, it certainly will be confused now. In fact, I am not quite sure whether he set out deliberately to get the community confused about what Medibank represents or whether he himself is confused about it. This Bill will provide an easy change-over from existing arrangements for health insurance to the new Medibank plan. The House has already passed this Bill, has already debated it and everyone should be pretty well aware of what it means. The Senate predictably rejected it. However, it is proposed that the scheme will come into operation on 1 July and will cover the whole Australian community.

The Bill is important. It is important and most desirable that it is passed. But Medibank can come into operation and can function without further legislation. Pensioners will profit from Medibank. There is no question of that. It is quite unreasonable for the honourable member for Chisholm to speak of pensioners suffering under this scheme. At the moment pensioners participate only in general practitioner services. Under Medibank this will be widely expanded. The one million people whom the Opposition consistently speaks about who cannot afford the ever increasing cost of private health insurance will benefit from Medibank. These are the people who will benefit—the pensioners and the one million who cannot afford to be covered.

It is no use members of the Opposition consistently saying that the hospital side of Medibank will cover only public hospitals. At present those who are not covered cannot get into a hospital for treatment at all. They cannot have the operations they need so desperately. Medibank will make sure that we look after those who cannot afford to look after themselves. The Opposition has frequently spoken of its concern for those now excluded from coverage. I would have expected members of the Opposition to be quite pleased with the provisions within this Bill if they were genuine in their concern.

Pensioners now get free general practitioner consultation. Their medical attention will be expanded into specialist services, procedural and diagnostic services as well as consultations. Medibank will take a load of worry off the shoulders of those who hold medical entitlement cards, or ordinary medical cards as we know them in Victoria. But the first and main objective of Medibank will be to ensure that every Australian, regardless of his ability to pay, will have automatic security against the cost of medical and hospital treatment. If one has never been in a position where one cannot afford medical or hospital treatment one will not understand what that will mean to the people of Australia. Non-pensioners who are being subsidised heavily by their families for nursing home care will welcome this Medibank scheme like manna from heaven. If one has subsidised a member of one's family who is a non-pensioner in a nursing home one will know exactly what this will mean.

The honourable member for Chisholm kept reiterating that the Government will have to increase taxation to pay for this scheme. I suggest to the honourable member for Chisholm, who has now left the chamber, that his Party should forget about putting up taxes. His Party is dedicated to reducing taxation, probably by not giving medical or hospital benefits and by reducing pensions and social security services. I believe tertiary allowances are now to be involved in the proposed cuts. No doubt child care will be the next on the list. I think the honourable member should give up any talk about putting up taxes. The honourable member for Barker (Dr Forbes) said that the Australian Labor Party does not help the private health insurance funds. This Party gave more help than any other government has ever given. In 1971-72 the previous Government met 56 per cent of the average medical benefit refund. The year before that it was 54 per cent and the year earlier 46 per cent, so the proportion was raised a bit. This Government met 58 per cent of the average cost

of medical benefit refunds and this year we will allocate \$185m towards propping them up—\$22m more than last year. So I think we can disregard the suggestion that we do not help private health funds.

We shall extend the additional Australian Government nursing home payments, now applying to those entitled to pensioner medical services, to all qualified nursing home patients. (Quorum formed) Is the Opposition prepared to bear the responsibility for denying this type of help to people who need it? This Government is not. I ask honourable members opposite to be reasonable. This is not a program for nationalised medical and hospital services.

The honourable member for Chisholm predictably once again dragged out the socialist bit. The socialists are not trampling over the community; we are setting up a program to protect the health care of every Australian within the community. Medibank will not interfere with the freedom of the patient-doctor, doctor-doctor, patient-patient and patient-nurse etc. freedom. It will extend the services. Everyone will get automatic coverage for private practice fee for service medical treatment. There will be complete freedom of choice of doctor by the patient. Every time anything to do with national health is discussed the same old bogey man is dragged out and shaken out—he must be worn out by now. It is said that we will not have freedom of choice of our doctor, we will go onto a list and we will become a number on a card in a pocket. This is so much hooey and it is time the Opposition stopped trying to fool the people who are interested in national health and who have voted for national health. It is time the Opposition tried explaining and not frightening.

Under the Government scheme a person may choose his doctor. What if his doctor does not come into the Medibank scheme? If the family GP does not wish to be part of the Medibank scheme a person does not have to find a new doctor. A family doctor does not have to be part of Medibank. All he has to do is to provide the patient with an itemised account of his services so that the patient can claim the benefit. But the doctor has always done that anyway. The Government is not asking him to do something new. He has always done this under the voluntary scheme. If the doctor does not wish to accept assignment benefit in full settlement of his account he does not have to. If his fees are higher than the return the patient gets from Medibank the patient pays it. If that is what the patient wants to do he may go ahead and pay the difference. But no one is interfering with the

patient's freedom to choose his doctor. No one is telling the doctor where he will or will not practice. In fact no one could get away with that if one tried.

I turn now to what this Bill does. Firstly, it provides for the cessation of the payment of Australian Government medical and hospital benefits under the National Health Act. Secondly, it provides for the manner in which existing health insurance organisations will phase out their National Health Act operations. Organisations ceasing operations under the National Health Act will be eligible to seek authorisation to conduct health insurance business under legislation supervising health insurance. This will be introduced later in the sittings. Thirdly, its provisions recognise that with the pending introduction of Medibank some existing medical and hospital funds may have difficulties continuing their viable financial operations.

To meet these situations clause 19 provides for Medibank to conduct private medical and hospital insurance to the extent necessary to ensure that the interests of contributors are fully protected during the changeover period. Finally, and most importantly—I hope the Opposition will not vote against this Bill and try to deprive the community of this provision—the Bill provides for the Australian Government to assume liability for nursing home benefits at present paid by registered hospital benefit funds to insured non-pensioner patients. That will be achieved by extending the additional Australian Government nursing home payment now applying to pensioners with medical cards to all qualified nursing home patients. That alone makes the Bill well worth supporting.

The failure to pass this Bill would cause some disadvantage, perhaps, to other sections of the community, but to the patients in nursing homes who are not pensioners or the pensioners who cannot get into nursing homes it is going to mean a capsizing of their hope of health for the future. It is not those of us who have our health now and those of us who can afford to contribute to medical and hospital benefit funds for whom we are legislating today; we are legislating for the pensioners and the one million Australians in our affluent country who cannot afford to cover themselves for medical and hospital benefits. If the Opposition continues to block the passage of this Bill it will have to hold itself responsible for such personal losses, which in some cases could be substantial, as may occur. If some States continue to block the introduction of this Bill the governments of those States will have to hold themselves responsible for the grief and worry

such an action causes to the people who live in those States.

Mr O'KEEFE (Paterson) (3.16)—I rise to oppose the National Health Bill. In his second reading speech the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) has set out why the Bill has been brought back into this chamber and has covered its objectives. The Bill, of course, has been well and truly debated in this chamber previously. No doubt the debate today will go over some of the ground which has been mentioned previously in this House. The present health scheme covers 90 per cent of the people of Australia. There are only a few areas which are not catered for in the existing scheme. They are to be found in the pensioner field and the paramedical field.

This Bill, which has been introduced by the Government, is based on a scheme devised by 2 academic economists, not by doctors or even by people experienced in health administration. The reason why it was devised had nothing to do with the quality of health care and it will do nothing to increase the quality of health care available. In fact, in my opinion it could tend to reduce medical and hospital standards in this country. The original report of the 2 economists—the Deeble-Scotton report—in the 1960s was in fact a piece of economic research that was conducted in an attempt to find a method of controlling the expanding cost of the delivery of health care services. Then came the adoption by the Australian Labor Party—the present Government—of the Deeble-Scotton proposals, which it allied with its own socialistic ideology. The Bill which we are debating is a nationalistic, socialistic piece of legislation. That perhaps can be best expressed in the health area by the statement that the availability of health care to all individuals free of cost at the point of consumption is a right of those individuals. The present Bill is a blank cheque which no country can afford and which this country in particular, with the present economic situation with which it is faced, cannot afford.

Dr Gun—I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I point out to the honourable member for Paterson that this Bill does not deal with the Medibank scheme. I think that the same point of order could have been taken on the 2 previous Opposition speakers. This Bill deals precisely with 3 specific areas, namely, nursing home benefits for non-pensioner patients, transitional arrangements for funds and the payment of medical and hospital benefits to private health insurance organisations.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lucock)—Order! There is no substance in the point of

order raised by the honourable member for Kingston. The subject of Medibank has been discussed by every speaker in the debate on this Bill.

Dr Gun—With respect, Sir, the point of order—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! There is no substance in the point of order. The honourable member for Kingston will resume his seat.

Mr O'KEEFE—I am surprised that the honourable member for Kingston should take a point of order on that aspect because every speaker who has taken part in this debate today—not only the supporters of the Government but also members of the Opposition—has mentioned Medibank. So I take it that I can do the same.

I feel that there are 3 reasons why there should not be a change from the present system of hospital and medical care. The first reason is that there has been no public demand from the people of this country for a change in the present system, which, as I have said before, covers 90 per cent of the people. It is worth remembering that more than 50 million medical services are provided to the Australian public each year by doctors in private practice. I understand that the number of complaints is remarkably small. Even if the number were large the Hayden health scheme would not provide the remedy. In opinion polls which have been conducted the majority of the Australians interviewed have shown very clearly that they prefer the present system of voluntary health insurance to that provided for in the Bill which we are debating. There has been no public demand for the changes envisaged in the health system at present in Australia.

The second reason is that we of the Opposition object to a monolithic National Health Commission being established. We believe that there is no advantage in such a proposition. The third reason, which is a very good one, is that patients value their right under the present system in Australia in most circumstances to choose the doctor they prefer. I will admit that the Hayden plan allows for a free choice outside the hospital area, but I will not accept the claim that the proposed scheme will work in this manner inside the hospital area. Under it doctors will be paid on a salary or sessional basis for work in standard wards and therefore will be available only when rostered for duty rather than when required by a particular patient. Added to that is the fact that most people will be able to afford only the standard ward accommodation provided under the scheme. The combination of

those 2 factors will mean a loss of the right to choose a doctor in most circumstances. Certainly there are times at present when the right of choice is not freely available. I think honourable members readily appreciate that. In particular that occurs in times of emergency. I do not think that many patients would quibble about taking the best that is offering at the time in those circumstances. However, there is no reason why there should be an increase in the area in which there will not be a freedom of choice. There is no doubt that the introduction of a nationalised scheme, as envisaged by the Government, will lead to that state of affairs.

What about the quality of the health care provided? That is a most important factor. I must make it quite clear that there can be no doubt that the quality of the health care provided is closely allied to the delivery and implementation of the health care services. An outstanding example at the present moment of a country in which the quality of the health care provided is being badly undermined by the introduction of a nationalised form of medicine is the United Kingdom. One has only to talk to people who come from that country to learn that they do not want to have anything to do with nationalised medicine. They are disappointed when they come to Australia and find that this Government plans to bring in nationalised medicine. In the United Kingdom there has been a steady deterioration in the delivery of health care in the hospitals, and there have been continuous problems in the area of primary care outside the hospitals as far as the general practitioner and private specialist areas are concerned. Today in Great Britain there is the sad situation in which hospitals are run down physically. Their consultants have virtually gone on strike and, according to the last reports, general practitioners were in the process of submitting to the British Medical Association their undated but signed resignations from the national health service. We do not want that situation to develop in Australia.

If the remuneration of general practitioners is once again frozen on the grounds that all other workers in the health industry have received salary increases and that there is not enough money left in the global pool to give legitimate fee increases to the doctors in this present inflationary period, resignations from the doctors will be forthcoming. The quality of health care must suffer under such circumstances. The position in the United Kingdom is so serious that the resident doctors at the royal medical colleges recently joined with the British medical faculties in

warning that there was a real danger of standards declining to the point where recovery would be impossible within the foreseeable future. In Australia the quality of health care would inevitably be depressed as the result of the closing of the system which occurs in nationalised medicine. I point to the long periods which elapse before chronic cases can be admitted to hospitals in the United Kingdom. This causes no end of problems. We do not wish this state of affairs to operate in Australia under any circumstances.

I turn now to the Government's advertising program for Medibank. I, along with the people of Australia and other members of the Opposition have been amazed at the blatant advertising concerning Medibank which has been undertaken by the Minister for Social Security and the Government in all our national newspapers. It is being paid for by the Australian taxpayers. The Medibank advertisements are certainly not true. They are misleading and are likely to create chaos in Australian health services. The advertisements admit that hospital care can be available under the scheme only if the State governments agree. Yet the advertisements say that people will have to make no contributions and that there will be no books to keep. In most States, people who require hospital treatment after 1 July are likely to have huge bills to pay unless they maintain their existing membership of hospital benefit funds. In any case, the scheme purports to cover only public ward care. The great majority of Australians prefer intermediate or private ward accommodation, so additional private insurance would be needed to cover the extra cost of hospitalisation. No mention is made of this in the advertisements.

The advertisements are likely to cause many people to abandon membership of voluntary health insurance funds before 1 July, and this could lead to a chaotic situation and cause great hardship. The advertisements state that Medibank will be a more efficient and simpler health insurance scheme. This claim can have no factual basis before the scheme starts. If the health insurance scheme is as efficient as the scheme under which the Department of Social Security is paying unemployment benefits, it will soon be christened 'Muddybank'. The extra money that the Government will have to raise to pay for the health insurance scheme is equal to a 7 per cent or 8 per cent rise in income tax. In the present state of the economy, the nation just cannot afford this system. Based upon reliable figures produced by consultant actuaries, it is estimated that the full year national cost in

1975-76 of both the hospital and medical sides of the Hayden plan will be \$1,680m. Taking into account the fact that present Commonwealth benefits would no longer be paid and that most health costs would no longer be tax deductible, this still would mean an increase of about \$750m in Government expenditure. If this sum were met from personal income tax, a 7 per cent or 8 per cent increase in income tax would be required to raise the money. This health insurance scheme will cost the nation far more than the Government indicates it will cost in the figures that have already been cited by the Minister.

Mr Hayden—What is your interest in this?

Mr O'KEEFE—I am interested only in securing the best scheme in the most economic way for the Australian people. I am interested not in a socialised scheme, or a nationalised scheme, but in a scheme that keeps free enterprise going in Australia. In the few minutes that are left to me, I should like to refer to the Opposition's policy in this field. We recognise that the States face grave financial difficulties in developing their hospital and health services, because of the unwillingness of the present Government to increase Commonwealth support in line with inflation. The present Opposition, if in government, would provide an immediate and large injection of funds into the State health systems. The Commonwealth Government today contributes only \$5 a day towards the bed costs of pensioner medical service patients who are provided with free treatment in public wards. Originally the Commonwealth contribution represented a substantial proportion of the bed costs of pensioner patients. This is no longer the case. Hospital bed costs now range to above \$50 a day. The States now bear the brunt of the burden of providing free hospital treatment for pensioners. This has placed an intolerable strain on scarce State resources, particularly in times of high inflation.

The Opposition recognises the pressing need for more State resources to be made available for the development of hospital and health services. The Commonwealth Government has the constitutional power to provide medical and hospital services for pensioners, and with it the responsibility to make a significant contribution towards the hospital care of pensioners. This responsibility should be exercised without seeking to take over financial control and management of State hospitals. A Liberal-Country Party government would increase the proportion of the Commonwealth contribution towards the daily bed costs of pensioners from 10 per cent to 50 per cent. On present costs this would result in an increase of the Commonwealth contribution from \$5 a day

to at least \$25 a day. When in government, we will also enter into urgent negotiations with the States and the voluntary health insurance funds on a number of other matters. These include improving the present inadequately subsidised health benefits scheme for low income people; extending medical benefits to cover hospital out-patients; increasing the \$2 a day bed subsidy for insured patients which has been unaltered since 1963; extending hospital and medical benefits to include all psychiatric patients; and improving ambulance cost sharing arrangements. We are conscious that special arrangements will have to be made with individual States where particular circumstances exist, such as Queensland, so that no one is disadvantaged financially. All of the measures which we would introduce would be part of the continuing reform of the health insurance system, which will ensure comprehensive coverage of the entire community while maintaining freedom of choice and a private system, not a socialised, nationalised scheme which financially is airy-fairy and could cost this country millions of dollars more than the present Government has estimated.

Dr GUN (Kingston). (3.36)—I want to introduce a novel turn into this debate. I want to talk about the Bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lucock)—Order! I point out to the honourable member for Kingston that if he had read the second reading speech made by the Minister for Social Security he would know that the Minister said:

The Bill before the House is designed to provide for an orderly transition from the present health insurance scheme to Medibank.

Therefore, I think that my ruling in disallowing the point of order taken by the honourable member for Kingston in the course of the speech made by the honourable member for Paterson was correct. I suggest that the subject of Medibank is within the ambit of the Bill.

Dr GUN—Mr Deputy Speaker, I agree with your ruling that, in view of the fact that the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) made certain references to Medibank in his second speech, the honourable member for Paterson (Mr O'Keefe) was entitled to deal with the same subject. Nevertheless, my original statement stands. I propose to introduce an original turn into the debate by discussing the Bill, which is something that the honourable member for Paterson and the honourable member for Chisholm (Mr Staley) did not do.

Members of the Opposition are most reluctant to discuss this Bill and to tell the Australian

people why they are opposed to it. Let us look at what this Bill provides. The Bill provides for transitional arrangements for private health insurance organisations. If in the period of the transition to Medibank they are unable to deal with the various claims that they receive, provision is made so that the contributors to those funds will not be disadvantaged. That is why the Opposition does not want a discussion about its opposition to the Bill. It does not want the Australian people to know that it wants certain people to be disadvantaged and that it will sacrifice contributors to those funds on the altar of private enterprise health insurance. No wonder members of the Opposition did not want to tell the Australian people why they oppose this Bill.

This Bill also makes provision for nursing home benefits to be paid in respect of non-pensioner patients. No wonder Opposition speakers did not refer to that aspect. Everybody in this Parliament and everybody in Australia ought to know that the Opposition is opposing legislation to provide Commonwealth nursing home benefits for non-pensioner patients. Why did not Opposition speakers refer to that fact at all? They did not want to tell anybody about it. But that is what they are doing.

This Bill is not about Medibank. The legislation relating to Medibank was passed by the Joint Sitting of both Houses of the Parliament. The Medibank proposal was put to the Australian people at the Federal elections in 1969, 1972 and 1974. On that basis, the Australian people elected a Labor Government in the last two of those 3 elections and the Bill dealing with Medibank was enacted following its passage at the Joint Sitting of the 2 Houses of this Parliament. This Bill is not about Medibank. It seeks to provide benefits to certain people and deals also with certain transitional arrangements. Why did not Opposition speakers discuss the contents of this Bill instead of trying to draw a smokescreen across the whole trail by discussing only the tired old arguments that they have put up in the past about Medibank?

This Bill provides also for the repeal of the payment of—(Quorum formed) The effect of throwing out this Bill, which is what the Opposition is seeking to do, would be most curious in relation to the third provision of the Bill with which I wish to deal, that is, the payment of hospital and medical benefits to voluntary health funds. Under the Medibank scheme, if people choose to receive private ward treatment or to go into a private hospital they will still receive the benefit payment of \$16 a day. The effect of

throwing out this Bill would be that, if people choose to go into the private ward and if they choose to take out additional private hospital insurance, in addition to receiving through Medibank the hospital benefit for their private hospitalisation they will continue to receive payment through the voluntary health fund in the form of a Commonwealth benefit. In other words, if the existing scheme is not repealed, the Commonwealth will be obliged to continue to pay medical and hospital benefits not only through Medibank but also through voluntary health funds if people remain insured by those funds. The Commonwealth would be forced to pay twice for each individual service. This would add increasingly to the cost of the scheme. It would not provide further cover for people but would just provide a cash bonus.

This could be interpreted in no other way than as a deliberate effort by the Opposition to sabotage this scheme, even if it means making the scheme more costly, even if it means inconveniencing private citizens, and even if it means that people who go into nursing homes will not be able to receive Commonwealth nursing home benefits. This is the reason why none of the Opposition speakers chose to speak about this Bill. They do not want the public to know that they want the Commonwealth to pay 2 lots of benefits to people who go into private hospitals and that whilst this would increase the cost of the health scheme it would not increase the security of the people against hospitalisation or sickness. They do not want the public to know that the Opposition is against non-pensioner patients receiving nursing home benefits. They do not want the public to know that if any private fund cannot provide financial security to its contributors in the transition to Medibank the Opposition would be opposed to the Government providing some security during that transition period. They do not want the public to know that they are out to sabotage this health scheme which has been adopted by a Joint Sitting of the 2 Houses of Parliament.

It is difficult to know why all the members of the Opposition are so keen to do everything possible to try to destroy and to sabotage the actions of a democratically elected government. There are heaps and heaps of measures that have been thrown out by the Senate. The rejection of many of these measures represents nothing other than obstruction for obstruction's sake. That might be all very well, but the Opposition has now taken its action to the point that it will seriously inconvenience many people and, in this case, will cause considerable extra expense to the taxpayer

by requiring the Government to pay 2 lots of hospital benefits. I repeat that this point has not been dealt with by any of the Opposition speakers. Not one of them has given a single explanation of why he is opposed to the provisions of this Bill. This is something that ought to be shouted out from the housetops.

I mention briefly a couple of points raised by the honourable member for Chisholm. I cannot understand why the Opposition must assume that all we have to do to have a proper health care scheme in Australia is to talk with the Australian Medical Association, as if everything that that Association espouses will coincide with the best form of health care in Australia. In other words, the Opposition assumes that the AMA is some sort of altruistic body whose concern is purely with the health care system, and if the benefits to the medical profession of any system that is provided happen to coincide with what is best for the health of Australians, that is pure coincidence. That is not the truth at all. The fact is that the AMA is not an altruistic body.

Experience shows that in all other countries the medical profession is prepared to go to any lengths to oppose changes which it regards as detrimental to its own interests. I refer to many places in the United States of America where people have tried to introduce pre-paid medical systems such as voluntary health maintenance organisations into various State legislatures. This is not a radical proposal. I think that the provision of health maintenance organisations is now in the policy of the Liberal Party. Yet the representatives of medical lobbies in the United States have said 'We have sufficient clout in the State legislatures in the United States to prevent any such innovatory legislation coming in' and they have succeeded in doing so. Everybody knows what happened in Chile and the crucial role played by the organised medical profession in that country to bring down the democratically elected government. It saddens me to see the main Opposition party in this country running along to the Australian Medical Association every time it wants to find out what it should be thinking.

Even more remarkable is the fact that the Opposition seems to think that the interests of the private voluntary health funds coincide with the interests of Australians. We all know that these private health funds are not representative of their contributors. They give their contributors no say at all. A very well known meeting was held in May 1973 by the chief medical benefits fund in Victoria. An effort was made there to organise the annual general meeting so as to give

the contributors some control. But this move was thwarted at the last minute when a carload of Liberal members of Parliament arrived from Parliament House in Melbourne—I understand that Mr John Jess, the former member for La Trobe, was with them—to help pack the meeting in order to maintain control by the small elite in charge of the funds and to prevent proper representative contributor control of those funds. The Australian Labor Party Government stands for a health scheme which will provide for the interests of all the Australian people. If it is inconsistent with the interests of lobby groups like the AMA or the voluntary health funds, we believe that the needs of the Australian people must have priority of place.

Mr HODGES (Petrie) (3.48)—I am very eager to join in this debate, particularly in the first instance to refute some of the statements that have been made by honourable members on the Government side of the House. I take the honorable member for Kingston (Dr Gun) to task, particularly for his reference to the Bill not being about Medibank. Let us have a quick look at the second reading speech of the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden). In fewer than 5 pages, as a quick scrutiny will reveal, the word 'Medibank' was used at least 9 times. So that is what it is all about. If it is not about Medibank, why not scrap the Bill altogether; there is no point in having it. The fact is that the Minister is obsessed with this scheme and will go to any lengths to see it come about. What the honourable member for Kingston was doing was in fact criticising his own Minister on this matter.

I join with the honourable member for Chisholm (Mr Staley) in criticism of the honourable member for Prospect (Dr Klugman). It is quite plain in all the advertisements that the use of the word 'free' is being pushed. They say: 'Medibank will provide free medical insurance cover for every man, woman and child in Australia. And free public hospital care in those States whose governments agree to allow such treatment to be made available.' There is no doubt that this Government is deceiving and misleading the Australian people with the same sort of deceit that has been perpetrated on the Australian people from time to time by this Government.

Mr Donald Cameron—They should be ashamed of themselves.

Mr HODGES—The Government should be ashamed of itself, as the honourable member for Griffith reminds me. I also take up a point which was made by the honourable member for Henty

(Mrs Child). The Opposition is concerned for those people not covered and for extending the cover for pensioners. I repeat that the Opposition is concerned. It says: 'Extend the present scheme.' Why scrap the present scheme—because that is the eventual aim of the Minister—why bring in a scheme to cover everybody in Australia, when we have a subsidised health benefits scheme to which the majority of people in this country are happy to belong? So I refute the statement that the Opposition is not interested.

It is interesting to note Press reports of the statement by the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) that Cabinet plans to cut back expenditure which does not directly create jobs for the unemployed. The Government has an expenditure review committee—I call it the Big Five, the super brains of the Cabinet—of which the Minister for Social Security is a member. I think that they realise that the honeymoon is well and truly over. It is a case of get back to work and get your feet back on the ground. The Prime Minister has admitted that many Ministers have over-reached themselves with their spending projects. It is a matter of simple accountability to realise that if there are taxation cuts—that is, income cuts—they must be matched by expenditure cuts. I say to the Minister for Social Security: 'Why not scrap this Bill altogether and extend the existing service?' We have seen plenty of somersaults by the Government in recent times. We have even seen reversals of reversals. That is the sort of desperation we see from this Labor Government.

Profit is no longer a dirty word in this country. When I came to this Parliament less than 12 months ago it was well and truly a dirty word, but the Government's attitude has now changed. The Government says now that it must encourage the private sector. Only 3 months ago it said: 'Let it struggle. Let it get on the best way it can.' The Treasurer and Deputy Prime Minister (Dr J. F. Cairns) made a rather infamous speech at Terrigal when he said:

The private sector is not only Australian, it is international. Despite our understandable and justified aspirations for a better society we must operate for now within the system.

The important words are 'for now' because they indicate to me and to every Australian that the long term objective of this Government is the complete socialisation of this country. Now the Government says: 'We must concentrate on the private sector.'

I submit to the Minister that Medibank is contrary to that objective. It is a public instrumentality, not a private one. I turn again to the rather infamous advertisements that state: 'A healthy

change for everyone'. I submit also to the Minister and to the Government that this will be a further unhealthy change in the state of Australia's deficit balance. We have budgeted for a deficit of \$570m. It has been estimated and stated by the Prime Minister that we now face a deficit of something like \$2,500m. That is a further unhealthy trend for all taxpayers. I want to go into the net extra cost to the Government. Let us be honest with ourselves, this is a cost to the people. The estimates put the cost of the scheme for a full year at approximately \$1,600m. If one projects the costs of the existing scheme, which are estimated to be about \$570m, add to that figure the predicted taxation concessions from the existing scheme of about \$370m and subtracts those 2 figures from the total cost one finds that it leaves a balance of some \$700m to be found by way of extra taxation. This will amount to something like 7 per cent in additional tax receipts from individuals.

The Labor Government's propaganda says that this is a free health scheme. I hope that the Minister is listening to this. I sincerely hope that the Minister will take steps to delete the word 'free' from the advertisements. If Government members are genuine and are genuinely under the misapprehension as to the meaning of the word 'free' and as to how the scheme will operate, as has been clearly indicated today, I believe it is the duty of the Minister to remove the word 'free'. We saw the machinery 1.35 per cent levy Bill rightly thrown out by the Opposition. This levy was, of course, to be the means of funding the scheme. On the one hand the Government intended to bring this scheme in with a tax levy and now it tries to make out that the scheme is free. I ask the Government: Where can one get something for nothing? The Minister for Social Security refers to it as being a free scheme. I say to him: Who does he think he is fooling? Queensland has had a so-called free hospital scheme for a number of years, but it has cost the people of Queensland a lot of money to operate.

Mr Hayden—It is not free.

Mr HODGES—I said it was a so-called free hospital scheme.

Mr Hayden—Your State Government calls it free.

Mr HODGES—The point is it has had this name from the days of a State Labor Government.

Mr Hayden—They have not changed it in 17 years.

Mr HODGES—This was a name we inherited in my State. That is not the question in issue at the moment. I point out that under the Medibank scheme people will be covered only for public hospitals. It is a well known fact in this country that a majority of people seek private or intermediate hospitalisation. The Minister has made some outlandish statements in relation to Medibank, and I want to point out some of them to the House. He says that doctors will not be involved in overheads and bad debts often associated with billing the patient. I am touched by the attitudes of the Minister. He is so concerned for the medicos that he is telling them that they will not have to worry about bad debts and they will not have the extra overheads. I am surprised at his deep concern to improve the lot of the medico. It is a real about-face from Australian Labor Party policy to reduce the medico's bad debts and to cut back his overhead costs so he can earn more and lift his meagre income—perhaps an income that is lower than that of the lower to middle income earner. Who does the Minister think is going to swallow that nasty draught?

In a recent statement the Minister said of a speech that the President of the Australian Medical Association, Dr Keith Jones, made that he was trying to race a lame horse. I say to the Minister: You have a horse that is completely broken down and it needs shooting. Another statement attributable to the Minister is that Medibank would be smaller—do not ask me how it will be smaller—less bureaucratic, less costly and more efficient than the present enormously fragmented system of private health insurance.

Dr Edwards—That is a joke.

Mr HODGES—He said it would be smaller, less bureaucratic and less costly. Let us look at those 2 statements. I submit to the Minister that the very reverse will be the position, that Medibank will be full of bureaucracy and will be far more costly to this Government, to this country and to the people. I am afraid that I could not agree with his statement about the efficiency of Medibank. I cannot agree that the Government will run a more efficient service than the private voluntary health organisations. Let us look at the Minister's reference to this enormously fragmented system. What a distortion of the facts that statement is. In Queensland one health fund has approximately 78 per cent of the business; 2 health funds together hold approximately 91 per cent of the business, and 3 funds in that State, in total, hold 95 per cent of the business. The remaining 5 per cent of the business is held by five other funds. So there is not the enormous

fragmentation mentioned by the Minister. I understand that in New South Wales 3 funds have in excess of 80 per cent of the business. I think this refutes the Minister's statement that there is enormous fragmentation in the present scheme.

I would like to refer to the second reading speech of the Minister. This refutes the point that the honourable member for Kingston made about this Bill not being for Medibank. The Minister made the point in his second reading speech that the Bill provides for cessation of the payment of the Australian Government medical and hospital benefits under the National Health Act and, secondly, that it provides for the manner in which existing health insurance organisations will phase out their National Health Act operations. I say to the Minister: Why should we amend the Act at all? Why not leave it as it is? The Minister went on to state a little further on in his second reading speech:

As I have already stated it is not absolutely essential that the Bill before the House be passed to enable medical benefits to be paid and the hospital arrangements to be achieved under Medibank, but it is desirable . . .

Of course it is desirable. The Minister wants to see the demise of the existing scheme, the scheme that has served this country and the people of this country so well over the years.

I shall refer briefly to the massive promotion of this scheme which is costing \$1.56m of the taxpayers' money. I shall mention also that Medibank at the moment is poaching a lot of staff for the same work from the existing voluntary health funds at a salary, I understand, of often more than \$2000 or \$3000 more than they are receiving at the moment. As I indicated, they will do the same work for Medibank. It is scandalous that the Government should be wooing these people and poaching them to do similar work by offering far greater salaries than they are currently receiving. I ask the Minister: Why introduce Medibank at all? It has been stated that 8 per cent of Australia's population is not covered by health insurance. I understand that the Minister has indicated that one million people are not covered. Incidentally, the Opposition has gone along largely with the statement of the Minister but I understand that the figure for people who are not covered is closer to half a million of 4 per cent. I say to the Minister: Expand the existing subsidised health benefits scheme. I oppose the Bill and I urge the people of this country to reject Medibank and to stay with their own private health organisations. I finish on this note: The devil you know is better than the one you do not know.

Mr DONALD CAMERON (Griffith) (4.2)—In speaking in support of the views of honourable members on this side of the House I feel it is appropriate to remind the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) that the Liberal-Country Party teams have been steadfast in their opposition to what he proposes since the day he arrived and set about to nationalise health in this country. Despite his protests, nobody could be convinced that what he has in mind for Australia is anything but a national health scheme based on socialist doctrines to which he himself adheres.

This Bill seeks to facilitate the financial means of achieving what the Minister proposes and what, regrettably, was passed in the Joint Sitting of the Parliament after the 1974 Federal election. Regrettably in his second reading speech on this occasion the Minister said that Medibank had been the subject of a prolonged campaign of deliberate misrepresentation conducted principally by those with vested self interest in the preservation of the present inefficient, inequitable and very costly health insurance scheme. Well, I can say to the Minister that the only vested self interest I have in health is the retention of a system whereby the people I am privileged to represent and I have access to the best possible health treatment. We on this side of the House do not believe that the Government's type of health scheme is in the best interests of the people of this nation. Medibank is still another nail in the coffin of health care. As we have in the past we will continue to oppose all the measures that the Government takes to implement its health scheme.

One has only to look at the United Kingdom to see how the health system in that country is ailing. It is paralysed. It is not just a case of arthritis; it is almost a case of poliomyelitis. It is crippled. It is claimed in that country that an injection of another £Stg500m is needed to save the British health scheme. I emphasise that this is not just \$500m but £Stg500m. It is also claimed that this amount of money will only get the British scheme back on to its knees again. Yet here we are in Australia, in the tradition of Labor socialism, embarking up on a path which has been proven in other countries to lead to ruin.

As a Queenslander I want once again to register the protest of the people of my State at the manner in which the Bill will affect them. I have said in this House on previous occasions that it amazes me that the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden), a fellow Queenslander, can come into this House every couple of months and introduce measures which will do nothing for the

people of Queensland but impose a heavy financial burden. I know that the Minister will tell us that a Labor State government introduced the so-called free hospitalisation in Queensland. But it has been a Liberal-Country Party coalition State government which has kept that system alive since 1957. So all the talk and speculation in the early years that the Liberals would abandon free health in Queensland have proven to be incorrect. Honourable members from Queensland in this place and in the other place will be asked to vote on this legislation. The absence of the honourable members for Bowman (Mr Keogh), Brisbane (Mr Cross), Capricornia (Dr Everingham), Dawson (Dr Patterson), Leichhardt (Mr Fulton) and another one or two—I do not think there are many left from Queensland these days—underlines their lack of concern on this matter or alternatively they are so flushed with embarrassment that they dare not come into this chamber.

The fact is that the Minister is imposing upon the people of Queensland another form of taxation to finance his health scheme. He intends to make Queenslanders pay for and contribute to what they already receive without making a contribution. As a member of a private health organisation I presently enjoy such coverage as will allow me to go into public wards, intermediate wards or private wards of a hospital.

Mr James—Psychiatric treatment?

Mr DONALD CAMERON—Well, I am quite sure that if I did go into hospital on weekends for psychiatric treatment I would find the honourable member in the bed next to me. But I would be there only occasionally; the honourable member would be there every weekend. As I was saying before my sick friend interrupted me, the people of Queensland have this coverage by contributing to a private health organisation. The Minister seeks to impose upon us a system which will force us through taxation, or in any other way the Government dreams up, to make another contribution that will simply give us access to public wards. If we want to go into an intermediate or a private ward we have to go to a private health organisation and insure for that right. So instead of being knocked with one single barrel as we are now, we have the Minister with his double barrel shotgun firing both barrels at once.

Furthermore, we should look back at the objections which have been raised over the last couple of years to what the Minister proposes. I ask the Minister: If his name was Clyde Cameron

and he was a Minister for Labour and Immigration and had a union objecting so strongly to the proposals of the Government, would he continue to implement those proposals? The entire medical profession almost to a man—with the exceptions of the honourable members for Prospect (Dr Klugman) and Kingston (Dr Gun) and a couple of other burnt out medicos who have come into this chamber—is opposed to the introduction of Labor's national health program. Yet, without the promise of co-operation which is necessary for the successful implementation of the program, the Government wanders along the path of socialism determined at all costs to impose its socialistic health scheme upon the people of Australia. When will the Government ever learn?

In recent weeks the present Government has admitted that many things done in this country in the last couple of years have been wrong and disastrous. Why must we continue with these hare-brained schemes at a time when the Government is parading itself as having realised what is needed in this country? The Government is spending \$1.56m on promotion for its scheme. I suppose such an undertaking is like embarking on a giant program to whip up the crowds to go along and see someone like Chubby Checker who had his day years ago. One would need to spend about \$1.5m to enliven interest in him. This Government once again plunders the public coffers simply to embark upon an advertising campaign, and what an advertising campaign it is. As my friend and fellow Queenslanders the honourable member for Petrie (Mr Hodges) pointed out before, the Minister who authorises the advertisements claims that the scheme is free. He claims that the scheme provides free medical insurance. Yet, earlier the honourable member for Prospect denied that it was a free scheme and acknowledged that everything that is given by governments must be paid for by somebody. On this occasion the Australian public is being forced to pay once again for a scheme that will only partly meet its requirements. The public will have to continue to seek other forms of health coverage. I know that the Minister uses as a justification for the scheme, the argument that there are a number of Australians who presently are not covered by any form of health insurance. It is not very difficult to improve upon the present scheme to ensure that perhaps the half a million Australians who are presently not covered become covered. I see absolutely no sense in completely sinking the ship we have at the moment because of a few slight leaks in the scheme.

I hope that this legislation will again be blocked in the Senate. I know that the Government is endeavouring to bring about a situation where it can go to the people of Australia and say that it has been frustrated by the Senate. The Government wants to use these grounds as the basis for calling a double dissolution. It wants to be able to say: 'Give us a go again'. I am telling supporters of the Government now that they have had their go for the last 2 years and we promise to look after them when they are defeated and out of office.

Mr HAYDEN (Oxley—Minister for Social Security) (4.14)—in reply—As the honourable member for Kingston (Dr Gun) observed, it was a curious moment when someone attended to the Bill before the House rather than divert on often completely unrelated debate. On the other hand, as the honourable member also pointed out, it would be embarrassing for members of the Opposition to have devoted their attention in this debate to the proposals in the Bill. Before I proceed to that, I would like to make a quick comment in relation to the manufactured anger that the honourable member for Griffith (Mr Donald Cameron) just displayed. We all know him and are rather fond of him. I assure outsiders who are watching this debate that knowing him so well we are not distressed by the serious line that he seems to take. But he has manufactured this opposition to Medibank. On the face of it I guess it might have sounded convincing. Yet I am advised from reliable sources within the Liberal Party in Queensland that not only does the honourable member hope to make the first claim on Medibank when it comes in for publicity purposes but also, so that he will not have to pay for this, he is searching around for a doctor who will bulk bill so that there will be no charge to him.

Let us look at the Bill. One has only to restate very quickly the principles in the Bill to remind honourable members and the public how unreasonable the Opposition is being—unreasonable in terms of the great responsibility which we assume in this House in Opposition or in Government; unreasonable in its attitude towards the rights and the expectations of the public, expectations which if they are not at this point developed will become quite apparently developed closer to 1 July when Medibank comes into operation. It is true that if this legislation is rejected, as the Opposition promises it will be, we can still operate Medibank in spite of the fact that those parts of the National Health Act relating to the provision of hospital benefits and medical benefits by the Australian Government will not have been cancelled. We can still

make Medibank operate. It will be a little messier. It will not be any great problem for us personally but there will be some disorderliness with the transition from private health insurance to Medibank. It will not affect Medibank but it will disadvantage some private health insurance funds and the contributor members of those funds. It will not disadvantage us but it will worry us greatly when, as for instance, some funds find they are unable to continue financially in the provision of benefits for members of the public either just prior to or subsequent to the introduction of Medibank. I say 'subsequent to' because there will be bills which will come in after 1 July for medical services and hospital services provided before that date. If the Opposition refuses to pass this legislation then it will mean that the people who have been contributing to those funds will not be able to get any benefit at all because the funds are in financial trouble.

Mr Donald Cameron—It is your fault.

Mr HAYDEN—It is not our fault because if the Opposition passes the legislation we will provide that money from the Health Insurance Commission. We will meet those costs consistent with the levels that have been established under the medical or hospital tables. For some people this can be an absolutely disastrous experience. Already in this country we have solid reliable information coming from research work for the poverty inquiry that people cannot afford the cost of health services, and that in one State 40 per cent of the cases in the petty debtors court in fact related to people who could not afford the cost of health services. Many of those people went to gaol because they could not afford those costs. These, by and large, are the unfortunate people among that 15 per cent of the public who are unable to afford or who do not have health insurance cover. This involves over one million people, a figure which has been established in an irrefutable way by the Bureau of Statistics in not one but several successive surveys, including a fairly recent one conducted for the poverty inquiry. Many of these people who have this experience will find they will be financially crippled because their funds will be no longer operating and because Opposition members like the honourable member for Griffith and the honourable member for Petrie (Mr Hodges) have taken this tough obstructionist line. They do not care about the public. They do not give a damn about public rights and public needs. All they want to do is to destructively obstruct. At least they could allow the passage of those parts of the legislation we bring in which will benefit the public and where there is no dispute. Surely there can be no

dispute about this. Surely no one on the Opposition side wants to see a situation in which members of the public find that funds to which they have contributed for many years can no longer financially operate and can no longer financially provide them with the benefits that they expect. This legislation makes provision for us to meet those liabilities for members of the public. We do not want to see people forced into petty debtors courts. We do not want to see numbers amongst those people sent to gaol because they cannot afford their health costs. That is the sort of critical issue to which members of the Opposition have to address themselves. Are they so deprived of any sense of morality or public responsibility that they are prepared doggedly to reject this legislation in spite of the clear benefits which are put into it?

It is a machinery piece of legislation in many ways. It will allow for a tidier transmission. We can still bring in Medibank. It will not stop us having this scheme in operation. It will provide in a few areas an impediment or two but only minor ones. We can overcome them. The point I am making is important—the Opposition is going to penalise members of the Australian public. Some of them will end up in debtors courts because they cannot afford the cost of health services, and some of them on the hard evidence that we already have from an objective dispassionate research project for the poverty inquiry, will go to gaol because they cannot afford to pay those costs. Is that the principle of small 'liberalism'? Of course it is not, but it seems to be the principle of big 'L' Liberalism.

Mr Hodges—Stop distorting the facts.

Mr HAYDEN—It seems to be the principle of that big lump of lard over there who does not give a damn about people.

Mr Hodges—Mr Deputy Speaker, I suggest that the Minister should be asked to withdraw that comment.

Dr Edwards—Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order. Is it a parliamentary phrase to refer to my colleague, the honourable member for Petrie, as 'that big lump of lard over there'?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lucock)—I suggest that the Minister might rephrase the term and not use an expression like that.

Mr HAYDEN—I apologise to the House and I apologise to the honourable member but I do find myself rather angered. If Opposition members want to reject legislation because of some assumed ideological difference that this Government wants to bring in, that is their right but do

not make innocent people in this community suffer. I cannot help feel distressed at the thought of what is going to happen to some people in this country because of the sheer stupidity and political prejudice of members of the Opposition in resisting everything that is being proposed here. At least let some of those things go through. I mention now the proposal to provide nursing home benefits for aged people in nursing homes who are not entitled to pensioner medical service benefits. Currently we provide substantial subsidies towards the cost of nursing home treatment of those people. The proposal in this legislation is to extend that provision to cover people who do not have pensioner medical service entitlement. Many of them will be pensioners, not just wealthy people with healthy superannuation benefits, but pensioners who have missed out because there is a different and a tighter means test for pensioner medical service entitlement. It is a means test which we cannot ease because the Australian Medical Association has made it clear that it is not prepared to accept any extension in the quantitative sense of that means test or any extension in the categories of people, such as the supporting mother, who can be covered by it. Members of the Opposition are going to deny those people too this benefit. It is true that they will be able to contribute to private hospital insurance funds but they will not be in such a strong financial position to be able to afford the costs of those sorts of contributions. This will be available for them without cost if members of the Opposition allow this legislation to go through. I say to members of the Opposition: You are being completely foolish; you are being stupid; you are being unreasonable and irresponsible to the Australian public in resisting the proposals in this legislation. They are largely there to help people who will clearly have need for help if certain eventualities happen in the case of some funds failing before or just after the introduction of Medibank. There are clear benefits for people. Members of the Opposition are determined to deny them to people who at present are in nursing homes and not entitled to pensioner medical service cover and therefore not entitled to the sort of nursing home benefits which we provide. I would ask members of the Opposition to think again before they resist this legislation.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Message from the Governor-General recommending appropriation announced.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Bill (on motion by Mr Hayden) read a third time.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr HAYDEN (Oxley—Minister for Social Security)—Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Drury)—Does the Minister claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr HAYDEN—Yes, I do. I claim to have been misrepresented in a newspaper article which appears in the Melbourne 'Herald' of today's date. The article is headed 'Pension rises face chop' and it states:

Pensioners are likely to be the first to suffer under the Federal Government's proposed cut-backs in spending.

It could be a cold autumn for pensioners expecting an end-of-summer increase of up to \$4 a week and the abolition of the means test for everyone over 70.

Instead, under the Government economy campaign, pensioners could receive an increase of only \$1.50.

The article also states:

Mr Hayden proposed an increase of \$4 a week, but later seemed to back down on this when he released a statement saying that the Whitlam Government had already increased pensions to higher levels than any other government.

The author of the article, Mr Monks, also says:

The pension increase cut-back and the delay in ending the means test for the over-70s could save the Government at least \$50m this year.

It is a totally dishonest article. It is irresponsibly presented. It will create a great deal of unease, if not alarm, amongst pensioners in the community who have a reasonable expectation of a substantial increase in pension rates in this session of Parliament. In no way can Mr Monks's irresponsibility be justified. Mr Monks, as a member of the Press Gallery of this Parliament, would know that this morning the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) and I confirmed that there would be a substantial increase in pensions and that pensions would not be suffering from any cut-back which might arise if any policy of public expenditure restraint were to be applied. For instance, if I may quote the words exactly, I said this morning:

There will be further substantial increases in pensions in the course of this parliamentary session and these increases will lift those relationships again.

The words 'those relationships' refer to the relationships between pensions and average weekly earnings and the consumer price index, to which I have been referring. The Prime Minister said:

... there is provision in the Budget for an increase this April in social service payments. There will be no cut or curtailment there. It has never been suggested.

I will not quote all of the other comments that the Prime Minister made this morning and I will not refer any further to the comments I made. However, I will say that Mr Monks has come to the Parliament with a reputation as a beat-up journalist. I am not sure what a beat-up journalist is; but, if it is a person who is prepared to write any sort of scandal or sensation or completely dishonest exaggeration at all, then I can understand at last what a beat-up journalist is. Nothing that Mr Monks has written in the article to which I have referred has been considered by the Government. None of the money amounts which he has quoted has at any time been suggested or considered by me or any other member of the Government or considered by the Government itself. It is, I repeat, a totally disreputable article. It brings the profession of journalism into disrepute. It is going to create a great deal of alarm and insecurity amongst pensioners. I hasten to assure them that that is not justified. I would hope for a higher standard of probity and conduct from members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery. If they do not know what is going on in Cabinet—I am pleased to discover that they do not—that is no justification for any one of them beating up a succession of what can only be described as lies in an effort to get a sensational article.

NATIONAL HEALTH BILL 1974 [No. 2]

Dr EDWARDS (Berowra)—I wish to point out, with your indulgence, Mr Deputy Speaker, that members on this side of the House are totally opposed to the National Health Bill 1974 (No. 2). A few moments ago when the motion for the third reading of this Bill was proposed—

Mr Sinclair—The second reading.

Dr EDWARDS—The second reading, and then followed the third reading. At that time the honourable member for Calare (Mr England) and I called for a division. I think that your attention was temporarily diverted, Mr Deputy Speaker, because the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) who was at the table was seeking to make a personal explanation and in those circumstances you did not hear our call for a division. The honourable member for Calare and I did so call and I seek the indulgence of the Chair to have the matter recommitted.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Drury)—I am sorry if I am in error here. I did hear a call for a division but I did not think that more than one honourable member called. As the honourable

member for Berowra said, it could well be that in fact my attention was diverted at that particular moment.

Mr DALY (Grayndler—Leader of the House)—I accept the explanation that has been given, Mr Deputy Speaker. I think it is only reasonable that the Bill be recommitted for a vote on the third reading. I seek the leave of the House, therefore, to move a motion to rescind the vote of the House on the third reading.

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

Mr DALY—I move:

That the resolution of the House this day on the third reading of the National Health Bill 1974 be rescinded and that the question—That the Bill be now read a third time—be again put to the House forthwith.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—I now put the question: 'That the Bill be now read a third time'.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

Ayes	63
Noes	52
<hr/>	
Majority	11

AYES

- Armitage, J. L.
- Barnard, L. H.
- Beazley, K. E.
- Bennett, A. F.
- Berinson, J. M.
- Bowen, Lionel
- Bryant, G. M.
- Cairns, J. F.
- Cameron, Clyde
- Cass, M. H.
- Child, G. J. L.
- Clayton, G.
- Coates, J.
- Cohen, B.
- Collard, F. W.
- Connor, R. F. X.
- Crean, F.
- Cross, M. D.
- Daly, F. M.
- Davies, R.
- Dawkins, J. S.
- Duthie, G. W. A.
- Enderby, K. E.
- Everingham, D. N.
- FitzPatrick, J.
- Fry, K. L.
- Garrick, H. J.
- Gun, R. T.
- Hayden, W. G.
- Hurford, C. J.
- Innes, U. E.
- Jacobi, R.
- Jenkins, H. A.
- Johnson, Keith
- Johnson, Les
- Jones, Charles
- Keating, P. J.
- Keogh, L. J.
- Kerin, J. C.
- Klugman, R. E.

NOES

- Adermann, A. E.
- Anthony, J. D.
- Bonnett, R. N.
- Bourchier, J. W.
- Bungey, M. H.
- Cadman, A. G.
- Cairns, Kevin
- Calder, S. E.
- Connolly, D. M.
- Corbett, J.
- Drummond, P. H.
- Drury, E. N.
- Edwards, H. R.
- Erwin, G. D.
- Fisher, P. S.
- Forbes, A. J.
- Garland, R. V.
- Giles, G. O'H.
- Gorton, J. G.
- Hewson, H. A.
- Hodges, J. C.
- Holten, R. McN.
- Howard, J. W.
- Hunt, R. J. D.
- Hyde, J. M.
- Jarman, A. W.
- Katter, R. C.
- Kelly, C. R.
- Killen, D. J.
- King, R. S.
- Lucock, P. E.
- Lynch, P. R.
- MacKellar, M. J. R.
- McLeay, J. E.
- McMahon, W.
- McVeigh, D. T.
- Macphee, I. M.
- Millar, P. C.
- Nixon, P. J.
- O'Keefe, F. L.

AYES

- Lamb, A. H.
- Luchetti, A. S.
- McKenzie, D. C.
- Martin, V. J.
- Mathews, C. R. T.
- Morris, P. F.
- Morrison, W. L.
- Mulder, A. W.
- Oldmeadow, M. W.
- Patterson, R. A.
- Reynolds, L. J.
- Riordan, J. M.
- Scholes, G. G. D.
- Sherry, R. H.
- Stewart, F. E.
- Thorburn, R. W.
- Uren, T.
- Wallis, L. G.
- Whan, R. B.
- Willis, R.
- Young, M. J.

Tellers:

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

NOES

- Peacock, A. S.
- Robinson, Eric
- Robinson, Ian
- Ruddock, P. M.
- Sinclair, I. McC.
- Staley, A. A.
- Street, A. A.
- Sullivan, J. W.
- Viner, R. I.
- Wentworth, W. C.

Tellers:

- Cameron, Donald
- England, J. A.

PAIRS

- Fulton, W. J.
- Whitlam, E. G.

- Chipp, D. L.
- Shedden, B. M.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION
BILL 1974 [No. 2]

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 February on motion by Mr Clyde Cameron:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON (Hindmarsh—Minister for Labor and Immigration)—Mr Speaker, may I have the indulgence of the House to raise a point of procedure on this legislation? Before the debate is resumed on the Bill I would like to suggest that it may suit the convenience of the House to have a general debate covering this Bill and the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill (No. 2) 1974 as they are related measures. Separate questions will, of course, be put on each of the Bills at the conclusion of the debate. I suggest therefore, Mr Speaker, that you permit the subject matter of the 2 Bills to be discussed in this debate.

Mr SPEAKER—Is it the wish of the House to have a general debate covering the 2 measures.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—The Opposition wishes to have 2 separate debates, Mr Speaker. The Opposition does not wish to have a cognate debate.

Mr SPEAKER—There will be 2 separate debates.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER (Wannon) (4.39)—Mr Speaker, which Bill is to be debated

first, the one dealing with amalgamations or the one dealing with agreements?

Mr SPEAKER—The Bill before the House is order of the day No. 6, the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill 1974 [No. 2].

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—But it is not clear which Bill is which.

Mr Clyde Cameron—Give the speech you gave last week or last year. That will do.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—The Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) did not make a proper speech last year. He made one off the cuff that was wrong in fact and he had to tick off the Parliamentary Counsel.

Mr Clyde Cameron—Mine was right in fact; the Counsel was wrong.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—On a number of occasions the Minister for Labor and Immigration has brought similar legislation before this House. He is now again bringing in legislation concerning the amalgamation of trade unions, and to be debated separately another Bill concerning the certification and cancellation of certified agreements. No new argument has been introduced by the Minister in relation to these matters but I think that circumstances have developed since the previous debates. It is my understanding, especially in relation to the amalgamation measure, that a significant proportion of the trade union movement has sought to get the Minister to accept amendments to his own legislation, but the Minister has not accepted those amendments. I understand that that is so because the Minister would like this Bill, along with the other Bill, to be one of a list of Bills that could be used in a double dissolution situation. If that is so I think it is a pity because the Minister had an opportunity, after consultation with some people who might basically have been his own supporters, of altering this legislation in a way which might, who knows, have made it acceptable. That being so, the Minister would have shown a degree of flexibility which he has not exhibited so far in his portfolio.

There is really a contradiction between the 2 Bills. The Bill concerning agreement is designed, in the Minister's terms, to protect the rank and file members of the trade union movement, to give them a say in industrial agreements and negotiations and an influence over the terms of those agreements that they would not otherwise have. I think the Minister might agree that that is a fair statement of his objective. He therefore believes that there would be a greater chance of those agreements being accepted. In that Bill he

is introducing a measure, however misguided it might be, which would be in favour of the rank and file membership having some influence over what occurs. But in the legislation concerning amalgamations are provisions which reduce rank and file influence almost to nil and gives major control in the hands of large and powerful unions and significant control in the committees of management of the trade unions themselves. The safeguards in the present Conciliation and Arbitration Act to protect the rank and file membership—their right to influence what is occurring, their right to say whether they are in favour of a proposed amalgamation—are utterly removed in the Bill as it is proposed by the Minister.

I suppose it is fair to say that the Minister is using different arguments to suit different cases but not arguing for a constant principle or from a constant purpose. His industrial relations policy would have a greater opportunity of achieving some degree of industrial peace if his principles in these matters were constant and if his purpose were constant. A number of safeguards in the present Act are proposed to be deleted. The safeguards are these: Firstly, under our legislation, which is at the moment law, is provision for secret postal ballots, paid for by the Commonwealth, conducted by the Industrial Registrar or the Commonwealth Electoral Officer. Under the provisions of the proposed legislation, unions may conduct ballots in their own way, or 250 members or 5 per cent of the membership, whichever is the lesser, can apply for a Registrar-controlled ballot. But that ballot also has to be conducted in conformity with the rules of the union concerned. If those rules do not adequately provide for a postal ballot or for free secret ballots in every case, a free secret ballot will not occur. There is only one way—

Mr Clyde Cameron—The honourable member is quite wrong there because an electoral officer is required to see that every person gets a ballot paper and if the rules of the union do not provide for it he must disregard the rules.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—I suggest again that the Minister ought to read his own legislation because the legislation, as he has introduced it, says quite plainly that if an election is conducted by the Registrar or an electoral officer then it must be conducted as far as practicable in conformity with union rules.

Mr Clyde Cameron—As far as practicable.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—We had an argument about this matter on the last occasion this legislation was debated. For example, it will be

conducted according to the rules of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union, which do not provide for free and open secret ballots in the normal sense of the term.

Mr Clyde Cameron—That is not right.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—The last time we debated this matter the Minister admitted that it was one union which did not have a free and proper secret ballot procedure. The Minister knows very well that it does not.

Mr Clyde Cameron—If it is conducted by an electoral officer it must be conducted according to the roll.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Drury)—Order! I would suggest that the discussion across the table should cease.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—That, I think, is not a plain interpretation of the Bill. I would like the Minister to point to those provisions in the Bill which require it because there are other provisions in the Bill which would certainly seem to conflict with that. There is another safeguard in that the definition of the roll of voters would certainly seem to be undefined in the Minister's proposal. That would open up opportunities for abuse and opportunities for difficulty which are not there in the present circumstances because the roll of those eligible to vote in a particular amalgamation situation is defined in the present law. The provision that requires 3 months' notice of the commencing and closing date of a ballot is to be deleted. The provisions requiring the circulation of the cases for and against secret postal ballots to each member of a union are to be deleted. The requirement for publication of cases in an organisational journal is to be deleted. Above all the voting provisions which require that 50 per cent plus one of the membership of the union should cast a vote are to be deleted. Those are all safeguards that are designed to ensure that the rank and file membership of a trade union has an adequate opportunity of influencing the union's decisions. They are all safeguards that are to be removed from the present provisions if the House accepts the legislation as proposed by the Minister for Labor and Immigration.

When we look at what he proposes we find, as I have indicated, that the ballots will be conducted under union rules or by the Registrar but still under union rules. The roll of membership—the indication of who is or is not a financial member—is undefined, leading to the possibility of a stacking of the membership to achieve a certain purpose. There is no provision for adequate notice of ballots, no right of those opposing a particular proposition to put their views on ballot

papers or in journals. Technically under the legislation proposed by the Minister seven voting out of a membership of 10 000 could achieve an amalgamation. What democracy is there in that? If the Minister really believes that that is an appropriate way in which to behave or that this is appropriate legislation to pass, I find it difficult to understand why.

It would have been much better if he had accepted the urging of some of his colleagues and supporters in the trade union movement and tried to introduce different provisions from those contained in this legislation. Other areas which would have made it possible for objections to be made in relation to changes in the rules are now to be restricted to changes in the rules that affect eligibility for membership of an amalgamated union. There are in fact to be many other changes to the rules that can affect individual members and the rights of individual members of a union. The objections should not be restricted just to objections that affect the eligibility conditions of trade unions. The other provision which indicates that there will be no vote in relation to union matters or no vote in relation to union officials for 3 years after an amalgamation would seem to be an especially unreasonable one simply because there will be no protection for rank and file members of a trade union along the road to amalgamation.

All those matters would have been serious enough, but we ought to note that the organisation which seeks to take over some other organisation, which submits its scheme of amalgamation to a particular committee of management of a second and maybe much smaller and weaker organisation has the capacity to appeal over the heads of the committee of management of the smaller organisation to its own members. If one-fifth of those members, who may not even be financial members, then require a ballot that could occur, but again it would not have to be a secret ballot in accordance with the provisions of the amendment that the Minister is in fact introducing. That does open up opportunities for the larger and more powerful unions to subject the smaller organisations, the smaller trade unions, to takeover tactics which would be just as vigorous and just as ruthless as any takeover tactics that might have occurred in the commercial field between a large company against a smaller company. Again it is an indication of a lack of regard for the rights of individual members of a particular organisation. I have already indicated that I believe that the Minister has been under pressure to change the terms of this legislation. He has not done so because he wanted it to be

one of a technical list that could be counted if there were a double dissolution later this year.

Some of the arguments in favour of the Minister's purpose are plainly deficient. One of the arguments that he and the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) have been using over a significant period of time is that since so much of our industrial disputation is concerned with demarcation areas we have to have an amalgamation of trade unions to end the demarcation disputes. The Australian Bureau of Statistics lists the causes of industrial disputes under wage claims, wage matters, hours of work, leave, pensions, compensation provisions, managerial policy, physical working conditions, trade unionism, which includes disputes concerning the employment of non-unionists, inter-union and intra-union disputes—in other words, demarcation disputes—sympathy stoppages in support of employees in another industry and the recognition of union activities. It is under trade unionism that we find that demarcation disputes are listed, along with other things.

The figures for the September quarter of last year, which I think are the latest comprehensive figures available, indicate that 87 per cent of the working days lost were lost over wages issues and that 3.5 per cent of the working days lost were lost over trade unionism issues of which demarcation disputes are but one of several parts. So, unless the Bureau of Statistics is very wrong in the way in which it compiles the figures, it would appear to be plain that demarcation disputes represent only a very minor part of the total claims and the total strikes and disputes that occur in the industrial area.

Mr Clyde Cameron—This is an abnormal year.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—The Minister would know quite well that he could go back over a long period and use the same figures and get the same kind of division, one against the other.

Mr Clyde Cameron—No, I would not.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—If one goes to the March quarter of 1974 one finds the same circumstances. The Minister indicated that this is an abnormal year, but it is abnormal only because we have a Labor Government in power with the worst industrial disputes record since statistics have been kept—since 1913—as a direct result of the policies being carried forward by it. So the Minister should not make too much of the abnormality of the year. The abnormality is his own position as Minister for Labor and Immigration and the position that the Prime Minister and the

Government as a whole have taken in relation to the trade union movement and in relation to the economy. They have established the circumstances in which this kind of industrial climate prevails.

Mr Clyde Cameron—You will be as bad as Snedden if you keep on like that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Drury)—Order! I ask the Minister to be good enough to let the member for Wannon make his speech.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—The Minister, who says that small unions cause strife—sometimes that can happen—ought to recognise that a small number of members from a large union can cause a great deal more strife. One thousand members out of the 160 000-strong membership of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union can do and often have done as much damage as any strike caused by a small union. It is possible to have demarcation disputes within a large trade union. That has often occurred. So amalgamation for its own sake will not overcome some of the major causes of industrial disputes. It will not overcome the kind of wages issues that have arisen during the last year. One of the largest unions, the AMWU—the Transport Workers Union is another—has been significant in the forefront of disputes over wages issues. If the Minister's arguments were correct, both of those unions should have been less involved in industrial disputes over those issues because they are major issues. The Minister's arguments in these areas are, I think, quite specious. I shall quote what was said by one noted union official who will remain nameless because I am sure that the Minister would not want me to break that confidence. He is not only a significant union official; I think he is also a significant official in the Australian Labor Party. He said:

Amalgamation will not stop demarcation disputes. Take the Storeman and Packers Union as an example. This union is through industry generally. If they did amalgamate with unions such as the Federal Transport Workers or Waterside Workers, they could then use their industrial strength to force their will upon other unions in all sections of industry, and this would lead to more demarcation disputes. The unions who would be vulnerable if this happened would be all unions in the metal industries who currently have as members tool storemen, etc. This would also apply to the aircraft industry, the vehicle industry, the retail trade, the clothing trade and the rubber industry to name a few.

That is the view of one prominent trade union official of whom Australia, I believe, will hear a great deal more during the next few years.

Mr Clyde Cameron—Is he from Melbourne?

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—He is from Australia. The Minister can fish as much as he

likes but he would never guess—not in a thousand years. The Minister's approach to these matters would be greatly advantaged if he consulted much more with the trade union movement than he does, and I will say more about that aspect when dealing with the other legislation concerning agreements and the certification of agreements. The Minister has cut himself off from consultation with a large part of the trade union movement. He has abandoned the National Labour Advisory Council. He called an industrial peace conference, but he will never call one again because he did not agree with its conclusions, as I will demonstrate quite conclusively in the later debate.

The Minister's views on these subjects have been taken too much in isolation. He is too much cut off from what is happening in the main stream of industrial relations. The Minister ought to know—obviously he does know but he chooses to ignore it—that 70 per cent of trade union memberships is already to be found in 33 unions. When amalgamations have occurred, they have in fact been between large unions, not between the smaller unions, many of which want to maintain their own identity, even if the Minister thinks that is wrong and even recognising, as I and he would, that being too small means that it is very difficult to supply the secretarial services and the research staff that are necessary for the best service. But if unions can be too small, they can also be too large to provide the best service to their members. Branches and divisions of a union become cut off from the centralised control and do not know enough of what is happening at State or Federal level. I have visited establishments where this has certainly been the case. Shop stewards and delegates have plainly made that kind of complaint against their own officials.

If the Minister wishes to suggest that there is an analogy between companies and unions and that there ought to be an equivalent circumstance, I think he would do well to examine his own argument. Legislation in relation to companies, and also other significant power groups in the community—organisations of employers or employees—ought to be there to advance the general public interest and to ensure that the standards of all Australians can in fact be raised. That is why we have restrictive trade practices legislation, which in varying degrees is supported by all members of this House. That is why there is a Companies Act with very stringent provisions to determine how companies can and cannot act. Company registrars act with great speed and great thoroughness if a company steps outside the provisions of the Acts which are

strictly and actively applied. In the area concerning organisations of employees or of employers, these organisations which are registered under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act are not really subject to rules that vary consequences in anything like the same way. The Industrial Registrar is passive and plays a passive role rather than an active role. I suggest that a majority of unions at the present time, as a result of changes to the Conciliation and Arbitration Act that the Minister has already introduced, do not have rules that are up to date with the present provisions. A number of them do not have the circumstances or the facilities to interpret some of the complex law which the Minister has already introduced.

When I say that organisations of employees or of employers are in many ways not subject to rules that carry consequences, let me refer briefly to the activities of the Builders Labourers Federation about 4 months ago. Following a telegram from Mr Norm Gallagher to Mr Jorgensen of the Master Builders Association, six of the major building companies in Australia were frightened out of the High Court because of threatened and actual guerrilla tactics and bans being placed upon those companies. As a result of that activity the Attorney-General of the day was given adequate opportunity to refer that apparent blatant contempt of court to the High Court so that the High Court could take official cognisance of it and act upon it. The Attorney-General of the day, who it might be worth noting is now the Chief Justice—not the Chief Justice, but a justice of the High Court; I hope that the other step never eventuates—just washed his hands of the matter. He was a more perfect Pontius Pilate than Pontius Pilate himself. He said that this was no matter for him. The chief law officer of the Commonwealth was saying that adherence to and maintenance of the law had nothing to do with him. If it had involved a company which had attempted the same kind of action, if it had involved a company which was threatening black bans and guerrilla tactics against its competitors, the Attorney-General of that time would have acted with all the speed and thoroughness of which he believed himself to be capable. That shows that this Government adopts a partisan and one-sided approach to a number of these questions.

It also ought to be noted that in many areas the trade union movement is now more powerful than even the most powerful companies in Australia. Under plans already made, one union will have an income of \$10m to \$11m by 1976. About one-half of that income is necessary to

carry on the union's research secretariat and other union activities, and the rest is free floating money for other activities. That shows, I think, the significance of union power in a number of instances, if it is, in fact, misused as it is in a number of significant circumstances.

I know that the great majority of members of the trade union movement do not behave in that way. They want to pursue their industrial purposes and advance the cause of their members as well as they know how—vigorously and firmly, but with an understanding of Australia's overall national interest and with the interests and well being of the community very much in mind. Rules that carry consequences are necessary in those areas where people do not hold that general view. The Minister would well know, and the President of the Australian Labor Party and of the Australian Council of Trade Unions would well know, that there is a significant minority of members of the trade union movement who do not hold that view. If the Government showed some signs of applying rules equally it would be in a much better and a more creditable situation than it is at the present time. It would have a greater claim to credibility.

I think it is worth noting that this Minister switches his arguments very much like a yo-yo on a string. In one Bill he is all for the rank and file, and in the next Bill—this Bill—he is for the large and the powerful. His Government took special action to help 3 large multinational companies in a difficult employment situation but took no action whatsoever to help some hundreds of smaller Australian companies. It did not assist them because they were not laying off 5000 people at one blow; they would by laying off only their tens, twenties, or possibly hundreds. That special action had to be taken by this Government, of which the Minister for Labor and Immigration presumably is a supporter, to support 3 large multinational companies, but the Government did nothing for those Australian companies which were in equally difficult circumstances and which were placed in those circumstances as a result of the actions of this Government and this Minister.

Mr Clyde Cameron—You are getting down to Snedden's level.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—If the Minister does not like the facts of this situation, that cannot be helped. But these facts indicate that there is a dual standard or a double standard and that it is not really the interests of the rank and file members of trade unions which are the principal concern of this Minister, although they ought to

be; it is the expediency of the moment. That is one of the reasons why this legislation will continue to be opposed by the Opposition.

Mr KEITH JOHNSON (Burke) (5.6)—Again we have heard almost a psychotic diatribe from the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser) in attacking the trade union movement. The honourable member, who has just resumed his seat, seems to have almost a passion in his dislike for trade unions. It is such a passion, in fact, that he launched into an attack on a most venerable jurist who now sits on the Full Bench of the High Court of Australia. If I remember correctly, he made the comment that he hopes that that judge never becomes the Chief Justice of this country. I can tell the honourable gentleman, in passing, that that judge of the High Court probably has more chance of becoming the Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia than the honourable member has of becoming Prime Minister of Australia, although the honourable member is working at that.

Let me go through the arguments put forward by the honourable member for Wannon. He led us into many areas of half-truths and of complete misrepresentation of the facts as they are printed in the Bill. He demonstrated to us his lack of knowledge of the parent Act, the Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904-1974. When the honourable member spoke about the provisions for the procedure of giving a voice to the rank and file members, commonly known as the ballot, to be held prior to any amalgamation taking place, he indicated that he would have us believe that the provisions of this Bill leave it open for there to be manipulation of such a ballot. If the honourable member had read the Bill, he would have known that for any ballot to be conducted it must be requested by 250 members or 25 per cent of the union membership, whichever is the lesser. Following a petition being made by those people to the Industrial Registrar, a ballot will be carried out under the terms of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918-1973. This is what is commonly called a court controlled ballot.

The honourable member seemed to indicate that that ballot would be conducted by an Australian electoral officer or returning officer in terms of the rules of the union and that officer would ignore all the accepted principles of conducting ballots in this country. I refer to the secret ballot. The honourable member seemed to believe that there was a number of things which would not be done. I have a great deal more confidence in the people responsible for activities in this area of our community than the honourable

member for Wannan obviously has. I draw to his attention the provisions of section 170A of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904-1974, which provides:

(1) A person conducting an election, or taking a step in or in connection with an election, for an office in, or in a branch of, an organisation under section 165A or under the last preceding section, may, notwithstanding anything contained in the rules of the organisation or branch, take such action and give such directions as he considers necessary in order to ensure that no irregularities occur in or in connection with the election or to remedy any procedural defects in those rules which appear to him to exist.

What the honourable member seeks is for that provision to be repeated. It seems to me that an Act becomes pointless if the same provision is repeated over and over again. So, the argument advanced by the honourable member is pointless because the Act already contains provisions for a court controlled ballot to be conducted in the way in which we in this country expect ballots to be conducted.

The Bill refers to the question of members being advised of the proposal. It provides for advertisements to be placed in union journals where a periodical, journal or other publication of the organisation is issued within one month from the date of the resolution of the committee of management and, in any case, in each State in a metropolitan daily newspaper. I am not one who believes that those who are interested in the affairs of their union do not bother to read daily newspapers; nor do I think that the people in the community generally do not bother to read them. To pretend that such advertisements and their purpose would remain a great mystery to the people who are members of unions is to do them a disservice and a discredit. It is something which I personally would not tolerate.

I return to the question of union ballots. The honourable member spoke about the star nights of the Amalgamated Engineering Union. If he had as much knowledge about trade unions as he pretends to have he would know that, even though star nights are provided for in the rules, in fact the court controlled ballots were controlled according to normal electoral practices and not according to the Rules of the AEU. He also seems to think of separate unions as being some sort of entities in isolation. He has overlooked the fact that in every State an organisation of organisations exists and for the whole of Australia there exists an organisation of organisations of organisations. I speak of the trades and labour councils in the various States which, in turn, become the constituent bodies of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

Through those organisations resources are provided for each of the unions. Without the benefit of this Parliament or the members sitting in it, machinery exists within them for the resolution of disputes that arise between unions. That machinery is very effective and does not need to be provided for in some lengthy Act.

The Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) is probably the greatest Minister for Labor and Immigration that this country has ever had. I believe that when the annals of this country are written his name will be inscribed in gold letters on every page in recognition of what he has done to lighten the lot of the average worker in this country. Certainly in the annals of trade unionism his name will be forever remembered. The honourable member seemed to accuse the Minister of failing to do something about which I know the Minister is very meticulous, that is, consulting the trade unions. The Minister spends a great deal of his time consulting the trade unions, among others. He is not one who, as the honourable member for Wannan would seem to indicate, speaks only with those who are strong and powerful. The Minister has a ready ear and an open door to every trade union in this country. The trade unions know this and take advantage of it. In this way he has become the best informed person in Australia on the activities within individual unions. In that respect I think he does his job well and does it properly.

All of the provisions of the Bill that is before us now and the one that is to follow have been drawn up in close consultation with those who will be affected by them. I refer to the trade unions and the members thereof. Honourable members opposite, of course, would like to take a far more pious position than that and would like to decree from a position of power what shall happen to those who are ordinary members of ordinary trade unions. Their psychotic fear of large organisations and the power that they have is not shared by me. I suppose, to be realistic about it, many of the unions because of their size probably do have a far greater power or a potentially greater power than they have ever in fact put into effect. They have a concern for their members and it is because of this that they go about their business.

Nowhere in this Bill is any union forced into amalgamation. Nowhere in this Bill is any union or are the members of any union told that it shall amalgamate with another union. So, the contention that the provisions of the Bill will cause the smaller unions to lose their identity, which they would want to maintain, is completely without

substance. If they do not want to amalgamate, they do not have to amalgamate. At all times it is on the heads of the members, guided by the duly elected and properly elected leaders, as to whether or not they should agree to a course of action. So nobody loses an identity. People maintain an identity. But there is provision for the unions to amalgamate if the members so desire.

The legislation that was brought in by the last Minister for Labour—I think he was called the Minister for Labour and National Service at that time and I am pleased to see that the present Minister refused to accept that dreadful title—and steam-rolled through this House and the Senate contained provisions which made it virtually impossible for trade unions to amalgamate. On the face of it, it appears to be a very attractive proposal. All that is required is for half the membership to return their ballot papers and for half of those who return their ballot papers to agree to the proposal. However, there is no existing legislation dealing with trade union ballots as there is dealing with elections conducted in the community generally. In other words, there is no compulsory ballot in trade unions. A reliance is placed on people to face up to their responsibilities and to send back their ballot papers. The question of postal ballots is almost a phobia with honourable members opposite. I invite them to study what happened in the Miscellaneous Workers Union in New South Wales in 2 cases that subsequently came before the courts. There had been interference with ballot papers that had been delivered through the post to members of the union. Prosecutions were launched and convictions were gained in both cases. If it is the desire of the honourable member for Wannon to drive members of unions to that position—I sometimes doubt his motives for wanting to do that—it is quite clear from past experience of the manipulation by some unscrupulous people that that will not work.

The provisions in the Bill are far more acceptable to the trade unions—we must remember that the members of the trade unions are the people who are affected by this legislation—than those which exist at the moment. It is because there has been consultation with the unions and an honest endeavour to ensure that each of the unions and the members of the unions have every available right to them to protect themselves and to put their point of view, that the Bill has been drafted. There is no guarantee in the existing legislation that that is the case. Many members of a trade union would be denied any rights at all simply by the apathy of others, simply by a campaign being waged to say 'Do not return your ballot paper',

or by the ballot papers being intercepted and never reaching the returning officer.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—That is an allegation of corruption against the Commonwealth Electoral Officer.

Mr KEITH JOHNSON—I did not mention the Commonwealth Electoral Office. If the honourable member had taken his spare wool out of his ears and had been listening he would have heard me say what occurred in New South Wales with the Miscellaneous Workers Union. It had nothing to do with the Electoral Office. Ballot papers were intercepted in the post and did not arrive. There is a perfect example in the court records in New South Wales and I invite the honourable member to read the court records to find out what happened instead of beating the air with his gums.

Mr Clyde Cameron—His NCC friends used to intercept them.

Mr KEITH JOHNSON—I am not sure what that stands for but I agree with the Minister. I do not know who intercepted the ballot papers. The point I am trying to make here is that an amalgamation honestly intended and agreed to by the majority of members of a union can be frustrated in a variety of ways. The simplest way to frustrate it is not to vote at all. The next way, which is probably more complicated, is that the NCC people whom the Minister speaks about and whom it is alleged are friends of the honourable members for Wannon—

Mr Clyde Cameron—Oh yes, they are his advisers.

Mr KEITH JOHNSON—It has been confirmed that they are friends of the honourable member. In some way they are able to intercept the mails and make off with the ballot papers. This casts no reflection on the postal services. If the honourable member wants to know how it was done I will tell him. When the postman arrived with a ballot paper at a particular address a gentleman knocked on the door and said: 'I am sorry. You received a ballot paper in the mail today. There has been a bit of a cross-up in communications. The whole ballot has been called off. I have been deputed to pick up your ballot paper and take it back.' Who would question a person like that? The members gave him the ballot papers and away he went. Those ballot papers were intercepted in the course of a mail delivery. They were never found. They were never actually delivered to the person who was supposed to receive them. They were not filled in by the person who was supposed to fill them in. All sorts of malpractices like that can arise. I

think it is far more desirable that the present provisions remain than—I am lost for words to describe the honourable member's liking for postal ballots as if that were some sacrosanct way of ensuring that the ballot was honest.

Mr Donald Cameron—That man would have to be pretty weak to hand over his ballot paper in that way on such a weak story.

Mr KEITH JOHNSON—I can hear some rumblings in the background. I think that somebody left the door of the barn open. I do not want to delay the House further. The legislation is fair, just and equitable. The arguments of the honourable member for Wannan are too silly to warrant considering, let alone answering. This measure has been brought forward by the Minister after close and careful consultation with the people who are involved—the trade unions. It has their sanction and, so long as they agree with the measure and disagree with another in this place I will support the measure with which they agree. I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr CORBETT (Maranoa) (5.22)—The honourable member for Burke (Mr Keith Johnson) has put up a few arguments as to why the Bill should be carried. He paid a very fine tribute to the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron). I have met a few members of the Australian Workers Union in my area—friends of mine—who spoke of the Minister in very different terms. Perhaps it is a matter of opinion what one thinks of the Minister. Their opinions were very different from those expressed by the honourable member for Burke. I do not intend to take up the time of the House telling honourable members what they said because that is not why I have risen.

The honourable member for Burke said that it is virtually impossible under present conditions for unions to amalgamate. If the members of the unions were keen enough about amalgamation I believe that they would be able to amalgamate without all the difficulties that he has propounded. He said that there is no compulsory ballot, and that is true. He made some play of the fact that ballot papers had been intercepted in the post. That is not an argument in favour of the Bill. It simply states a position which he claims exists. I will not argue about that, but if that position does exist at this time the Government should investigate it. I doubt whether a postal ballot could not be taken without the interception that the honourable member for Burke says took place. This should be able to be overcome and I believe it could be overcome. I do not think

it is an argument in favour of the passage of the Bill.

I agree with many of the contentions—I will not repeat them in detail—which the honourable member for Wannan (Mr Malcolm Fraser), the Opposition's spokesman, presented in support of his case. One of his chief points of which this Parliament should take particular notice was that the safeguards have been eliminated by this Bill. He mentioned the possibility that by stacking the membership a very small percentage of a union's membership could achieve an amalgamation despite the fact that the great majority of its members perhaps did not want that amalgamation.

One point I wish to raise and which I believe has to be considered relates to union amalgamation. I do not claim that amalgamation is not desirable in some instances. What concerns me is that experience has shown up to the present time that amalgamation is taking place when it is not needed. Large unions are amalgamating, as I think the honourable member for Wannan said, and the smaller unions are not taking advantage of the conditions which are available to them to amalgamate. There are a large number of members in a small percentage of the unions. Indeed, there is some indication that amalgamation is taking place. If it is taking place in respect of some unions why can it not take place in respect of others?

The Minister for Labor and Immigration, in his second reading speech, said that the number of trade unions in Australia has been slowly declining. There were 375 in 1956; 305 in 1972; and 294 at the end of 1973. That shows that they have been able to do something about reducing their numbers. The figures given by the Minister in his second reading speech show a large number of separate unions representing small groups of employees. The question one has to consider is the right of those employees to have their own particular unions if so desired. I shall refer to the figures given by the Minister—I am sure he would not argue with those—with regard to the size of unions. He referred to the number of trade unions in 1972; I do not know whether he did not have the figures for 1973. In 1972 there were 305 unions in existence, 158 of which had fewer than 1 000 members. Those unions, if they desired, would surely be able to have a better opportunity to provide for themselves some amalgamation if they were in favour of it. The Minister stated further in his second reading speech that another 82 of the unions had between 1 000 and 5 000 members; 28 between 5 000 and 20 000 members; and 23 between

20 000 and 50 000 members. Only 14 unions had a membership of more than 50 000.

I agree with the honourable member for Wannon when he says that there is a need for a union to have sufficient numbers and to have sufficient strength to enable them to operate effectively. No one denies the need for and the great value of the trade unions and what they have done for the working people over the years. We accept that. What I do argue though is that one of the faults in the development of the trade union movement has been the tendency for a small militant minority to force their opinions on the great majority of trade unions. I am not convinced that the amalgamation of unions will not promote and expand that particular tactic. I believe that is one of the reasons behind this idea of reducing and making very simple the matter of amalgamation.

I find it hard to believe that, if unions were keen enough on amalgamation, they could not get 51 per cent of their members to record a vote. If that cannot be done I feel that that is what should be investigated. The Minister does not seem to be taking any interest in the discussion, but the Opposition is urging him to look into the ways and means by which he can get an expression of opinion from at least 51 per cent of members of a union. The Opposition wants to know that the members of the unions have expressed their opinion. I am as keen to see them having an expression of opinion as I am to see democracy being promoted in any other way.

If I may digress for a moment, I point out that even in the election of members of this Parliament we have postal voting. I have not heard of any problems arising in relation to the postal voting system used for elections of the Parliament. Why cannot the same system be used in relation to unions? When the Senate returned the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill 1973 (No. 2) on 8 November 1973, some 15 clauses were completely omitted, and there were some 30 amendments in all which the Minister accepted at that time. Apparently this has not caused any great tragedy in the interim. What has been the problem? Why is the Government so anxious to make conditions for amalgamation to suit the militant minority of the trade unions and trade union leaders? They have enough power now. They are the people who dominate this Government. If they had greater power through amalgamation of unions they would dominate this Government even more.

So we find that one has to look behind the Bill to see what are the reasons for its introduction.

The Government is very keen on the amalgamation of unions. I say, in view of the appalling record of the Government in industrial matters, that this is sufficient in itself to give some rise for concern with regard to anything the Government promotes in the way of industrial matters. It is possible that in some instances, as I have said before—I do not object to it and I am sure the Opposition generally does not object to it—an amalgamation is justified. An amalgamation can be justified when the members themselves have expressed an opinion and have shown that at least 51 per cent—that is not a large percentage—of them desire an amalgamation. The Government is not satisfied with that. Why? The reason why this is not being accepted by the Government is something that the people of Australia need to look at very carefully.

I think that the unions themselves could very carefully examine the benefits and the disadvantages of amalgamation before accepting the Government's view. They could easily find themselves suffering some disadvantages. I do not think amalgamation should be forced on the unions by allowing a few people to have a greater say in the affairs of the unions than they are entitled to. I think the unions themselves should look at this matter very carefully before they find themselves in a position where they can be pushed about by big-name union officials. They should be aware of the actions of some Ministers and members of Parliament also who are ever ready to dance to the tune of prominent union officials. There are plenty of examples of that.

These conciliation and arbitration measures are vital to the welfare of employees. We, on the Opposition side, accept that with the same alacrity as do the members of the Government. All we want to see is that those union members have a democratic right to say what their trade unions are going to do. That is something which has been abused over the years. We do not want to see the members of unions in a position where they can be dominated by a few people in their own unions. It is important that industrial disputes be settled by arbitration and that they be settled by arbitration to a much greater degree than exists at the present time. Industrial disputes have occurred to an even greater degree during the term of office of this Government than before. This Government claimed it would have no real trouble in industrial matters because it was going to look after the trade unions. It has done so to the extent that about 300 000 people are unemployed and Australia has an inflation rate which is galloping ahead and which will

continue to do so under the policies of this Government. That is the way the present Government has looked after the trade unionists in this country. I advise the trade unionists, in the face of this Government's record in industrial matters, to tread warily when they get advice from it.

I believe there are circumstances when the amalgamation of unions—I believe there are quite a number of exceptions—would be an advantage. I believe that, in the main, when larger trade unions do amalgamate it leads to greater arrogance on the part of the union leaders, who have enough power now. There are cases where union leaders have encouraged strikes to the great disadvantage of their own members and to the great disadvantage of the community, resulting in a loss of wages, a loss of production and increased costs which force up the ever-spiralling rate of inflation. We do not want that, and I am sure that the union members themselves do not want it either. In his second reading speech the Minister referred to the second reading speech he made in April 1973 in which he said that the Government depends upon the good will of the mass of the ordinary working people. I would say that the goodwill of the mass of the ordinary working people is being eroded very quickly as a result of the actions of this Government. What we want to see is the unionists throughout this country given real freedom of action. I say that the rank and file unionist is a responsible citizen, providing he is given that freedom of action to which he is entitled. We can be charged sometimes with claiming this where it is not in fact true. But this is my opinion of what goes on and it is based on the opinions that I receive from many working people. This Government quite obviously has lost the confidence of the average working person. It has been shown in a number of ways. The Government deserves to lose the confidence of the people. I suggest that those ordinary working people—I use the phrase used by the Minister—may not now be as keen on amalgamated unions as they were. This Government's policy has not benefited the unions that have amalgamated to the extent that was proposed or had been suggested.

I say again that it is not unreasonable to expect, if unionists are keen on amalgamation, that 51 per cent would vote on the issue or on any other issue in which they were keenly involved and interested. If there are restrictions and problems relating to getting this expression of opinion from the unions, I say that it is up to this Government to provide the avenue whereby an opinion

from 51 per cent of those unionists can be provided without any interception of ballot papers and without any other problems. This Government which claims to represent the working people has this responsibility. I am just simply amazed to see supporters of the Government come in here and talk, as we have heard in this debate, about what is going on in the unions and the trouble that they are having in getting this expression of opinion. I believe that the great problem is that the unionists themselves have a good deal of disinterest in the affairs of the unions because they do not get the opportunity to express their opinion. As a result there is a great deal of apathy among the rank and file members of unions.

One of the reasons I oppose this Bill is that it takes away the right of unionists to give that expression of opinion which alone can give a true indication of what the average rank and file member, the average working man whom I have praised in the course of this address, is thinking. I still say that they are very worthwhile and responsible citizens. One of the reasons we get this irresponsibility and there is industrial strife is that they are badly led. I support the honourable member for Wannan in his opposition to this Bill. I believe that that is the general opinion of the great majority of the people of this country.

Mr VINER (Stirling) (5.38)—The legislation we are now considering is before the House for at least the second time in its present form. Originally it was part of a much larger Bill, the first one of which was introduced by the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) when he occupied that portfolio after the election of the present Government in December 1972. It is intriguing to note that there has been quite a length of time between each occasion that this Bill has been before the House. The first time around, the legislation was part of his original conciliation and arbitration amendment Bill. The Bill which was rejected by the Senate did not qualify as a double dissolution Bill at the last double dissolution in May 1974 because the original Bill was not re-introduced in its original form but was split up into several parts. So we have the separate Bills that we are now debating tonight.

Again, when the present Bill was first introduced and rejected it did not qualify as a double dissolution Bill. It was then re-introduced in July 1974 in its present form. It was rejected then by the Senate and now, some 7 months later, it has been introduced again, apparently so that it will qualify as a double dissolution Bill if the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) and his

Government are game enough to bring on a double dissolution. Whether or not that happens remains to be seen. But one thing can be said against that background: At least the Minister for Labor and Immigration is a trier. The record of his Ministry does not really show any great qualities of administration, but then, as I have said, at least he is a trier. The number of stoppages and strikes during his administration has been greater than at anytime since, I think, 1929. That is a mean record indeed for any Minister for Labor to have.

I recall that last year, with a great parade of publicity, the Minister convened an industrial peace conference. The conference was called with the objective of overcoming the obstruction, as the Minister would call it, of the Senate in rejecting his original Bill. Of course, that industrial peace conference did not approve the Minister's proposals and he is now attempting again to get them through this Parliament. So he failed with his peace conference. We also have the present example of his proposals in the wage indexation case that is presently before the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. It is quite obvious from the published statements of the most important white collar unions in Australia that they do not accept the Minister's proposals for wage indexation, nor indeed does the Australian Council of Trade Unions. So there is another failure on the part of the Minister.

Of course, at the pinnacle of the honourable gentleman's success, is the 311 000 unemployed in Australia at the present time. This situation has arisen under the administration of the man who said that he would resign and his Government ought to resign if unemployment grew to 250 000 people. Regrettably we still see the Minister holding his portfolio and still sitting at the table. This also is no mean record for this Minister. There is no great virtue in the proposals for amalgamation of unions that he brings before the House. On the close examination those proposals have been given by the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser), who is the shadow Minister for Labor, it is obvious that these proposals ought not to be accepted by either this House or the Senate and it is believed that they do not really meet with the acceptance of the trade union movement of Australia.

I would like to deal with 2 points made by the honourable member for Burke (Mr Keith Johnson) in trying to support this legislation and some of the matters referred to by the Minister in his second reading speech when he also tried to support the legislation. Firstly, the honourable

member for Burke said that when there is a ballot conducted by an Australian electoral officer that ballot will be held in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth under the Commonwealth Electoral Act. That, of course, by even the merest glance at the Bill can be shown to be wrong. I refer the honourable member to proposed new section 158L(5) which expressly says that where a ballot is conducted by an Australian electoral officer it shall be conducted:

. . . so far as is reasonably practicable and is consistent with this Part, in accordance with any rules of the organisation that are applicable.

I notice that the honourable member nods his agreement with what I have pointed out to him. The honourable member also referred to the fact that the proposal for amalgamation must be published, and so it must be in a journal of the organisation, if there is one, or if not in a metropolitan daily newspaper. What the honourable member did not point out is that there is no requirement that there be sent to all members of the amalgamating unions a case for and against the amalgamation. We know that it cannot possibly be sufficient to inform the members of a union simply by publishing a notice, either in the union journal or in a metropolitan daily newspaper, of the fact that there is a scheme for amalgamation.

One of the main areas of concern over the Minister's proposals, if not the critical one, is the amendment that he desires to make in regard to the number of members of an organisation who must vote in favour of an amalgamation before that can be brought about. It is worthwhile pointing out that under the existing legislation one-half of the membership must vote and there must be a majority of that one-half before the amalgamation can be approved. Under the Minister's proposal all that is required is a majority of the members who vote. As the honourable member for Wannon has pointed out, there might be only 7 members out of a membership of 10 000 voting in the ballot and if a majority of that seven approves the amalgamation, then it goes through. I could not think of anything more undemocratic than the proposal of the Minister. It is undemocratic because at the heart of unionism is the concept that it is a voluntary organisation of employees joining together for the common cause of seeking wage advantages for themselves and better conditions of work. Essentially it is a voluntary organisation of employees joining together for their own industrial benefit. If it is an organisation of that kind, then one would think

that the simple rules of democracy ought to prevail before those members can be amalgamated with another organisation into a new union.

In those terms, what is at the heart of the existing legislation is the idea that there should be as near as practicable a majority of the members of a union in favour of amalgamation before that should be allowed to come into effect. I have yet to understand, let alone hear from the Minister, any good reason why the ordinary rules of democracy should not prevail in this situation, more particularly because so often we hear, and properly so, within the trade union movement in Australia the assertion that unionism is one of the most democratic organisations within Australian society. That cannot possibly be so if simply a majority of those members who vote in favour of an amalgamation are allowed to force amalgamation on all the members of the union. The Minister unhesitatingly says that the intention behind his Bill is to make amalgamations easier and he wants to break down barriers to amalgamation. By allowing just a handful of members of a union to force amalgamation upon the majority of members, seems to me to be a complete misconception of what amounts to the breaking down of barriers. It is really, as I have said, a denial of industrial democracy to the whole membership of the union concerned.

There is one other aspect which I think ought to be brought to the attention of the House, and that is the consequences of allowing the greater concentration of union power into fewer and fewer unions because this is what inevitably will happen if this Bill is passed. As has already been pointed out in this debate, 70 per cent of the membership of unions in Australia is within only 33 unions. Obviously what will happen if amalgamation becomes easier is that the big unions will amalgamate into even bigger unions and increasingly there will be fewer unions with immense membership and fantastic incomes running into millions of dollars far beyond their ordinary needs for administration and to serve the industrial interests of their members. There will then be an even higher degree of monopoly power in unionism in Australia than there is at present.

When we hear members of this Government, particularly members such as the Minister, making an outcry against monopoly power of corporations within commerce and industry in Australia it is little wonder that the public cannot understand why this Government is not concerned about the increasing monopoly power of unions within Australia. Corporations of capital and corporations of labour very largely have a

common history, and I have heard the Minister speak about this before. In the same way as monopoly corporate power can have anti-social consequences for a community through, for example, restrictive trade practices, price fixing, cartels operating, commercial boycotting of competitors and so on, then the same kind of anti-social practices can derive from monopoly union power. I refer to black bans, boycotts, both primary and secondary, and strikes. All of these are weapons of monopoly power. There will come the time very shortly when the Australian community will want from this national Parliament effective laws which will control monopoly union power in the same way as it desires effective laws to control monopoly corporate power.

I mention those things because they do arise from a proposal by the Minister for easier amalgamations. They are something on which the Australian society needs to be informed. I think it is high time that debate within Australia on this subject is lifted to a much higher level so that the attention of the community is directed to it, and when proposals are put forward by either party for spreading the umbrella of the law over unions as well as corporations the true social purpose of those proposals can be seen and it will be appreciated that those proposals will be for the benefit of the community as a whole and will not be simply an instrument or a weapon, nor could they be labelled as such, for union bashing.

Mr MACPHEE (Balaclava) (5.53)—Mr Deputy Speaker—

Motion (by Mr Nicholls) agreed to:

That the question be now put.

Question put:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

Ayes	62
Noes	53
	—
Majority	9
	—

AYES

- Armitage, J. L.
- Beazley, K. E.
- Bennett, A. F.
- Berinson, J. M.
- Bowen, Lionel
- Bryant, G. M.
- Cairns, J. F.
- Cameron, Clyde
- Cass, M. H.
- Child, G. J. L.
- Clayton, G.
- Coates, J.
- Cohen, B.
- Collard, F. W.
- Connor, R. F. X.

NOES

- Adermann, A. E.
- Anthony, J. D.
- Bonnett, R. N.
- Bourchier, J. W.
- Bungey, M. H.
- Cadman, A. G.
- Cairns, Kevin
- Calder, S. E.
- Connolly, D. M.
- Corbett, J.
- Drummond, P. H.
- Drury, E. N.
- Edwards, H. R.
- Erwin, G. D.
- Fisher, P. S.

AYES

Crean, F.
 Cross, M. D.
 Daly, F. M.
 Davies, R.
 Dawkins, J. S.
 Duthie, G. W. A.
 Enderby, K. E.
 Everingham, D. N.
 FitzPatrick, J.
 Fry, K. L.
 Garrick, H. J.
 Gun, R. T.
 Hayden, W. G.
 Hurford, C. J.
 Innes, U. E.
 Jacobi, R.
 Jenkins, H. A.
 Johnson, Keith
 Johnson, Les
 Jones, Charles
 Keating, P. J.
 Keogh, L. J.
 Kerin, J. C.
 Klugman, R. E.
 Lamb, A. H.
 Luchetti, A. S.
 McKenzie, D. C.
 Martin, V. J.
 Mathews, C. R. T.
 Morris, P. F.
 Morrison, W. L.
 Mulder, A. W.
 Oldmeadow, M. W.
 Patterson, R. A.
 Reynolds, L. J.
 Riordan, J. M.
 Scholes, G. G. D.
 Sherry, R. H.
 Stewart, F. E.
 Thorburn, R. W.
 Uren, T.
 Wallis, L. G.
 Whan, R. B.
 Willis, R.
 Young, M. J.

Tellers:

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

NOES

Forbes, A. J.
 Fraser, Malcolm
 Garland, R. V.
 Giles, G. O'H.
 Graham, B. W.
 Hewson, H. A.
 Hodges, J. C.
 Holten, R. McN.
 Howard, J. W.
 Hunt, R. J. D.
 Hyde, J. M.
 Jarman, A. W.
 Katter, R. C.
 Kelly, C. R.
 Killen, D. J.
 King, R. S.
 Lucock, P. E.
 Lynch, P. R.
 MacKellar, M. J. R.
 McLeay, J. E.
 McMahon, W.
 McVeigh, D. T.
 Macphree, I. M.
 Millar, P. C.
 Nixon, P. J.
 O'Keefe, F. L.
 Peacock, A. S.
 Robinson, Eric
 Robinson, Ian
 Ruddock, P. M.
 Sinclair, I. McC.
 Staley, A. A.
 Street, A. A.
 Sullivan, J. W.
 Viner, R. I.
 Wentworth, W. C.

Tellers:

Cameron, Donald
 England, J. A.

PAIRS

Barnard, L. H.
 Fulton, W. J.
 Whitlam, E. G.

Fairbairn, D. E.
 Chipp, D. L.
 Snedden, B. M.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 8 p.m.

In Committee

The Bill.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER (Wannon)
 (8.0)—I have 2 amendments which relate to
 clause 6 which reads in part:

'158L. (1) If a direction that an amalgamation may proceed is given in accordance with section 158K, arrangements shall, subject to sub-section (7) of section 158R and sub-section (8) of this section, be made in accordance with this section for the conduct, in respect of each of the existing organisations concerned in the amalgamation, of a ballot of the financial members of that organisation on the question whether they approve the proposed amalgamation of that organisation with the other existing organisation or organisations concerned in accordance with the scheme or, if the

scheme has been amended in accordance with this Part, the scheme as so amended.

'(2) The ballot of the members of an organisation shall be conducted under arrangements made by the organisation except where a request is made in accordance with sub-section (3).

'(3) Within 1 month from the date of the direction under section 158K in respect of the amalgamation, a request may be made to the Industrial Registrar that a ballot of the members of an organisation to be conducted under this section be officially conducted.

'(4) A request under sub-section (3) in relation to an organisation shall be in writing and may be made—

(a) by or on behalf of the committee of management of the organisation; or

(b) by 250 members of the organisation, or by members of the organisation constituting one-twentieth of the total number of members of the organisation, whichever is the less.

'(5) Where the Industrial Registrar is satisfied that a request has been duly made in accordance with sub-sections (3) and (4), the Industrial Registrar shall—

(a) conduct the ballot himself;

(b) direct a Deputy Industrial Registrar or an officer employed in the Registry to conduct the ballot; or

(c) make arrangements with the Chief Australian Electoral Officer for the conduct of the ballot by an Australian Electoral Officer or by a Returning Officer holding office under the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918-1973,

and the ballot shall be conducted, so far as is reasonably practicable and is consistent with this Part, in accordance with any rules of the organisation that are applicable.

'(6) Where a ballot under this section is conducted under arrangements made by the organisation, it shall be conducted in accordance with any rules of the organisation that are applicable, so far as is reasonably practicable and is consistent with this Part, and, so far as the ballot is not conducted in accordance with any such rules, it shall be conducted in accordance with arrangements approved by the Industrial Registrar.

'(7) At every ballot referred to in this section, a copy of the scheme of amalgamation submitted under this Part or, if the scheme has been amended in accordance with this Part, of the scheme as so amended, shall accompany each ballot paper.

'(8) Where—

(a) an organisation is a party to an amalgamation otherwise than as a de-registering organisation; and

(b) the number of members of the de-registering organisation or, if there are 2 or more de-registering organisations, the number of members of each of the de-registering organisations, as at the date of a direction under section 158K that the amalgamation may proceed, is less than one-twentieth of the number of members of the first-mentioned organisation as at that date,

the Industrial Registrar shall, upon application by the first-mentioned organisation for an exemption under this sub-section, unless he considers that there are special circumstances by reason of which the exemption should be refused, exempt that organisation from the requirement that a ballot of its members be held in respect of the amalgamation and the application of this Part is modified accordingly.

'158M. Where an amalgamation is submitted to a ballot or ballots in accordance with this Part, the amalgamation shall be taken to be approved if, in the ballot, or each of the ballots, if more than one, more than one-half of the members

who duly record formal votes vote in favour of the amalgamation.

I shall speak only briefly to the amendments because much of the second reading debate was devoted to them or the substance of them. The basis of the amendments is to enable the rank and file membership of a trade union to have an influence over the affairs of that trade union and to make sure that on substantial matters which involve the future of the trade union each individual member can have an opportunity to influence the decisions that affect the life or death of that trade union. The purpose of the amendments is to make sure that those who might be in favour of a change and those who might be opposed to a change would have a free and fair opportunity of stating their case and also to make sure that each individual in the trade union would have a free and equal opportunity of casting a vote.

In the second reading debate a great deal of nonsense was spoken about some of the provisions of the Bill. It was suggested that because in certain circumstances an election concerning an amalgamation could be held by the Commonwealth Electoral Officer it therefore had to be a secret postal ballot. That of course is just not so. The interjections of the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) during the second reading debate were quite false and wrongly based. If he reads the Commonwealth Electoral Act and his own amendments he will know that that is so. Under the terms of the legislation that he wants to introduce, if there is to be a ballot and if that ballot is, after request, to be held by the Commonwealth Electoral Officer, it must be held as far as possible in accordance with the union rules—that means in the same way as the union itself would conduct the ballot, the only difference being in the personnel conducting the machinery or the technicalities of the ballot. That is far removed from a secret postal ballot, which is probably the fairest, most secret and most reasonable form of ballot available in Australia for any purposes.

The Minister is frightened of that possibility. One of the odd things about this legislation is that over the last four or five months significant trade union leaders have been trying to persuade the Minister to alter this legislation. But in his usual fashion he has made up his mind and is not prepared to alter the legislation. He is not prepared to negotiate or to consult. He wants to establish the circumstances in which five or seven people out of 10 000 can vote a trade union out of existence and he wants to establish the circumstances in which the proponents of change can

state their case but the opponents of change have no equal opportunity of stating their objections. If the Minister were, to use a phrase from his own Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), even-handed in these matters, he would have to adopt a different attitude. I regret very much that he has not done so. He has had a long if atypical history in the trade union movement and he ought to know that it is a precious right to be able to preserve for individual members prerogatives of effecting the affairs and the fortunes of a trade union.

The Minister is in a unique position to enshrine that right in legislation in a way which would endure for a long while. But he is so committed to the views that he has adopted over the last 30 or 40 years through his own experience in the trade union movement, that he is unable to do so and unable to bow to the pressure from a number of trade union leaders. He knows that I know their names and he also knows that he would not want me to name the names of those who for the last four or five months have been pressing him to alter the conditions of this legislation—his legislation—which they recognise to be inequitable. Therefore, we propose to move amendments to the proposed sub-sections which take out all the safeguards in relation to ballots and to insert provisions for a secret postal ballot. I move:

1. In the proposed section 158L, omit sub-sections (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6), substitute the following sub-sections:

'(2) A ballot referred to in the last preceding sub-section shall be a secret ballot by postal voting and the Industrial Registrar shall—

- (a) conduct the ballot himself;
- (b) direct a Deputy Industrial Registrar or an officer employed in a Registry to conduct the Ballot; or
- (c) make arrangements with the Chief Australian Electoral officer for the conduct of the ballot by an Australian Electoral Officer or by a Returning Officer holding office under the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918-1973.

'(3) A copy of the scheme of amalgamation submitted under this Part or, if the scheme has been amended in accordance with this Part, of the scheme as so amended, shall accompany each ballot paper sent to a person entitled to vote at the Ballot.

'(4) Subject to the next succeeding sub-section, the roll of voters for a ballot shall be a roll of the persons who were members of the organization on the day on which the Industrial Registrar gave his approval under the last preceding section.

'(5) The name of a member shall not be included in the roll if—

- (a) he became a member more than twelve months before the day referred to in the last preceding sub-section; and
- (b) he is, on that day, an unfinancial member within the meaning of the rules of the organization and has been such an unfinancial member at all times during the period of twelve months ending on that day.

'(6) Subject to this section, a ballot referred to in this section shall be conducted in accordance with the regulations.'

2. Omit proposed section 158M, substitute the following section:

'158M. Where an amalgamation is submitted to ballots in accordance with this Part, the amalgamation shall be taken to be approved if in each of the ballots—

- (a) ballot papers are received by the person conducting the ballot, on or before the day fixed for the closing of the ballot, from at least one-half of the members on the roll of voters; and
- (b) more than one-half of the members who record formal votes on those ballot papers vote in favour of the amalgamation.'

If the Minister were really concerned with industrial democracy, with rank and file control over trade union affairs, he could do nothing other than support these amendments. If the Minister, as he has in the past, persists in opposing these amendments he confirms the view that is held of him that he is concerned with the strong and not with the weak, that he protects the strong and ignores and destroys the weak.

Mr MACPHEE (Balaclava) (8.9)—I shall be very brief as the issues in this matter have been raised and dealt with thoroughly during the second reading debate. I wish to speak in this debate because I have expressed on many occasions my strong belief in the amalgamations of both unions and employer organisations. I think one point which has been overlooked in the debate on this Bill is that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act applies equally to employer organisations and to trade unions. I most strongly support the concept of amalgamation of both trade unions and employer organisations. I believe that the Act should be amended to make amalgamations easier. In doing so, however, the rights of members of unions and employer organisations must be fully protected. The vote of such members must be free from intimidation and they must be based upon maximum information both for and against the merger. Proposed section 158L does not provide such protection.

I support the amendment moved by the honourable member for Wannon (Mr Malcolm Fraser) and the reasons advanced by him for moving it. That amendment does provide adequate protection for the rank and file members to receive ballot papers and information regarding the amalgamation proposals and to vote by secret postal ballot if they choose to do so. The Bill provides that the union rules must provide for an absentee vote. Anyone requesting an absentee vote will be thought by the union officials to be thinking along rather different lines from the recommendations of the union officials.

That leaves room for intimidation. We would be most naive if we were to leave room for intimidation and most naive if we were to believe that intimidation would not be used in the future as it has been used in the past, not merely in Australia but in the trade union movement in other Western-style democracies. This Bill places undue power in the hands of the committee of management of the unions. It is from such committees or factions of such committees that intimidation might come.

Regarding proposed section 158M, it is simply not sufficient for the Minister for Labor and Immigration (Mr Clyde Cameron) to say that the Commonwealth Electoral Office is obliged to dispatch ballot papers to all members. The Bill does not say so. The Australian Industrial Court and the High Court of Australia would not have regard to what the Minister says but would have regard to what the Act says and the Bill currently before us does not say what the Minister said by way of an interjection in answer to the honourable member for Wannon. I therefore oppose proposed section 158M as it stands. I find the amendment to be more in keeping with the interests of the members of registered organisations than the proposed section which it seeks to replace. In my view, however, the amendment to proposed section 158M would not be necessary if proposed section 158L were not defective, but that proposed section 158L is defective in the way in which the honourable member for Wannon has said it is defective is borne out by the Minister's own comments in the debate of 31 July 1974 as reported at page 896 of Hansard of that date. The Minister said:

The honourable gentleman is proposing to delete from the Bill the very safeguards about which he pretends to be so concerned. I refer to the safeguards which are written into the Bill to ensure that where the rules of a union do not provide for a compulsory postal ballot of all members, then the members of that union will have the right to petition the Registrar for a ballot to be conducted by the Registrar or by the Chief Electoral Officer in accordance with the traditional way in which the Chief Electoral Officer has always conducted the ballots.

A little further on the Minister went on to amplify that remark. He said:

The only union, I repeat, which does not have provision in its rules for postal ballots and for a ballot paper to be posted to every single member is the AMWU. It is a union with 160 000 members. All that is needed to be obtained out of the 160 000 members is a paltry 250 signatures which is provided for in the Bill. When those 250 signatures have been obtained all of the 160 000 members of that union will be supplied with ballot papers direct from the Chief Electoral Officer and the ballot will be conducted in exactly the same way as any other ballot conducted by the Chief Electoral Officer for union elections.

My question is: Why bother to force 250 members to identify themselves and lay themselves open to intimidation when in fact it would be simple, it would be equitable and it would be most just and fair to send all members of the union a ballot paper together with a simple statement for and against the proposed merger so that they could, if they wished, vote in accordance with their own wishes? I do not understand really why that very straightforward policy has not been adopted.

My friend the honourable member for Burke (Mr Keith Johnson) has raised a number of points to which I think I should refer. His partial answer to the last question I have raised was that there would be an interference with the ballot papers in the postal service. Are we to shirk from passing a law involving the posting of ballot papers to all union members merely because there has been a criminal activity, that is, an interference with the mails? Clear evidence of the intimidation to which I have referred is to be found in the statement by the honourable member for Burke. Imagine how bad that intimidation would be if the persons doing the intimidating were to avail themselves of the existing provisions of the Bill. Imagine how bad it would be for the 250 members who sought to have a ballot conducted under the supervision of the Chief Electoral Officer.

I wish to refer to another matter raised by the honourable member for Burke, that is, proposed section 158G, which relates to the publication of the scheme for amalgamation. The honourable member omitted to say that the only case which goes in the journals and in the metropolitan newspapers under that provision is the case for the amalgamation. The case against the amalgamation is not presented. So it is very difficult for those who actually oppose it and actually can prepare a case against it to present their views. It would not be difficult for them to go to the Chief Electoral Officer and ask him, as in the case of a referendum, to seek either a yes or no answer and to say: 'This is the view we have. We would like our view sent with the ballot paper to other people'. I cannot understand why the amalgamation proposals do not advocate something along those lines.

In conclusion I would like to refer to another matter raised by the honourable member for Burke. It is a matter on which I am in agreement with him and at some variance with my colleagues. The honourable member said that a 30 per cent vote is a good result for a trade union. It is a good result. It is a very good result for a registered employer organisation, too, I might

say. I do not doubt that an employer organisation or a trade union is doing very well when it gets a 30 per cent return. As I have said, I know that this is at variance with the views of some of my colleagues, but I hope that they will respect my practical experience on these matters. In the interests of both the members of registered organisations and the public, I believe that the existing Act is preferable to the Bill. If the Minister had drawn his Bill in the spirit of the amendments to proposed section 158L I would have expected a better reception for the Bill. As it stands, however, I oppose the Bill and, for the reasons I have given, support the position of the honourable member for Wannan.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON (Hindmarsh—Minister for Labor and Immigration) (8.17)—The Government did not see a copy of the amendments until just a few seconds ago.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Come off it. You saw them 6 months ago, Clyde.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—They are different from the ones that were submitted 6 months ago.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—No, they are not. They are the same.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Therefore the Government has not had an opportunity of studying the amendments. I can say without very much study that the Government would reject outright the second amendment which has been proposed by the honourable member for Wannan.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Barry Egan would reject your view on this Bill tonight and you know very well that he would. You know quite well that he has been trying to persuade you to change your mind over this Bill for the last 5 months.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I was impressed by the remarks of the honourable member for Balacava (Mr Macphee), who very rightly pointed out—

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Do you not know Barry Egan? Are you going to deny him, too?

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Order! The honourable member for Wannan will remain silent.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—The honourable member for Balacava probably has a far wider knowledge of industrial relations than even the honourable member for Wannan.

Mr Innes—He would not have to know much.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I think that is a view that is shared by a lot of people. I would

suggest that the honourable member for Balaclava does not rely upon 'News Weekly' or upon leading members of the National Civic Council for his advice on industrial relations. The honourable member for Balaclava was very close to the mark when he said that this matter is very difficult. The honourable member for Wannon, if he can spare time in between arranging to become the next Leader of the Opposition to listen to the remarks of the honourable member for Balaclava and cogitate upon them and think over them, will find that they were pearls of wisdom that fell from the lips of the honourable member for Balaclava a moment ago.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—I agree with every word of them.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I am glad that the honourable member does, especially those remarks made by the honourable member for Balaclava about its being very difficult to get any more than 30 per cent of the membership of a union or of an employer organisation to vote. It is indeed very difficult to get any more than 30 per cent.

Mr Street—It has often been achieved, though.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—It has been achieved occasionally, not often. When I was running a campaign against my dear and bereaved friend Tom Dougherty we worked very hard to defeat, as of course we did, the candidates being supported by Tom Dougherty in South Australia. We still fell short of the 50 per cent that would be needed under this proposal. In fact, we took the precaution of using the pre-paid envelopes that Mr Dougherty's candidates sent out for our own candidates' ballot papers. In this way we saved a great deal of expense and we brought a certain excitement into the campaign that normally does not occur in union elections. In spite of the excitement, the thrills and the energetic efforts by Mr Dougherty we still did not get 50 per cent of the total number of people entitled to vote. The honourable member for Balaclava is absolutely correct in saying that it is difficult to get 30 per cent of the membership of a union to vote, and to insist upon a 50 per cent ballot is to virtually put the—

Mr Innes—It would kill it.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Yes, it would kill the idea of ever getting an amalgamation in this way. I did say that I knew of only one union which does not provide for a secret ballot of all of its members and which does not require that ballot papers should be posted to all of its members. That union is the Amalgamated Metal

Workers Union. But the word 'and' is the important one. There is a provision under the rules of the AMWU and of all unions which are registered under the Act for a secret postal ballot. Any individual member of the union has the right to ask for a postal ballot, and he has to be given it. I know of no case where a registered union has ever refused a member the right to have a vote recorded by secret postal ballot. The honourable member for Balaclava who made, as he usually does on matters such as this, a very thoughtful contribution, I think was a little astray when he said that he feared that there would be victimisation of the 250 members who might petition for a secret ballot or for an officially controlled ballot. I am sure that it could not have been the honourable member for Balaclava who said that; it must have been the honourable member for Wannon, because the honourable member for Balaclava would have known that when a person signs a petition for an officially conducted ballot, there is no way in which any official of the union can discover the names of the persons who signed the petition for an officially conducted ballot.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—That is just not true.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—That is true. If the Registrar were ever to reveal the name of a person who signed a petition for an officially conducted ballot, that Registrar would be dismissed.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Not under your administration, Clyde.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Yes. If I discovered that a Registrar or a Deputy Registrar had revealed the name of a person who signed a petition for an officially conducted ballot, I would have him charged. I would charge him.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Really?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I really would. Moreover, if the charge were proven, he would be dismissed. In all of the officially conducted ballots that I have had anything to do with—although I was not eligible to sign the petitions I did have a lot to do with their preparation and organising their distribution—I know from my brother who was the secretary of the Australian Workers Union after me, and from my good friend Jack Wriedt who succeeded him—,

Mr Malcolm Fraser—After you were expelled, or after you?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I was never expelled.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—They tried to expel you.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Ah! That is a different thing. You tried to get Snedden's job,

and that was a different thing, too. Mr Jim Dunford succeeded Jack Wriedt. They all will testify to the fact that there is no way in which the secretary of a union is able to see the names on a petition. The officers come into the union office, they ask for the membership roll, and they examine that roll in secrecy without anyone who is an official of the union having any opportunity of seeing who has signed the petition. So much for all the nonsense about victimisation. I do not see so much wrong with the first amendment of the Opposition as I do with the second amendment.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Well, will you accept the first?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—Well, will you withdraw the second?

Mr Malcolm Fraser—No.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—What is the point in my accepting the first amendment? The Government is certainly not prepared to accept in any circumstances the second amendment. We would need to have a very good look at the first amendment which has just been sprung on us before we accepted that. I am sorry, Mr Chairman, that on behalf of the Government I have to say that we cannot accept this amendment which has just been so suddenly sprung upon us. Certainly one part of it at any rate would kill the effect of the Bill altogether, and we would not have a bar of that.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER (Wannon) (8.27)—The Minister has on his statesman-like air tonight. Unfortunately, when he does this he does not always report the facts to the Parliament quite as accurately as he might do. He diverted from talking about an Amalgamated Metal Workers Union controlled ballot, where people have a right to apply for an absent vote, to the question of 250 people having a right to apply to the Industrial Registrar for an Australian Electoral Office controlled ballot. Even if the names of the 250 people who apply for an electoral office controlled ballot are kept quiet—I have no doubt that the Registrar would try to do that—when there are 4, 5 or 6 people trying to gather together 250 names, inevitably it becomes known to other people in the union that that is what is happening, and the names of those people are known and those people are subject to victimisation. The Minister knows that quite well.

If anyone in the AMWU is game to apply for an absent vote, his name goes on a roll as having applied for an absent vote. The only people in the AMWU who apply for an absent vote are people who are not going to turn up at the star

nights—that is their term, not mine—because at the star night, if a person does not vote in the way the hierarchy wants him to vote, members of the hierarchy can take his name out of an upturned hat and have a look at it. They know how a person voted. That is no more a secret ballot than is the man in the moon. Anyone in the AMWU who applies for an absent vote has his name put on a list. If the absent votes come in one after the other against the ruling junta in the AMWU at the time, the names of the persons who made those absent votes are known. Irrespective of whether the Minister recognises it, or is prepared to admit that that is a fact of life in that union, members of that union know it to be a fact, and they will not appreciate the Minister's rising in this chamber and denying what happens to be a fact of life.

Let me point out something that is not all that well known in the union movement. The Minister for Labor and Immigration opposed quite vigorously the industrial court legislation of the Liberal-Country Party Government when he was in Opposition with his colleague, the then honourable member for East Sydney. They used to operate in tandem. I freely admit that in Opposition they were the most effective pair ever to be in Opposition. That tandem was broken when the honourable member for East Sydney died. At the same time as the then honourable member for East Sydney was growing old, the honourable member for Hindmarsh, the present Minister for Labor and Immigration, was having his own fight with the Australian Workers Union. He used the legislation which he had opposed in this chamber—our industrial court legislation—to defeat his own union and to try to defeat Tom Dougherty. One of the tragedies of the honourable member for Hindmarsh is that he has carried that fight into the Parliament as the Minister for Labor and Immigration. He has carried the lessons he thought he learnt then into the industrial legislation he has tried to write into the annals of the Commonwealth in the years since. So much of what the Minister has written or tried to write into law has come from an atypical experience in an atypical union when the Minister just could not stand Tom Dougherty. There is no reason why this Commonwealth or this Parliament should have to put up with that type of legislation at this time.

The Australian Workers Union has a great number of members, especially in Queensland. A history has been written of the Mount Isa struggle, which the Minister tried to have suppressed but which ought to be available in the Parliamentary Library. If it is not available in

the Library I can get anyone a copy. If people want to know what this Minister did in internecine union fights they only have to read the document. It is a pity that the Minister tries to pretend that he had not seen these amendments until a few moments ago. He nows full well that he saw these identical amendments 6 months ago. The arguments he advanced against them 6 months ago were no more effective than the arguments he has advanced against them tonight. If the Minister had one atom of concern for rank and file control over trade union affairs and less concern for the internecine power struggle within the AWU, his old union, and for trying to pay off past debts, he would let these amendments through and let the rank and file members have an influence, and a real influence, in the affairs of their own unions.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON (Hindmarsh—Minister for Labor and Immigration) (8.33)—I cannot remain silent in the face of the exaggerated, unfair and quite false allegations about—

Mr Malcolm Fraser—Not exaggerated. If you read the book about Mount Isa, you will see that I very much understated them.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—I read the book about Mount Isa and used to have to put it down every few seconds because I could not control my laughter. The author talked about his speaking to somebody with 'a twinkle in my eye', whatever that means.

Mr MacKellar—You have never had a twinkle in your eye, have you?

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—No. But the author said: 'Bert Huntley indicated that they wanted me to call a meeting for Saturday the 16th to give a report and to exchange views. I asked him what does that mean with a twinkle in my eye.' He must have had a mirror in front of him when he wrote the book or when he had the interview. On another occasion he said that he looked around the room and he saw a lot of comms sitting around in clichés. If honourable members think that is not what is written in the book I suggest they borrow the book from the Parliamentary Library—I suggest they do not buy one—and they will see that the author stated that I told somebody something with a twinkle in my eye. They will see that the author said that he went to a union meeting and he saw communists sitting around in clichés. The book on Mount Isa was written by this man with whom the honourable member for Wannan seems to have so much in common.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—You tried to take court action to stop it.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—He pulled the honourable member's leg again when he told him that.

Mr Malcolm Fraser—You tried; you know quite well.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—He has been pulling the honourable member's leg for a long time. The honourable member told us last time we debated this legislation that Edgar Williams told him he would not have a bar of it. I think that Edgar Williams, if he had any views to express, would have expressed them to me. I am the Minister. The honourable member is not likely to be the Minister in the future. He might be Prime Minister one day, if he lives long enough. The present Prime Minister looks extremely healthy to me. Judging from today's question time the present Opposition leader, I think, is about to be put over the high jump at any time. But good luck to the honourable member for Wannan; he went close last time and I only hope that next time he has better luck. I return to the subject of the debate. To say that the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union would keep the names of those who applied for postal votes is a dastardly untruth. It is not a lie because the honourable member probably knows no different, but it is a dastardly untruth to say that. Mr Chairman, the Leader of the House (Mr Daly) believes that I have completely routed or 'rooted' the honourable member, as a leading official of the AWU once said.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Scholes)—Order! The Minister will not make that sort of remark.

Mr CLYDE CAMERON—The member was reading a report of mine which talked about how Pat Galvin had routed Harold Wells of the Miners Federation. As he read it out he mispronounced it. He said that Pat Galvin completely 'rooted' the members of the Miners Federation. He was reading a report in which the word was spelt 'r-o-u-t-e-d'.

Question put:

That the amendments (Mr Malcolm Fraser's) be agreed to.

The Committee divided.

(The Chairman—Mr G. G. D. Scholes)

Ayes	53
Noes	61
	—
Majority	8
	—

AYES

Adermann, A. E.
Anthony, J. D.
Bonnett, R. N.

NOES

Armitage, J. L.
Barnard, L. H.
Beazley, K. E.

AYES

Bourchier, J. W.
 Bungey, M. H.
 Cadman, A. G.
 Cairns, Kevin
 Calder, S. E.
 Connolly, D. M.
 Corbett, J.
 Drummond, P. H.
 Drury, E. N.
 Edwards, H. R.
 Erwin, G. D.
 Fisher, P. S.
 Forbes, A. J.
 Fraser, Malcolm
 Garland, R. V.
 Giles, G. O' H.
 Graham, B. W.
 Hewson, H. A.
 Hodges, J. C.
 Holten, R. McN.
 Howard, J. W.
 Hunt, R. J. D.
 Hyde, J. M.
 Jarman, A. W.
 Katter, R. C.
 Kelly, C. R.
 Killen, D. J.
 King, R. S.
 Luccock, P. E.
 Lynch, P. R.
 MacKellar, M. J. R.
 McLeay, J. E.
 McMahon, W.
 McVeigh, D. T.
 Macphee, I. M.
 Millar, P. C.
 Nixon, P. J.
 O'Keefe, F. L.
 Peacock, A. S.
 Robinson, Eric
 Robinson, Ian
 Ruddock, P. M.
 Sinclair, I. McC.
 Staley, A. A.
 Street, A. A.
 Sullivan, J. W.
 Viner, R. I.
 Wentworth, W. C.

Tellers:

Cameron, Donald
 England, J. A.

NOES

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

Tellers:

James, A. W.
 Johnson, Keith

PAIRS

Chip, D. L.
 Fairbairn, D. E.
 Snedden, B. M.

Fulton, W. J.
 Nicholls, M. H.
 Whitlam, E. G.

CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION
 BILL (No. 2) 1974 [No. 2]

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 February on motion
 by Mr Clyde Cameron:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER (Wannon) (8.46)—This Bill contains its own contradictions. Just as the previous legislation, the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill 1974 [No. 2], was passed by this House by the tactics of the Government—it supported the large and the powerful against the rank and file membership of the unions—so too in this Bill we find another contradiction but of a different character. In this Bill the Minister for Labor (Mr Clyde Cameron) is trying to say, if I understand him correctly—I hope he will nod his head if I misinterpret him—that 2 parties, the employers and employees, ought to be allowed to get together to make agreements and that nobody should stand in the way of those agreements no matter what they are. The Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, conciliators and others should stand outside the arrangements negotiated between employers and employees. Basically, it has been the Minister's attitude to agreements for quite some time that nobody should stand between the 2 parties.

Consistent with that attitude, the Minister has proposed in this legislation that the circumstances in which certification of a particular agreement could be refused by the Arbitration Commission be reduced. The impetus of this legislation is towards private arrangements between employers and employees and to take industrial negotiation away from the Arbitration Commission itself. But what the Minister seems not to have realised is that the instructions he gave to the Government's counsel in the wage indexation case before the Arbitration Commission fly in complete and utter defiance of the principles proposed in this legislation because one of the Australian Government's employees stated quite plainly before the Arbitration Commission: 'This is what must happen and if unions do not agree with this the Commission must deny their claims'. In that case the Government was saying that the Government and the Commission have a perfect right to stand between negotiations freely arrived at between employers and employees.

The Minister really must try to get into his mind some consistent objective in relation to industrial relations because all he succeeds in doing is confusing not only his own supporters in the Australian Council of Trade Unions but also

Question so resolved in the negative.

Bill agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill (on motion by Mr Clyde Cameron)—by leave—read a third time.

the great bulk of the union movement. That may be one of the reasons why the ACTU said that wage restraint, which would seem at one part to have been an integral part of the Government's case in relation to wage indexation, was not in its handbook and that it was a matter for the individual unions themselves to determine. One member of the ACTU executive said: 'In the ACTU no matter what resolution is passed, if the word 'restraint' is in it I will be against it.' The Minister knows that full well. The Minister probably knows that that was not just the view of one particular member of the ACTU Executive but was the view of the majority. It was a view which I believe the President of the ACTU accepted against his better inclinations, knowing how much the President of the ACTU and the President of the Australian Labor Party would have wanted to support the Minister in these particular matters. There was not any noticeable attempt by the President of the Labor Party and the President of the ACTU to support the Minister in these matters.

This legislation says that employers and employees ought to be able to get together; the Commission ought to have a minimum opportunity to stand between 2 parties in whatever arrangements they might like to make. I will read now from the statement of the wage indexation system advanced by the Australian Government, of which the Minister is a member. It states, in part:

The Unions claim wage indexation. The Government supports that claim on condition that wage claims for the next 2 years are limited in accordance with assurances to be given to the Commission.

Of course, there were no assurances. Then there was a description of the wage indexation proposals of the Minister which were limited, to a certain extent, up to average weekly earnings and at a fixed rate beyond that. The case pointed out that wage indexation adjustments would take place quarterly and would be consistent with the consumer price index up to average weekly earnings but at a level equal to average weekly earnings beyond that point.

Counsel for the Government went on to say on the 9th page of its evidence before the Commission:

There are to be no wage increases on account of price increases except as provided above. Wage increases are otherwise to be limited to those on account of changes in national productivity, work value, or other special circumstances, but not including changes in relativities.

A little further we find that Mr Justice Robinson asked this question:

What would happen if there is a demand made for general increases in wages as a result of a new award review or in accordance with the expiry of the old award which would be perfectly normal and at the end of 4 weeks the parties come to the Commission and they say: We are in agreement that for work value reasons the wages in this industry should be increased by \$10?

Mr McGarvie, representing the Minister and the Government, said:

In those circumstances the Commission, in accordance with the principles which it would have adopted in these proceedings, would look at that agreement and before making an award in those terms or certifying the agreement, would satisfy itself whether or not it was in the public interest—

I ask the House to note those words—

to make the award or to certify the agreement. In doing that, it would be guided by an application of the principles which have been put forward.

There would be nothing beyond the consumer price index increases, apart from productivity. Mr McGarvie continued:

If it were a case in which the Commission came to the conclusion that there was no work value increase which would justify the increase of the \$10, the Commission would decline to certify and to make an award in those terms.

That was said by Mr McGarvie, counsel for the Minister and for the Commonwealth. Mr McGarvie must have been quite unaware of the proposed amendments to this legislation. If Mr McGarvie had read the Minister's Bill which at its last reading was 6 months old or at an earlier time when it was 12 months old or more, he would have known that the Commission would have no power to deny the agreement that would be proposed under the terms of the legislation the Minister is now introducing into this House.

So what the Minister is proposing is a sham on 2 counts. He is proposing wage indexation under certain commissions through the mouth of his counsel, Mr McGarvie, and Mr McGarvie is stating that the Commission would have powers to restrain applications in relation to certification that might come before the Commission which this Bill is specifically designed to take away from the Commission.

The Minister cannot have it both ways. Mr McGarvie said that the Commission would determine whether or not it was in the public interest to make the award or to certify the agreement. That power is being taken away from the Commission and in the future if this Bill becomes law—God forbid it does—the Commission will only have power to refuse to certify a particular agreement if it is, in the view of the Commission, a major detriment to the public interest. That is a very different question from its not being in the public interest. It is a much more difficult hurdle to jump, and I doubt whether any commissioner or any judge of the Commission would say that a

particular matter was a major detriment to the public interest.

That is the first count on which Mr McGarvie has been misled in the brief that he has been given and on which he was not advised of the legislation which the Minister was intending to bring before this House. I hope that the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission will take note of this debate, and its consequences, in coming to its conclusion. At the same time Mr McGarvie said that if the Commission came to the conclusion that there was no work value increase which would justify the increase of \$10 the Commission would decline to certify or to make an award on those terms. This particular legislation would deny the Commission any power to deny the certification of agreement in those terms. The Minister must know that very well indeed.

It is difficult to put with complete accuracy what the Minister is doing and, at the same time, in parliamentary language. The Minister is saying one thing to this Parliament and quite another thing to Mr McGarvie, his counsel before the Arbitration Commission. Is it this Parliament, the Arbitration Commission or just the ACTU he is trying to mislead? The Minister does not often talk to the ACTU because the ACTU has denied him and told him that his plans for wage indexation are sheer nonsense and that they will have none of it. The white collar unions have told him the same thing. They will have no part of it. One only has to get into any union forum around this country and people will say that the Minister is hard working but they only wish he would talk to them a little more so that he could understand what they have in their minds and there would be some prospect of industrial peace.

Some wish that the National Labor Advisory Council could be re-established, because that at least was a forum in which employers, employees and the Government could talk. The Minister does not often talk but when he does and when employers and employees come to a unanimous agreement, as I will demonstrate before this debate has concluded, and he does not like that unanimous agreement, he ignores it utterly. That is not a statement made by a Liberal shadow Minister for Labor. It is a statement that I will prove absolutely to this Parliament and, if necessary, I will table the papers necessary for its proof.

Mr Clyde Cameron—I would like that.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—I think you would like it. It would enable the Minister to

know who his best friends are. In any case, this is what the situation is in relation to this legislation. There is a gross contradiction with the purposes of this Bill and with everything that has happened in relation to the Arbitration Commission and indexation. The Minister has been riding 2 horses or running down a barbed wire fence with one leg on each side. He is going to find that it is an uncomfortable experience.

Mr Clyde Cameron—How do you know?

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—I have a vivid imagination. My heart grieves for the Minister being dragged along by the ACTU on the one side of the barbed wire fence and being dragged along by some other group on the other side. It must be a rasping experience.

Mr Clyde Cameron—It is. It is terrible. It is dreadful. Take your hands out of your pockets. Try to forget it.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—That is not even original. It goes back to an earlier honourable member for Henty and your present Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam). The Minister should not embarrass in the way in which the present Prime Minister was then embarrassed and should not seek to remind the Prime Minister of that circumstance. The contradictions of the legislation are plain. The Bill says to the two parties: 'Do as you like'. But the Government says to the Commission: 'Do as we tell you and not otherwise'. Quite plainly what the Government is saying to the Commission is in defiance of everything that the Minister has been putting in relation to industrial relations over the last 2 years. The decision that the ACTU came to in relation to wage indexation, the determination that there could be no restraint on the part of any trade union, the determination of the white collar unions to press forward and to oppose the indexation proposals are all ample evidence of the Minister's tragic wilfulness and determination to go his own way despite the advice of the ACTU and despite the pre-eminent advice of his own Department.

The one thing which the Minister really ought to make up his mind about is consultations with the people intimately involved. I do not beg so much for consultation with employer organisations as I do for consultation with employee organisations whom the Minister ought to be closely aside, but whom the Minister has ignored more than any other group in this country. When this Government is destroyed and beaten it is going to be destroyed and beaten because of the intransigence of this Minister as much as any other single act. The honourable member for Port Adelaide (Mr Young) who is sitting on the

front bench but who does not yet belong to it—no doubt he will shortly—knows quite well that everything I have said in relation to this matter is true. He knows quite well that every senior trade union leader throughout Australia, who would also be a member of the Australian Labor Party, would confirm its truth, and that is excluding only a militant minority.

Mr Young—I like your earlier line about the control body.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Oh, so you are. But this Minister in particular operates by remote control but not by the ALP trade unions. If he were controlled by the ALP trade unions I would not mind it as much as his being controlled by the ones who do in fact control him because at least the ALP trade unions are democrats.

This Bill gravely weakens the public interest clauses of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. This is one of the quite significant differences between the Government and the Opposition Parties. We believe that in industrial negotiations there is a silent third party ever present, and that is the Australian public. The Australian public is concerned at what happens in major wage negotiations. They are concerned if inflation runs unduly rampantly throughout the community. Even the Prime Minister, despite what the Treasurer and Deputy Prime Minister (Dr J. F. Cairns) said today, has admitted that it is excessive wage claims that have resulted in the Government's present economic difficulties. I have never heard any Deputy Prime Minister go so near to denying his own Prime Minister as the Honourable Dr Jim Cairns did at question time today in relation to that matter.

There is a third party in industrial negotiations—the general public. The provisions of this legislation would deny the legitimate interests of the Australian public because the public interest clauses right throughout the legislation are weakened to such an extent that they would be of no account. Matters that would affect standard hours of work, altering minimum wages on the grounds of the national economy, annual leave provisions, long service pay and benefits are at present powers to be exercised by the Full Bench alone. But under the provisions of this legislation in relation to agreements, these matters can be determined by a commissioner alone. This means that there will be a significant difference in the future between the powers of the Commission in relation to awards and in relation to agreements. The legislation gravely weakens the Commission's power in relation to agreements.

The Minister seeks to exempt agreements from these general provisions.

I have already mentioned that this legislation would enable a commissioner to refuse to certify an agreement only if it became a major detriment to the public interest as opposed to the circumstances which apply at present, namely if it is not in the public interest. What is proposed in the legislation is a much lesser hurdle to jump. I have already mentioned also the contradictions between the proposals in this legislation and the arguments of the Australian Government and Mr McGarvie, Q.C., before the Arbitration Commission in relation to wage indexation. I only hope that every trade union in the country reads of that contradiction and reads of the impossible position in which the Minister has put himself in relation to these 2 matters.

The provisions of the legislation gravely weaken the Commission itself and I think in a number of matters would make the Commission unworkable. One of the central parts of the amendments is that an agreement ought to be referred to the rank and file members of the trade union movement. That, I believe, would lead to a number of private agreements outside the Conciliation and Arbitration Act where no attempts of any kind would be made to have them certified. It would be an impetus to movement outside the Commission, and that is consistent with the views earlier expressed by the Minister when he said he wanted to have separate conciliators and arbitrators outside the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. One part of the Minister's industrial relations proposals would seem to have lapsed in the present circumstances.

Under the present law the committee of management of a union must sign a statutory declaration that the committee of management approves the principal terms of an agreement, and that, I believe, is a reasonable and proper position. The committee of management is a committee of management. It must have responsibility. It must be given credit for that. It must be given its own way of consulting with the rank and file because unions differ so greatly. What is appropriate to the Waterside Workers Federation is not appropriate to the Minister's old favourite union, the Australian Workers Union. But the Minister is now also saying that the principal terms of an agreement must be referred to the financial members, undefined, of a union, that there must be consultation and that the principal terms must be referred. There could be all the litigation in the world over what is meant by 'consultation'—whether it is adequate or inadequate—and what is meant by the principal

terms of the agreement—whether they have in fact been referred or whether some have been omitted. There could be litigation without end on these matters. But even if there were not to be a lawyer's field day, and knowing the Minister's favoured view of lawyers and his wish to exempt the arbitration processes from too much legalism, it is strange that these matters have crept into his amendment. But even putting that aside, in practice what the Minister is proposing would not and could not work.

Let us take the Waterside Workers Federation. The members of this union work together in a number of large centres. They do have mass meetings. New agreements are referred to members of this union at those meetings and in these circumstances the system can work. It can and does work for the Australian Waterside Workers Federation. But it cannot work for the Australian Workers Union in the shearing sheds. How can one refer a new shearing award to 10 000 or 20 000 shearing sheds right throughout Australia?

Mr Young—Why do you not ask them?

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Ask who?

Mr Young—Ask the shearers whether they are prepared to go to a central point to have their meetings.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—Ask them to go to a central point when they are in every corner of Australia? Would the union pay for their time to get them there? The honourable member knows quite well that they have not and they will not and it just cannot be done.

Mr Young—It was in 1956.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—As the honourable member might know, if he knows any industrial history, I was on the shearers' side during the 1956 strike. That strike was one of the silliest and most provoked strikes of all. But at the same time such a proposal just will not work and the AWU leaders know it will not work. It is one example of the Minister's intransigence that he seeks to continue with this all-embracing rule for all unions no matter what the particular circumstances of the union might be.

There are 6000 shops in the metal trades. I have been advised that under the law as it is proposed, if three or four shops or the delegates from those shops wrote in and said they had not been consulted, a Commissioner, an Arbitration Court judge, would feel duty bound to establish a ballot to see whether they agreed or did not agree. Once we do that there is all the avenue in the world for a difficult minority to make sure

that a ballot was not accepted. If there are 6000 shops there are certain to be more than three or four shops that get omitted in the consultation process.

In the case of new ventures very often one has to negotiate an award or conditions before any one is employed. If one is starting a new mining town or a new mining venture in some area how can one possibly get people together and employ them when one does not know the conditions. Does one then say to those people: 'Now we are going to refer the terms of the agreement to you?' The union has to do this.

Mr Young—Rubbish.

Mr MALCOLM FRASER—I would go a little quiet if I were you because I am going to read something in a minute which will demonstrate that I have massive trade union support for what I am saying. In the circumstance of new ventures in which conditions have to be determined, the union has to do the best it can to negotiate the circumstances, and then you go out to employ people. It is just not possible. In circumstances in which there is a high labour turnover, tragically sometimes up to 200 per cent a year, under the terms of the Minister's proposals there can be a reference on 1 February but by 1 June there is hardly anyone left to whom the agreement was referred so they all say they have a perfect right under the Minister's terms to break the agreement. In the mining towns of Australia that is the circumstance. The Minister is flying in the face of industrial and practical reality in pushing this amendment once again. It would force the circumstance in which people would have to bypass the Commission and it would weaken union leadership because it would force a situation in which people are referred back to that situation. In relation to this matter it is probably well worth quoting some words from an industrial peace conference. Mr Souter is reported in the minutes of the last Industrial Peace Conference as follows:

Mr Souter outlined the normal procedure followed by ACTU in arranging the formulation of claims and progress of negotiations, particularly regarding the points at which membership is consulted. He mentioned the practical problems involved in the consultation of membership at all stages and the effect on the finalisation of negotiations. The ACTU, he said, was in favour of consultative negotiations but did not attempt to direct unions on how these should be conducted.

That is precisely what the Minister is trying to do. Mr Souter went on to say that the ACTU has reservations about the establishment of set procedures rather than allowing each case to be treated in the most practical way. Mr Coleman, who I understand is a Trades and Labor Council

secretary from a most important State, made the point that some industries are too large and diverse to allow full membership consultation, but such consultation was carried out in organised industries. He used the metal trades industry and the oil industry as examples of the 2 distinct types. Mr Coleman felt that the level of membership consultation depends on the nature of the industry concerned but supported the development of the concept. That would seem to be a practical point of view. Mr Marsh, from New South Wales, commented that he would not wish to see hard and fast regulations laid down in respect of membership consultation because of the different sets of circumstances which can apply. He specifically mentioned the situation in which agreements are negotiated prior to employees being engaged. That is precisely the circumstance of a new venture which I mentioned.

At the conclusion of that Industrial Peace Conference a Press statement in the following terms was issued:

The Conference took note of the changes made in the recent legislation affecting the certification of agreements and their duration. The Conference felt that experience should be gained of the working of these provisions before considering any further changes.

That decision was made only in February last year and 6 weeks later the Minister had this kind of Bill in the House ignoring the Industrial Peace Conference. That is why he has not consulted with employers and employees on that point since.

I would like to make another point which again shows the Minister's lack of consultation with trade union leaders, with the ACTU and with employers. It concerns the termination of agreements. He has now proposed that after the end of the fixed term of an agreement, on 30 days notice either party may cancel that agreement and he thinks that that will lead to a better situation, encourage renegotiation of agreements and all the rest. It is a very significant change from the proposals he had earlier put down, but again it is worth noting the view of the Industrial Peace Conference on this matter. On the question by the Chairman as to whether the Conference saw any need for legislative changes regarding agreement termination, it was said that the 3-year period recently introduced was a significant change in itself. It was said—I will not mention the person's name because it might be improper to name an officer of the Department of Labor and Immigration—that:

The significant difference between the present legislation and the procedure involved in the Minister's proposals is that at present an agreement continues until superseded, while under the proposals an agreement could be terminated

at the request of a party. Treatment of long service leave and sick leave would need to be considered.

That is the critical point. On a question from Mr Justice Moore, Chairman of the Conference, as to whether the Conference saw any practical problems in allowing agreements to continue until replaced—as opposed to the provisions in this Bill—employer and employee representatives saw no difficulties in so doing. In other words, they did not want the changes which the Minister is determined to try to force through this Parliament. The Minister's record of gaining his own way in defiance of the advice of his own Department, in defiance of the advice of employer and employee representatives and in defiance of the best industrial relations experience available in this country is now becoming well known throughout Australia. I can only say that it is a tragedy for industrial relations experience in this country because 2 years ago nobody probably in the history of the Commonwealth or since the introduction of the Arbitration Act might have been better placed than the present Minister to introduce, from his own unique experience and what should have been his own unique contacts with the trade union movement, legislation which would have advanced industrial peace in Australia.

Question put:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The House divided.

(Mr Speaker—Hon. J. F. Cope)

Ayes	59
Noes	51
	—
Majority	8
	—

AYES	NOES
Armitage, J. L.	Adermann, A. E.
Barnard, L. H.	Anthony, J. D.
Beazley, K. E.	Bonnett, R. N.
Bennett, A. F.	Bourchier, J. W.
Berinson, J. M.	Bungy, M. H.
Bowen, Lionel	Cadman, A. G.
Bryant, G. M.	Calder, S. E.
Cairns, J. F.	Connolly, D. M.
Cameron, Clyde	Corbett, J.
Cass, M. H.	Drummond, P. H.
Child, G. J. L.	Drury, E. N.
Clayton, G.	Edwards, H. R.
Coates, J.	Erwin, G. D.
Cohen, B.	Fisher, P. S.
Collard, F. W.	Forbes, A. J.
Crean, F.	Fraser, Malcolm
Cross, M. D.	Garland, R. V.
Daly, F. M.	Giles, G. O'H.
Davies, R.	Graham, B. W.
Dawkins, J. S.	Hewson, H. A.
Duthie, G. W. A.	Hodges, J. C.
Enderby, K. E.	Holten, R. McN.
Everingham, D. N.	Howard, J. W.
FitzPatrick, J.	Hunt, R. J. D.
Fry, K. L.	Hyde, J. M.
Garrick, H. J.	Jarman, A. W.

AYES

Gun, R. T.
 Hayden, W. G.
 Hurford, C. J.
 Innes, U. E.
 Jacobi, R.
 Jenkins, H. A.
 Johnson, Les
 Keogh, L. J.
 Kerin, J. C.
 Klugman, R. E.
 Lamb, A. H.
 Luchetti, A. S.
 McKenzie, D. C.
 Marin, V. J.
 Mathews, C. R. T.
 Morris, P. F.
 Morrison, W. L.
 Mulder, A. W.
 Oldmeadow, M. W.
 Patterson, R. A.
 Reynolds, L. J.
 Riordan, J. M.
 Scholes, G. G. D.
 Sherry, R. H.
 Stewart, F. E.
 Thorburn, R. W.
 Uren, T.
 Wallis, L. G.
 Whan, R. B.
 Willis, R.
 Young, M. J.

Tellers:

James, A. W.
 Johnson, Keith

NOES

Katter, R. C.
 Kelly, C. R.
 Killen, D. J.
 King, R. S.
 Lucock, P. E.
 Lynch, P. R.
 MacKellar, M. J. R.
 McLeay, J. E.
 McMahon, W.
 McVeigh, D. T.
 Macphee, I. M.
 Millar, P. C.
 Nixon, P. I.
 O'Keefe, F. L.
 Peacock, A. S.
 Robinson, Eric
 Robinson, Ian
 Ruddock, P. M.
 Sinclair, I. McC.
 Staley, A. A.
 Street, A. A.
 Sullivan, J. W.
 Viner, R. I.

Tellers:

Cameron, Donald
 England, J. A.

PAIRS

Fulton, W. J.
 Nichols, M. H.
 Whitlam, E. G.

Chipp, D. L.
 Fairbairn, D. E.
 Snedden, B. M.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

Bill (on motion by Mr Clyde Cameron) read a third time.

**AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY
 DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BILL
 1974 [No. 2]**

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 February, on motion by Dr J. F. Cairns:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr DALY (Grayndler—Leader of the House)—May I have the indulgence of the House to raise a point of procedure on this legislation? Before the debate on this Bill is resumed I would like to suggest that it may suit the convenience of the House to have a general debate covering this Bill and the National Investment Fund Bill 1974 (No. 2) as they are related measures. Separate questions will, of course, be put on each of the Bills at the conclusion of the debate. I suggest

therefore, Mr Speaker, that you permit the subject matter of the 2 Bills to be discussed in this debate.

Mr SPEAKER—Is it the wish of the House to have a general debate covering the 2 measures? There being no objection, I will allow that course to be followed.

Mr ANTHONY (Richmond—Leader of the Australian Country Party) (9.26)—This is the second time this legislation has come before the House in its present form. It was before the House at the end of last year. It was then transmitted to the Senate, but the Senate did not deal with it. I think it is necessary to say a little about the history of this legislation so that our attitudes are clearly understood. Towards the end of 1973 the then Minister for Overseas Trade (Dr J. F. Cairns) introduced the Australian Industry Development Corporation Bill and the National Investment Fund Bill. That legislation provided for a very extensive expansion of the operations of the AIDC, which caused concern in the Senate to such an extent that it asked that the legislation be examined by the Senate Select Committee on Foreign Ownership and Control. That Committee called for evidence, and in the course of it receiving evidence and in the course of public debate on the question the Minister revised the legislation and introduced new legislation the following year. That legislation was debated in the Parliament.

The Opposition proposed a good many amendments, especially to the Australian Industry Development Corporation Bill but also to the National Investment Fund Bill. Although the amendments were accepted by the Government, the Opposition made a proviso that the legislation would not have the total support of the Opposition until the Senate Select Committee's report on the legislation was examined, just in case it recommended further amendments. However, the Government has failed to call for the report of the Senate Select Committee and has said that it regards the Senate's deferral of the legislation until the Senate Select Committee reports as a rejection of the legislation by the Senate.

Although it is regarded in certain sections of the community as being highly contentious legislation, when it first came before the Parliament we in the Opposition were prepared to look at it in a conciliatory manner in an endeavour to improve it and not to show any undue or dogmatic opposition to it. We resolved to do that in spite of the fact that the implications of the expanded Australian Industry Development

Corporation and National Investment Fund were awesome and put a great deal of fear into the community. There was the possibility of those bodies being used as a government instrument for furthering the socialist beliefs of a socialist government. However we tried to be as helpful and co-operative as we could with the Government. We were disappointed that the Government refused to allow the Senate Select Committee to report. So that the full facts of the way in which this Government is ignoring the proper workings of the Senate committees and the evidence and advice which they are prepared to give to the Government might be known to the Australian people I think it proper for me to read from the speech which the chairman of that Senate Select Committee, Senator McAuliffe, delivered to the Senate. He said:

The Senate referred the amending Australian Industry Development Corporation Bill 1973 and National Investment Fund Bill 1973 to the Committee on 28 November 1973 for inquiry and report by 12 March 1974. Upon receiving this reference the Committee immediately suspended the investigations which it was undertaking at that time and despite the limited time available organised and carried out an investigation. Advertisements appeared in the daily Press on 8 and 15 December 1973 inviting submissions by 31 December 1973, and in addition the Committee approached all of the major industry and trade associations in the financial sector. The Committee received 28 formal submissions and called representatives of 12 organisations to give further oral evidence at a series of public hearings which were conducted in Canberra from 5 to 12 February prior to the prorogation of Parliament on 14 February 1974. Copies of the evidence taken are available to interested persons, firms and organisations, upon request, from the Secretary of the Committee.

In the conduct of its inquiry the Committee took as the broad basis for its inquiry 2 aspects of its terms of reference, namely:

(d) the best method of mobilising Australian capital resources and attracting their commitment to national development.

(e) the best method of reconciling the inflow of overseas capital for Australian development with the retention of Australian ownership and control.

He went on to say how the Committee took a lot of evidence on these Bills. I think his speech is worth reading. He continued:

At the same time the Committee recognised that the Bills raised issues of critical importance extending over a wide area which necessitated an examination of the Bills not only from the viewpoint of Australian ownership and control objectives but also from other aspects. These included possible Government involvement in the Australian capital market and industrial structure arising from the proposed additional powers, extended functions and privileges of the Australian Industry Development Corporation; the implications for other financial institutions in the money and capital market arising from the financing activities of the AIDC and the NIF; the consequent implications for resource use in the economy and the attainment of other economic and social objectives.

Obviously a pretty extensive inquiry was being conducted. The Chairman stated further:

Before concluding, I wish to direct the attention of the Senate to 2 events which occurred during the Committee's AIDC and NIF inquiries and which reflect adversely upon the Senate. The Committee has been criticised for not presenting a report by 12 March 1974 as requested. Such criticism ignores the fact that because of the prorogation of Parliament on 14 February the Bills lapsed and did not exist after that date. The Committee was not reconstituted again until 14 March and members were not appointed until 19 March, the same day that the AIDC and NIF Bills were again referred to the Committee for report as soon as possible. The Committee was considering a draft report, but again due to circumstances outside its control was unable to report. This was because Parliament was dissolved.

Another aspect—I want to highlight this one—which must be commented upon was the unusual action taken by the Government in resubmitting the Bills in another place on 8 April 1974, while the Bills are still being considered by the Committee as directed by the Senate. The Committee was on the point of presenting its report when Parliament was dissolved on 11 April 1974. The AIDC and NIF Bills were again reintroduced in the other place on 16 July and during his second reading speech the Minister in charge of the Bills, Dr J. F. Cairns, Minister for Overseas Trade, again referred to 'a remarkable record of delay' and said 'that the Committee had not reported by 12 March nor had it reported by the time the Bills were again reintroduced, a further 27 days later'. These statements, were not in accordance with the facts of the situation and as well as being incorrect and misleading, these statements reflect adversely upon the Committee. Mr President, for the information of honourable senators I have prepared a list of the key dates relating to the inquiry and I seek leave to have them incorporated in Hansard.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Scholes)—Is leave granted?

Dr J. F. Cairns—I would rather he read them.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—Leave is not granted.

Mr ANTHONY—I would have been very surprised if it had been. As a matter of fact I did not ask for leave. I was reading the report of the Senate Hansard. It is up to the Deputy Prime Minister whether he will permit this report to be incorporated. But if he feels so sensitive about the matter that he does not want the documents incorporated—

Dr J. F. Cairns—I have so little sensitivity left that I would rather you read them.

Mr ANTHONY—I imagine that the Deputy Prime Minister must have little sensitivity these days. He does not want the documents incorporated in Hansard. The Government is trying to

create grounds to refuse the Senate having the Committee's report. Obviously it must be worried or concerned about the report.

Dr J. F. Cairns—Has the Committee reported?

Mr ANTHONY—You will not allow it to report. Listen to the Minister trying to make excuses. I have quoted the Chairman of a Senate committee, a Government supporter, criticising the Minister for not allowing the report into the Senate so that senators could have a full opportunity of examining the wide ramifications of the AIDC and the NIF legislation. I can understand the Minister being a little toey at the moment when he is losing the loyalty of some of his senators. But these people have worked hard on this Committee, they have taken evidence, and now they are being gagged in presenting this evidence. This has quite a significant bearing upon the Opposition's attitude to the Bills presently being discussed. I said that we tried to be conciliatory last time. We tried to get the legislation through and we hoped it would not be held up unduly in the Senate. But now the legislation is reintroduced and the Senate is being completely ignored.

We have looked at the AIDC legislation. There are a number of amendments in it. Some of them clarify the functions of this organisation. I think these are matters about which one would not argue. They give the Corporation power to raise money in Australia as well as overseas. That is probably a worthwhile function although the Corporation needs to be able to compete on equal terms in the Australian money market if it is not to have a preferred position and advantage over private enterprise operations.

The legislation also brings in a national interest clause. It, of course, always produces a degree of reservation in the Opposition when there is a socialist government which wants unduly to involve itself in private enterprise. But we accept that in certain circumstances there may need to be this special involvement in areas where at this stage it is not a sound commercial investment. However we have made sure that the legislation gives a degree of protection so that there is scrutiny—that is, that before any direction can be given to the Corporation to use its funds in what are considered uneconomic ventures at this stage, it has to have the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament. I think that is a very sound safeguard.

Also, the appointment of people to the various committees that the Corporation operates needs the consent of the Governor-General so that it is not done just with the Minister's authority. These

are some of the amendments that the Government was gracious enough to accept. They have expanded the operations of the Corporation quite considerably and brought it more up to date. But I must say that I do not think that anybody can just sit back and accept this Bill as a piece of legislation not causing some qualms and some concern, particularly in view of the way in which the AIDC has been acting in recent times.

The National Investment Fund Bill is another issue altogether. It establishes a special merchant bank or financial institution, call it what you like, which will enable the Government to draw very large sums of money out of the community in competition with the private sector. A ceiling of \$500m was put on it under the previous legislation. When one looks at some of the attitudes adopted by the Government in recent days and the performance of the AIDC one has certain grounds at the moment for not allowing this very vast expansion of the operations of the AIDC. Therefore, we will be opposing the National Investment Fund Bill.

Why are we becoming cautious? Anybody who has been watching the activities of the Government and such things as the Terrigal conference at which the Treasurer sought and obtained the approval of the Australian Labor Party to set up a national planning department must wonder where it is going to lead to. How is the Government going to implement it or bring it about? The immediate question that arises is: Is the expanded AIDC going to be a vehicle in its operations? Is the \$500m going to be part of the rationalisation of industry that the Government talks about? Is it to be used as part of the Government's program for more public involvement in the private sector of the community?

Are we being unfair in our criticism, in our suspicions? In view of the operations of the Petroleum and Minerals Authority I think that we have every justification for adopting the attitude we have adopted. What has been more disgraceful than the way in which the Government has entered into the Wambo coal deal? That was just highway robbery of the worst possible kind. What about the issue of shares in Mary Kathleen Uranium Ltd? If any director had made an issue of shares on the same terms and conditions at which the Government underwrote them in that case he would be censured very severely by the stock exchanges in Australia. But, of course, that was done as a device by the Government to buy its way into a section of private enterprise—in that case, uranium.

We know that the latest policy of the Labor Party is to take over the ownership as well as the control of the energy resources of this country. What can that mean? It will mean private enterprise being displaced by the Government. We on this side of the House are not going to allow that sort of thing to happen. We are going to take every step to safeguard the situation that we can. We accept that the AIDC has a special role to play in facilitating Australian companies to retain their ownership against foreign competition and we want to try to prevent the takeover of Australian firms by overseas interests. So there is a need for the AIDC. But is there a need at the moment for lush funds to be poured upon it?

When one starts to look more closely at the operations of this body one starts to wonder why there is a hurry to obtain more funds. At the moment it has a capital structure of \$55m. The AIDC was given \$50m interest free by the Government and it has accumulated reserves of about \$5m. To date the Corporation has borrowed another \$65m. But, more importantly, the performance of the AIDC to date does not reveal a very impressive record. In the 1973-74 financial year the AIDC made a profit of slightly over \$800,000 or a return of 1.6 per cent on capital. In fact, some of the Corporation's investments have been quite disastrous. For instance, the AIDC acquired \$2.7m worth of shares in a paper making company called Excor Ltd. It was part of the Bowater Corporation—I think that Bowater-Raleigh is the correct name. The Corporation acquired those shares at \$3 each. The shares are now worth 55c each. It acquired those shares by unloading to a foreign company and it has not even got control of the company. Bowater is still in control of the company. That is a pretty sound investment! Secondly, the AIDC spent \$1.8m buying shares in M. B. Johns Ltd, a company manufacturing valves. The shares for which the Corporation paid \$1.52c each are now worth 62c each.

Those illustrations reflect the commercial judgment of the Corporation. I know that it can make mistakes. We can all make mistakes. But I have had a number of people write to me expressing a great deal of concern at the actions of the AIDC when companies with which it has been involved have gone broke and the AIDC has had first call on the funds and left the ordinary little individual with nothing. A person wrote to me the other day about a request he had made to the AIDC for funds. He had a very successful engineering company. The AIDC said that it would provide the \$300,000-odd that the

company was looking for at 14 per cent interest, but that there had to be an establishment fee of \$5,000 and that it had to be covered for any change in currency values and the company had to bear the losses. A complete mortgage was to be taken over the company. It is hardly the provision of a special service to Australian industry when those sorts of conditions are being imposed.

Mr Jacobi—They were all in your time.

Mr ANTHONY—The honourable member for Hawker said that they were all in our time. This gentleman wrote to me last week. He is involved in export industry and he wanted to keep his operations going, but all he could do was get money at 14 per cent under the toughest terms and conditions; so he gave it away and looked back into the money market to see what he could do. What I am saying is that it is not providing a special service. We would have expected that there might have been special conditions and that there would have been attractive money for people who had good opportunities. On my look at this company it has been a real success. It is expanding beyond all dreams and it needs capital to keep going, otherwise somebody will take it over. But one might as well just forget about the AIDC if those are going to be the terms and conditions it is going to impose. Why should anybody agree to provide the NIF with \$500m for an organisation which is going to drag money out of the community in competition with the private financial institutions, thereby making money more expensive, to lend it out at no more attractive terms than anybody else does. All that is doing is permitting more Government involvement. Of course, that is what the Government wants. It wants to have a financial hold over whoever it can in the community. According to the Corporation's latest financial report a \$3m loss was incurred on current projects as well as a \$10m loss on shareholdings. It has also been reported that the Corporation has lost several million dollars as a result of the September devaluation. One would have thought that the organisation would have had some forward cover for any devaluation situation.

The Opposition does not support the creation of the NIF or the extension of the AIDC's financial role through the NIF. Firstly, the AIDC can borrow up to \$275m, representing 5 times its present capital, which, as I have said before, is \$55m. To date the Corporation has borrowed only \$65m. So it can still borrow \$210m. Why set up this organisation? It is just not necessary at the moment. If the Government were to come forward and say that the AIDC cannot carry out its functions properly because it does not have the money and it does not have the scope for raising money we would look at the proposal sympathetically.

At the end of last year the Treasurer introduced a financial measure designed to give a government guarantee to money being borrowed overseas from the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries ostensibly because the Organisation would not lend the money unless there was a Government guarantee. We supported that measure. Let the Government go out and borrow money on the world market if it needs to do that, but the Government cannot challenge the Opposition for questioning an operation which is designed to hand an enormous amount of money to an institution such as the AIDC when there is no real need for it. There might be a national need to try to have more Australian ownership and control, and this is what the AIDC was set up to achieve, but let that Corporation use the power which it has at the moment without thrusting this vast power upon it. I hope that the Treasurer will not try to tell me that we are taking a stance which is different from that which we took previously because I will read what I said in my speech on the previous occasion. I made our position quite clear when I said:

The Opposition recognises that there are not grounds for opposing this legislation on the basis of these apprehensions—

That is the apprehensions that people might have because of the fear of the bureaucracy. I went on to say:

... the Opposition, on the basis of the legislation before us, cannot see a basis for objection to the National Investment Fund so strong as to cause us to prevent its passage by opposing it at all stages. On the other hand, we express severe reservations as to the positive requirement under Australian economic circumstances for the establishment of an institute of this nature. To make clear our concern, I want to state that we are opposed to the passage of this Bill until such time as we have the advantage of examining the Senate Committee's report, and until we have the benefit of the considered views which the Committee no doubt will want to have on the National Investment Fund.

Dr J. F. Cairns—You have the Senate Committee's report now?

Mr ANTHONY—The Senate has not had the advantage of being able to see the Senate Committee's report.

Dr J. F. Cairns—Nor have you.

Mr ANTHONY—Are you going to present it now? Are you going to consider that the Senate has rejected the previous Bill because it has not handled it?

Dr J. F. Cairns—The Senate could have presented it months ago, and you know it.

Mr ANTHONY—The Treasurer is completely responsible for the delay in that report being considered by the Senate, and that is the very reason a member of his own Party, the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Foreign Ownership and Control, criticised him. If the Treasurer was keen to have the Senate make a judgment on the Bill he could have got it done without any difficulty. We were prepared to look and to listen. We were grateful for the co-operation that was extended to us in this House previously. But apparently the Treasurer fears that further amendments to this Bill might be made in the Senate, or that the Committee's report might expose some of the elements which are causing us concern and that the Bill might not go through. The Minister talks about the AIDC and its tremendous operations. I admit that it has had some losses, but a lot of those losses have been due to Government policy. One of the most appalling features of this relates to the 'Ocean Endeavour'. This is a large off-shore oil rig which is being built in Western Australia. In fact, it represents one of the biggest investments that the AIDC has in any project. The AIDC has invested about \$3m to \$4m in this project. Ampol Petroleum Ltd is one of the other partners. The rig is costing about \$23m to build. It is being built in Western Australia with a 45 per cent Government subsidy. The project has the AIDC backing—Government money. The rig is sitting in Western Australia and there is no work for it to do because no exploration work is being undertaken around Australia. The rig is sitting near the coast like a great monster. The trade unions have been coming to Canberra to see the Minister to ascertain what is going to happen because they were hoping to build a second rig. Government policy will not provide the opportunity for this great oil exploration drilling rig to be used, and the Government will not allow it to be used overseas. In other words, all this AIDC money is tied up and is not earning a cracker. It is no wonder that the AIDC cannot get more than a 1.6 per cent return on its capital.

Unless there is also a co-ordinating and corresponding Government policy to help in some of these projects, what is the use of ploughing money into this project and that project, if they have no chance of succeeding? That is the situation that we are running into in Australia with the operations of the AIDC. We believe in a policy of trying to retain the maximum Australian ownership and control, and we believe in the AIDC and its operations. Let the Corporation prove itself first and let it use up its present funds before it comes to us and asks for an open cheque for \$500m, through the National Investment Fund, and for the means to raise money—something which is putting fears into many of the financial institutions, insurance companies and other organisations in the money market. It needs only a slight amendment to some of Australia's taxation laws, and by compulsion the Government could rip off hundreds of millions of dollars from these other institutions. The Opposition will allow the passage of the AIDC Bill, as it has been amended, but we will oppose strongly at this stage the passage of the NIF Bill.

Mr JACOBI (Hawker) (9.56)—I rise to support both Bills. I have 2 observations to make on the speech of the Leader of the Australian Country Party (Mr Anthony). The first is that he blames this Government for running the firms he mentioned into deficit. The action which resulted in those firms running into deficit was taken by the Government of which he was a member. During the double dissolution debate on the Petroleum and Minerals Authority Bill and in some of my subsequent speeches in this House I have shown that previous Tory governments have failed to control and prevent the takeover of the Australian mining industry by overseas corporations. The fiscal policies of the previous Government virtually forced new mining companies in Australia to seek foreign investment. Had the previous Government been prepared to create a development corporation, aimed at promoting Australian ownership rather than the present hamstrung, emasculated structure to which the Opposition paid only lip service, which this Bill is trying to replace, it would have been possible to finance the development of Australian mining from internal funds and to retain control of Australian mining companies.

Before considering how the proposed Corporation, if it had been in existence, could have prevented the inroads made by multinationals, there are a couple of points that I believe ought to be considered. Foreign investment, it has to be admitted, may have associated economic benefits to Australia which represent little or no

extra cost to the investor. Perhaps those benefits could be briefly summarised as technical knowledge, mine management, marketing knowledge and access to overseas money markets. However, the cost to Australia of obtaining these questionable benefits was the loss of control over the exploration and exploitation of our natural resources resulting from a small number of multinational mining companies having a very strong control over pricing and the sale of raw materials. This control was perpetuated by control over manufacturing industries and possession on a global view of the particular market. At present the only controls that we have over mining are through our taxing policy—that is royalties—or through export licences. In the short term royalties could be determined, project by project, and could be made variable over time to enable the owner of the resource—that is Australia—to extract the rent element of higher prices or to reduce royalties to allow the mine to be efficiently operated during periods of weak demand, increased competition or extraction of more costly but economical ore lodes. On a long term basis, however, it is essential that Australia should regain control of its mineral resources by direct investment, such as from a development corporation.

The whole concept as envisaged by the previous Tory Government was that we would buy back a bit of Australia. To do that it needs to permit greater flexibility in its role as a development financier and to facilitate public involvement in national interest projects. I find it very odd that the Leader of the Country Party should oppose a Bill that will provide capital for co-operatives, because that is what this Bill does. Why should the Country Party want to oppose it? It is remarkable.

Having said that, let me make some very brief but crucial observations. Firstly, very little about this legislation is unique. The only aspect of it that is unique is that Australia is the last progressive country in the world to enact legislation of this type. Secondly, peoples and governments are challenging the right of large corporations, particularly in the United States of America, to control and manipulate resources, particularly natural resources, upon which their standard of living depends and to which their economy is extremely sensitive or vulnerable. Thirdly, governments over the past 3 years, particularly since the OPEC price hike, have been forced to re-evaluate their natural resources management, based upon and because of the need to gauge international supply and demand factors. Finally,

no nation can stand aside and permit either private capital or restricted and selfish State interest to plunder and pillage natural resources whose depletion can reduce it to economic destitution.

The attitude and policies of the Opposition have always been so and are exemplified in this Bill. The Opposition has a prolific capacity for trotting out clichés on every occasion. It has hung one on this Bill. It has said that it is 'socialism by stealth'. Let me expose this claptrap for what it is. I point out that the mining projects in Australia compare in size, volume, output and importance with any mining projects anywhere in the world.

Let me look at what the policies of the present Opposition achieved over 23 years. Let me deal briefly with Thiess-Peabody-Mitsui, a consortium in which Peabody Coal has a 58 per cent equity and Mitsui a 20 per cent equity, with the balance being held by Australians. It ought to be noted that Thiess Bros hawked the Moura project in Queensland around Australia for 4 years before it could get it off the ground. We ought to realise that the consortium exports from the Moura field alone at the rate of 3 800 000 tonnes of coal a year. In line with the price increases, there should be a revenue increase to that company of \$18.6m in a full year. I have not the up to date figures. The profit of this consortium averaged almost \$5m over the past 4 years. Similarly, the Thiess Holdings South Blackwater mine can expect a revenue lift of \$4.4m in the year ahead. All told, the recent price increases in coal will add an estimated \$113.9m to the annual revenue of central Queensland coking coal producers. These figures need to be updated. But this return could be destroyed by the irresponsible, ridiculous and utterly stupid statements of the Queensland Premier in the last week.

Thiess Bros at least had the foresight, the vision, the courage and the confidence in Australian management and technical expertise to take on this venture. Formerly, it was a contractor to the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority. It is one of the best constructing firms in Australia. But at that time neither the private sector nor the Tory governments, State or Federal, were prepared to underpin it by a cent. One Sydney firm—so much for private enterprise—offered Thiess Bros money at an interest rate of approximately 32 per cent. This extortionate level of interest epitomises the degree of confidence of the private sector and Tory governments in this country. The result of that response was that Australia lost to overseas, both in terms of ownership and in terms of control, one of the biggest coal mining projects in Australia. That

money—honourable members can estimate how over 20 years that profit will escalate—ought to be returned to this nation and not remitted overseas.

I take next the example of the Utah undertaking which is a classic example of the failure of the Tory Government in Queensland which sold out to such an extent that the only equity that we have in Utah is 10 per cent. The Leader of the Country Party stood here before I rose to speak and said what the Government proposes to do. What has the Opposition done? In the course of the Joint Sitting I made reference to another national sell-out. I refer to the Hamersley deposits in Western Australia. Hamersley Holdings Ltd is almost totally overseas controlled, with the exception of the 11.5 per cent Australian equity. The balance is carved up between the Kaiser Corporation and Conzinc Riotinto of Australia or the Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation. I ask for leave to incorporate in Hansard 3 tables which illustrate the argument that I am about to make. I have shown them to the appropriate member of the Opposition. I do not know whether he approved their incorporation.

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

(The documents read as follows)—

TABLE I
CAPITAL GROWTH

Time	Capital inflow	Share value	Number
March 1965	\$A million 45	50c	million 90
April 1967	5	50c	10
March 1970	Conversion to 25c shares	25c	200
March 1970	2.5	25c	10
May 1970	2.625	25c	10.5
June 1972	5.5185	25c	22.05
Total	60.6375	..	242.550

TABLE II
SHARE MOVEMENTS IN HAMERSLEY HOLDING CO.

Shareholder	Original Issue	1 for 20 Issue 25c share	Rights 1 for 20 25c share for \$2.75	SALE 25c share for \$5.17	Rights 1 for 10 25c share for \$1.00	SALE 25c share for \$U.S.3.90 or \$A2.7482	TOTAL
	million	million	million		million		
CRA	54 at 50c became 108 at 25c	5.4	5.67		11.907		130.977m 25c share
Cost \$Am	27	0	15.5925		11.907		54.4995
Percentage ownership	60	54	54		54		54%
KAISER	36 at 50c became 72 at 25c	3.6	3.78	3.3075	7.607250	15.03810	68.641650m 25c share
Cost \$Am	18	0	10.395	17.099775 Received	7.60725	41.327706 Received	22.425231 Received
Percentage ownership	40	36	36	-1.5	34.5	-6.2	28.3%
PUBLIC	10 at 50c became 20 at 25c	1	1.05	3.3075	2.53575		27.89325m 25c share
Cost \$Am	20 \$2.20 per 25c	0	2.8875 \$2.75 per 25c	17.099775	2.53575 \$1.00 per 25c		42.523025
Percentage ownership	10	10	10	11.5	11.5		11.5%
JAPANESE CONSORTIUM						15.0381	15.0381m 25c share
Cost \$Am						41.327706	41.327706
Percentage ownership						6.2	6.2%

TABLE III
IRON ORE RESERVES IN HAMERSLEY PILBARA LEASES

1. Mount Tom Price
at least 500 million tons of ore averaging 64 per cent Fe
plus
a minimum of 150 million tons of 58 per cent Fe ore
2. Paraburdoo
approximately 685 million tons of ore averaging 63.6 per cent Fe
plus
about 282 million tons of ore with a Fe content ranging between 60 and 63 per cent
3. Koodairderi
approximately 723 million tons of ore averaging 61.1 per cent Fe
plus
approximately 1170 million tons of ore averaging 56.6 per cent Fe
High grade ore from this deposit contains 0.131 per cent phosphorous, while the low grade ore contains 0.119 per cent phosphorous which under present economic and technical conditions makes this deposit non-commercial.

Mr JACOBI—I thank the House. The first table sets out the capital growth of Hamersley

Holdings Ltd. The second table shows the share movements in that company. The final table sets out the iron ore reserves in the Hamersley-Pilbara leases. If honourable members take the opportunity to study Table III they will find that the ore reserves in the Hamersley-Pilbara area are about 3.5 billion tonnes.

Let us look a little more deeply into this aspect. The development of Mount Tom Price to a production capacity of 17.5 million tonnes a year required a capital investment of \$392m, which was expended between 1966 and the end of 1970. The second stage of development of the Pilbara by Hamersley required a further expenditure of \$350m. This expansion program increased the production capacity of Mt Tom Price to 25 million tonnes a year. The Paraburdoo deposit also was developed. So the total capacity of the Hamersley operation from the end of 1973 was 40 million tonnes a year. The total development had cost Hamersley over \$750m, of which 46 per cent was raised overseas, mainly in North America, and 54 per cent in Australia. Funds raised from the Australian capital market accounted for only 16 per cent of the total,

whereas 38 per cent had been generated internally by retained profits, depreciation or deferred tax.

This is very important: The company has an authorised capital comprising 300 million ordinary shares of 25c each. The issued capital of the company is 242 550 000 20c shares with a full value of \$60.6375m. The history of the capital growth of Hamersley is shown in Table I, which I commend to honourable members. When CRA and Kaiser set up Hamersley, CRA invested \$27m for 60 per cent ownership, while Kaiser invested \$18m for the remaining 40 per cent. Subsequent share movements and substantial sales are shown in Table II. The present share breakdown is as follows: CRA 54 per cent; Kaiser 28.3 per cent; the Australian public 11.5 per cent; and a Japanese consortium 6.2 per cent.

For the period 1966-1973 Hamersley earned \$840m which yielded a net profit of \$153m after tax. Of this profit \$67m was paid out in dividends. Australia retained 16.63 per cent of this profit, or \$11.3m. Since Hamersley began operations the Western Australian Government has received \$52m in royalties. A cash discount determination shows that Kaiser and CRA have had an annual rate of return slightly in excess of 20 per cent. It ought to be remembered that Hancock and Wright receive a royalty of 2½ per cent of the f.o.b. value of Hamersley exports. Although Hamersley has received an average profit per tonne of \$1.13 on sales up to the end of 1974, the recently renegotiated prices, for which this Government takes credit, give a profit margin of approximately 70c per tonne. This apparently is at parity with that received by other iron ore producers.

I commend the following to honourable members opposite: Assuming the profit level is maintained, when Hamersley production reaches 40 million tonnes a year the company will be receiving a profit of about \$28m a year. If the profit level is maintained over the life of both the Mount Tom Price and Paraburdoo deposits, the total profit received by the company will be about \$830m from the high grade ores alone. Past performance has been to pay out approximately half the profit in dividends. If this practice were to continue, approximately \$400m would be paid out in the next 40 years.

Mr Katter—That would pay for the national health scheme for one year.

Mr JACOBI—It represents \$10m a year. Yes, it could pay for the national health scheme for one year. Of the shareholders, 16.63 per cent are Australians. This includes the 9.5 per cent of

CRA shareholdings. So, only \$66.5 will be retained in Australia. Of course, if capital injection ceases in the next half decade, in excess of \$640m will be taken from this country during the life of the deposits.

Let me sum up. It is a very interesting feature of the Hamersley project, upon which this House and this nation's private financial institutions ought to reflect, that all the management and all the expertise in that vast project have been entirely Australian. The project was an outstanding feat of engineering—one of the finest in Australia if not in the world. The whole operation was planned and executed entirely by Australian personnel. Had this very legislation been on the statute book at the birth of the project we as a nation would now, and for the life of the mine's exploitation, have reaped the benefits of a whole range of returns from the 3.5 billion tons of ore to be extracted—had we had the courage, the vision, the faith and the foresight to utilise our own capacities and expertise without being swallowed up by overseas corporations. I commend both Bills to the House.

Dr EDWARDS (Berowra) (10.11)—Unlike the honourable member for Hawker (Mr Jacobi), who has just resumed his seat, I want to concentrate on the Bill before the House and not enter into a long argument about minerals. I will come back later to his reference to the so-called 'buy-back' objective. In making these remarks I do not intend to denigrate Hamersley Holdings Ltd. If the Australian Industry Development Corporation legislation was not on the statute book at the time of the birth of that company, at least subsequently it was put on the book by a Liberal-Country Party government. That is my starting point. On the last occasion on which we debated this matter—it was in July last year—honourable members on this side of the House expressed broad support for the measure. How could we do otherwise? The Australian Industry Development Corporation was established by a Liberal-Country Party government. The purpose of this Bill is to remove from its operations irritating restrictions which experience has shown are hampering its operations. I will discuss those aspects in a moment.

I preface that discussion by saying that that is not the whole purpose of the Bill, although I hope I am right in my judgment that it is the main purpose of the Bill. As the Treasurer (Dr J. F. Cairns) said in his second reading speech, the Australian Industry Development Corporation Bill and the National Investment Fund Bill are designed 'to remove certain unnecessary restrictions on AIDC's operations contained in existing

legislation'. I have just mentioned that. He went on to say that they were designed 'to increase the ability of the AIDC to assist investment and employment in the private sector, and to facilitate ownership and control by Australians of our industries'. That is quite a canny reference to the private sector because the one aspect of the Bill under this present head to which I want to refer at this stage—not removing limitations, but promoting, fostering the development of the Corporation—is the very important clause 6 amending sections 8 and 9 of the principal Act. I refer in particular to proposed new section 8A with all its sub-sections (1) to (15). They extend over fully 3 pages of the Bill under the title 'Enterprises of projects in the national interest'. I do not for one moment think that the Government has come clean about all its intentions in respect of that section of the legislation. My original understanding was that the reference was to projects which would be excluded for the AIDC because of the requirement of existing section 8 (3) of the principal Act, namely, that the corporation 'shall act in accordance with sound business principles'. I had taken it that the main reference would be to potential loss situations but nevertheless situations, or projects, judged to be in the national interest—for example, a new decentralised regional development which inevitably requires an initial big push and an initial period of unprofitability. But in his second reading speech the Minister said:

There is no intention of changing the basic principle in the concept of AIDC that it should operate as a business. But in this day and age it is not difficult to envisage that there will certainly be potential developments, within AIDC's functions, and having obvious long-term economic or social benefits to the nation, but which AIDC on a business judgment could not afford to help. For example, the investment of AIDC funds required may simply be too big for AIDC.

I emphasise that last point. This is something of a new line. I am concerned at that and I register my concern. My concern is that this national interest division provided for in the 3 pages of the Bill to which I have referred may become the vehicle for massive public ownership, involvement, in the economy—to infiltrate the 'system'. The general thrust of the AIDC debate is about fostering Australian ownership and control, over and against foreign ownership. That is the issue about which I, the Australian people and many members of this Parliament, feel strongly.

What may be at issue here is not Australian versus foreign ownership but public versus private ownership, and that is a quite different and very significant issue. So I stress on behalf of the Opposition that it is with great reservations in

this area that this Bill will be passed—if it is—by the Parliament. My reservations are that the so-called national interest division hereby created will need to be watched closely. As I said, I do not think that the Government has really come clean and told us the whole story. In not opposing the AIDC legislation one is relying on sub-sections (6) and (7) of section 8A which provide that such AIDC national interest cases would require specific legislation passed by both Houses of the Parliament, either to effect a Government guarantee or to authorise the appropriation of Government money. In that event the Parliament can look carefully at each proposal in this context, and undoubtedly it will do so.

Apart from introducing this national interest division, the main thrust of the AIDC Bill is to remove from the operation of the Corporation limitations which experience since the enactment of the original legislation in 1970 have shown to be extremely restricting to the Corporation in the carrying out of its functions. I support those extensions. As I said in my speech last July on this subject, I believe that there is an important role for an enlarged AIDC in fostering the exploitation by Australian initiatives of Australia's vast potential for development and for doing that with a maximum of Australian management, ownership and control. In this key field of development financing I see an enlarged AIDC serving, so to speak, at the 'TAA' of the show with the Australian Resources Development Bank and other like institutions as the 'Ansett' of the show. The analogy is not a completely good one because the AIDC is itself, in concept, to further private industrial development—it comes into play as the situation demands, and when there is a going concern it divests.

Dr J. F. Cairns—What do you think TAA does if it does not help the private sector?

Dr EDWARDS—I am not arguing that particular point. I am stressing—I should think the Minister would consider this appropriate—that in this situation having performed its development functions and having achieved a going concern, it then divests in terms of the Act.

At this point it is perhaps reasonable to recall what is new in this Bill. Firstly, of course, it adds to the objectives, the objectives of maximum Australian ownership and control as a sort of co-equal objective. Of course we do not oppose that. The exploitation, as I said, by Australian initiative of Australia's vast potential for development with the maximum of Australian ownership and

control is held every bit as strongly on this side of the House as on the other side of the House. I would be prepared to concede that by and large the Australian Labor Party has perhaps done a better job of convincing the electorate of its concern about these matters than honourable members on this side of the House. With good nationalistic rhetoric it attacks the hated multinational companies and thereby adds an extra dimension of fervour to its story. But the sentiment on this side is every bit as strong. There is no opposition to the writing in of this objective. Next, it extends the scope of operations of the Corporation from manufacturing and the processing of minerals to other fields, and properly so.

Again, as things stand now the AIDC is required to source its funds mainly overseas. It is provided in this Bill that it should have access to Australian funds. This, of course, is proper. If the stance of monetary policy is such as to restrict or forbid overseas borrowing the AIDC would be bound by that, and were it not for this extension it could practically shut its doors.

Another point was made by the Minister in his second reading speech when he said:

The AIDC, which was set up for the declared intention of promoting Australian ownership and control—

I am glad he recognises that. It was not too explicit in the objectives of the original Bill but is now being written in. It was certainly always implicitly there. He continued:

is not allowed to use its project funds to buy back existing foreign owned shares in enterprises in Australia.

Here we come to this question of the buy-back program. I go along with this provision of the Bill. But it could be that it would not matter too much. Sure enough, this so-called buy-back program using the AIDC as a vehicle to 'buy back the farm', getting back into Australian hands the mines and factories now held by overseas interests, is good stuff. It appeals to me and it is bound to appeal to every red-blooded Australian.

But I think it is very important to understand just what is and what is not sensible policy in this area. The fact is that a lot of nonsense is talked in the name of buying back the farm. The first point to make clear is to ask: 'Will the operations of even an enlarged AIDC encourage additional domestic saving?' It is difficult to see any reason why it should and that, I believe, was Sir Alan Westerman's view as expressed to the Senate Select Committee on Foreign Ownership and Control. Will it encourage Australians who have hitherto made a few investments here and there

to say: 'I will take up some of these AIDC investment bonds instead of spending', and thereby lead to increased saving? That is not very likely especially with the accelerating inflation we have had under this Government. One would want a return in capital gain or dividend that would outstrip that inflation rate. I do not see that happening with the way the AIDC has been run in recent years. There is not any way, at least within the power of the AIDC, to increase saving. If we want to do this—and by and large I believe we ought to—it is a matter of overall general economic policy.

So far as the AIDC is concerned what is involved in the domestic scene is a diversion of savings and investible funds from existing channels. That needs to be clearly recognised. That matter has a number of aspects. Firstly, the use of the funds so diverted for the purchase from overseas interests of existing enterprises in Australia—this buy-back program we have heard about—is more likely to disadvantage than to advantage this country when examined in the cold light of reason as distinct from the euphoria of the buy-back rhetoric. Some months ago the report of the Industries Assistance Commission on the car industry underlined that point. 'Buy back' cannot mean the expropriation of assets; it means acquiring the business of an overseas owned company, a going concern, at its present value. That means the capitalised value of its future profit stream, and that valuation for a successful enterprise can be a lot different from, indeed vastly greater than, the ground floor outlays that established the business.

The effect would be that in this way you would buy back something that might give joy to this genuine Australian sentiment of buying back the farm but in reality could have the reverse effect where what you are seeking is to cut back overseas ownership and control. What you could be doing by this process, by buying back these overseas holdings, would be to enable overseas interests to control a total quantity of Australian resources for less money, or more resources for a given amount of money as the funds realised by the Australian buy-back are re-invested elsewhere.

The essence of bringing up the proportion of Australian ownership of our industries and resources, which we all want to achieve, is not an easy-quick, popular but largely phoney buy-back program. Rather it is, to begin with, the slower, more sound and sure process of enlarging the quantum of Australian savings and investment through appropriate overall economic policy and then, within that enlarged quantum of domestic

investible resources, plus funds from overseas, to work to engage Australian initiative and enterprises in major developments at 'ground floor'. That is the guts of the matter—ground floor investment in new development. It is the ground floor investment that counts. Then Australia shares in the risks of the enterprise but also in the great potential rewards—as well, of course, as in the potential losses of the unsuccessful projects and there can be numbers of those.

I turn, in conclusion, to the National Investment Fund Bill which is designed to back up the Australian Industry Development Corporation Bill (No. 2). As I said in the previous debate, I am idealistic enough to applaud the idea of, and to want to see, the small man getting a stake in the 'big time'. So, for my own part, I can see merit in the proposal for the proposed investment bond as a vehicle for ordinary Australians to invest and to share in the development of the country. But as I have said, nothing in the creation of the AIDC itself is going to increase the quantum of domestic investible resources. So inevitably what the AIDC captures is a diversion from other users of investible funds and other institutions. I could contemplate that with equanimity were I convinced that the Fund proposed in this legislation would not have, would not be given as it is given now and more at some time in the future, advantages over other operators—if it were constrained to compete with like institutions in the private sector on equal terms. But this I find it difficult to be convinced of.

If we do receive assurances on this matter, how can we rely on the good faith of the Government? Only yesterday we had reversed what was the reverse of an earlier reverse. Notwithstanding the spirit of constructive goodwill which pervaded the debate on this matter in this House in July, when this matter came up in the other place the simple request of the Opposition put down in this place that the Parliament should await the report of the Senate Select Committee before finally disposing of the Bills was contemptuously brushed aside. The view of the Government apparently had changed between this place and the other place. I believe today even more so the Government does not want an accommodation on that Bill. Accordingly, while not opposing the AIDC Bill the Opposition opposes the National Investment Fund Bill which in the short to medium term would have a very significant impact and a distorting effect on the Australian capital market.

Debate interrupted.

ADJOURNMENT

Appointment to High Court—Urban and Regional Development—Unemployment—Family Law Bill: Circulation of Draft Regulations

Mr SPEAKER—Order! It being 10.30 p.m., in accordance with the order of the House I propose the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr VINER (Stirling) (10.30)—Last night during debate on the motion that the House adjourn I spoke of the constitutional propriety of the appointment by the Governor-General of Australia on the advice of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia of His Honour Mr Justice Murphy to the High Court. I also spoke of the constitutional propriety of the proposal of the Government of New South Wales to act in accordance with the requirements of section 15 of the Constitution in having a joint sitting of the 2 Houses of the New South Wales Parliament to select a person to fill the casual vacancy created by the elevation of His Honour Mr Justice Murphy.

What I want to speak specifically about tonight is the appointment of His Honour to the High Court. There can be no doubt of the constitutional propriety of the actions of the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), through his Government, and of the advice which his Government gave to the Governor-General to have the then Attorney-General appointed to the High Court. Having regard to that, it is quite apparent that the Prime Minister was prepared to take every political advantage of his ability to act in strict constitutional propriety in this matter. However, when I listened to the Prime Minister's address to the nation on Sunday, 16 February 1975, I was concerned to hear the context in which he referred to the appointment in the past by the Australian Government of 5 other Australian Attorneys-General to the position of judge, four of them to the High Court of Australia and one, Chief Judge Spicer, to the Industrial Court. In the same context the Prime Minister referred to the fact that this century 12 English Attorneys-General had been appointed Lords-Chancellor, Lords-Chief Justice or a Lord-Justice of Appeal.

I think it is important to point out to the House that there is a clear distinction between the position of judges of the High Court of Australia who have formerly been the Attorney-General of the Australian Government and appointment to the high judicial offices within the English judicial system. The difference is that the United Kingdom does not have a written constitution

and therefore no piece of legislation may be declared by the judiciary in the United Kingdom to be constitutionally invalid. That is an important distinction because the Constitution of Australia gives to the High Court the authority to declare legislation constitutionally invalid by reason of the fact that the legislation does not fall within any of the expressed powers given by the Constitution to the Australian Parliament. So when a judge in the United Kingdom is called upon to give a judgment in a matter what he does is to apply the law of the land to the particular facts of the case before him without having any capacity or authority to call into question the validity of that law. So there is simply left to the United Kingdom judge the task of properly interpreting the legislation and then on a proper interpretation of the law applying it to the particular facts of the case as found by him. So there is no opportunity in the United Kingdom for law to be declared constitutionally invalid. That immediately throws into stark difference the position of Attorneys-General of the Australian Government appointed to the High Court of Australia because those judges are then in a position required by their oath to make a judgment on the validity of laws passed by this Parliament and introduced by the Government of which they were a Minister.

I remember one celebrated case in which the Earl of Halsbury, one of the most eminent of English members of the House of Lords, declined to pass judgment on the meaning of a particular law because he had advised the government of the day in the drafting of it. How much more necessary is it then for members of the High Court who have previously been members of a government which has been instrumental in the passing of a law to be so very careful in the stand that they take in the High Court when they are called upon to judge the constitutional validity of that law.

So when the Prime Minister of Australia goes before the people seeking to justify the stand or actions that he took and to condemn the actions of another government, I think it behoves him to state correctly the context in which he presents his arguments. I notice that in an article in today's edition of the Sydney 'Sun' Sir Mellis Napier, former Lieutenant-Governor of South Australia and former Chief Justice of the South Australian Supreme Court, is quoted as saying that the appointment of a judge to the High Court ought not to be treated as a matter of political expediency but as a question in which the whole of Australia had a keen and vital interest. There can be no doubt that the Prime Minister in

advising the Governor-General pursuant to the Constitution to appoint the then Senator Murphy to the High Court took every political advantage at his command and given to him by the Constitution of Australia to appoint his own Attorney-General to the High Court at a time when the Prime Minister knew that a number of pieces of legislation introduced by his Government and passed by this Parliament, either in the ordinary way of passing legislation or after a joint sitting of the 2 Houses, are subject to litigation in the High Court on the grounds that they are constitutionally invalid as not falling within the powers of the Commonwealth under the Constitution.

Mr Innes—Tell us about Sir John Spicer.

Mr VINER—Sir John Spicer is in a totally different position from judges of the High Court because he does not have to pass judgment on the constitutional validity of legislation that comes before him. When the Conciliation and Arbitration Act comes before the judges of the Industrial Court they are in exactly the same position as the United Kingdom judges to whom I have referred. They are obliged to interpret the law and then apply it to the particular facts of the case. If anyone wants to challenge the constitutional validity of any part of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act they have to take out a writ of prohibition and remove the matter into the High Court of Australia where the constitutional validity will be determined.

So let us not have any more hypocrisy in addresses to the nation by any member of this or any other Parliament, let alone the Prime Minister of this country. Let him not speak in terms of violence to democracy when he does not present in proper context his own arguments in justification of his own action because, as I have said, in appointing the then Senator Murphy to the High Court the Prime Minister undoubtedly took every political advantage at his command, acting as he did with strict constitutional propriety.

Mr ARMITAGE (Chifley) (10.40)—This morning the honourable member for Parramatta (Mr Ruddock), in a question to the Minister for Urban and Regional Development (Mr Uren), drew attention to the fact that the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) had stated that the Government intends to curtail expenditure. The honourable member went on to say that he thought the Government was adopting a positive policy of the Opposition, which means that agrees with it. The next part of the honourable member's question shows how illogical his conclusions are because he asked whether this meant that there would be a curtailment in expenditure on growth

centres, Land Commission projects, area improvement programs and so on. In other words, he wants to have his cake and eat it too. He said, on the one hand, that he agreed that expenditure should be cut, but on the other hand he did not want it cut in his area. That is what it amounts to.

During the last session the honourable member was reported in the Press as having said in this House that allocations for recreational facilities proposed by the Department of Tourism and Recreation had not been announced in respect of the western suburbs area of Sydney. He did not seem to realise that they had been announced because he said that there had been no allocations for projects to be undertaken in that area this year and that therefore Labor's assistance to the western suburbs of Sydney was a mirage. I will point out tonight just what type of mirage that is. First of all, the honourable member ignored the fact that the Department's allocations for recreational facilities in the western suburbs of Sydney were tied up with the area improvement program, and accordingly had not at that point been announced. That is why there was no announcement at the time. There has since been an announcement.

Perhaps I should recount some of the allocations that have been made by this Government since it came to power. In making this point I emphasise that before this Government came to power a little over 2 years ago, none of these programs was in existence despite the continuous appeals by various honourable members, including the honourable member for Reid who is now the Minister for Urban and Regional Development, myself and others to do something to overcome the very serious needs of Sydney's western suburbs. Nothing had been done by the previous Liberal-Country Party Government which the honourable member supported. This Government has achieved something. As I said by way of interjection this morning, the honourable member ought to be on his bended knees thanking this Government for what it is doing for this area which he represents without any prejudice so far as politics are concerned. We are not worrying about the fact that the area is not represented in this place by the Australian Labor Party. Where there is a need we will give assistance. Where there is greater need we will give greater assistance. Under previous governments no need was satisfied. The honourable member should realise this and stop trying to play politics. He ought to learn to co-operate with this Government to assist us in overcoming the great problems in the western suburbs of Sydney

which have been brought about by continuous inactivity on the part of his own Party in its 23 years in government. It is time that he set to and co-operated with the Government's plan to try to assist the people in this area, instead of trying to take petty political points because to do so is not giving service to the people he represents.

I will cite some figures on the funds that have gone into the electorate of Parramatta and the neighbouring electorate of Mitchell which is also held by the Liberal Party. The Grants Commission recommended that for 1974-75 the municipal councils within the Mitchell electorate should receive a minimum of \$193,000. Actually the amount is greater than that because they are also to get some of the money allocated for Blacktown. The municipal councils in the electorate of Parramatta are to receive a minimum of \$315,000. Again the amount is higher than that because it includes allocations for the Baulkham Hills and some of the other councils in this area. Furthermore, it should be remembered that these funds are allocated on the basis of need in the area. That is the only criterion and it is benefiting the honourable member's area. It also should be remembered that these funds are non-repayable non-interest bearing grants. In other words, they are gifts from this Government. This is the first time this has happened. Through the area improvement program for 1974, the Mitchell electorate received a total of \$663,000 in non-repayable non-interest bearing grants—gifts. For sewerage works projects in 1974 the electorate received a total of \$1,010,000, which covers the Baulkham Hills area reticulation, the Baulkham Hills West area reticulation and the West Castle Hill area reticulation. The electorate of Parramatta received \$690,000 for area improvement projects and an amount of \$860,000 to cover the sewerage works program which includes the Hunts Creek reticulation service, the Hunts Creek submain project, the Lake Parramatta area reticulation scheme and the minor carrier to SPS 256 project. For area improvement projects in 1975 the electorate of Mitchell received a total of \$298,000 and I think there are further announcements to come in relation to area improvement programs for the current year.

I point out that all of these funds are non-repayable non-interest bearing grants. They are gifts. I also point out that this is the first time in history that any government, be it a Labor government or a Liberal government, has ever introduced programs such as these. I say to the honourable member for Parramatta and to the honourable member for Mitchell (Mr Cadman),

who has been much quieter lately and has been using a little more common sense in regard to this matter, that they ought to be going down on their bended knees thanking this Government for having introduced programs about which, despite 23 years of Liberal-Country Party government and despite appeals over many years by various members on this side of the House, including the honourable member for Reid, now the Minister for Urban and Regional Development, and myself, their Party flatly refused to do anything. I could go on to talk of the community health program, which is doing a great deal for the western suburbs, and the allocations from the Department of Tourism and Recreation and from the Department of Transport, which will meet two-thirds of the cost of the quadruplication of the line from Auburn to Penrith as well as the cost of new rolling stock and signalling equipment. I received notification today that a special non-repayable grant of \$434,000 will be made available for work on the main western highway. The honourable member should be thanking us for the job that we have done.

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

Mr BOURCHIER (Bendigo) (10.50)—The Government's display on the pretext of being interested in employment never ceases to amaze honourable members on this side of the House. The Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) has come out with yet another of his great statements to the effect that the Government is going to devote its energies to the unemployment situation by creating employment. What it is doing is bolstering up those who are unemployed and trying to finance them so that they can stay out of work. Unfortunately, the actions of the Government give the lie to any suggestion that it is trying to create employment for Australian men and women.

Let us look at the situation in the textile industry as a classic example. Following the efforts of the Government, with its tariff cuts and its lifting of quota restrictions, we saw a massive close-down or threatened close-down of many textile industries. We have seen tens of thousands of textile workers retrenched. The best that the Government can do is to introduce the Regional Employment Development scheme, the National Employment and Training scheme and the Special Assistance to Non-Metropolitan Industries scheme.

Mr Enderby—You did not know the name of it until I told you.

Mr BOURCHIER—The Minister assisted me with the name of the last scheme. The Government has set up these schemes not for the purpose of creating employment but for the purpose of propping up these industries temporarily while it dithers its way out of a mess. A number of textile industries received huge grants of money under the SANMI scheme just prior to Christmas. The purpose of those grants was, of course, to prevent massive retrenchments from taking place on Christmas Eve. It was a very nice political manoeuvre. Certainly it was a good manoeuvre for the men and women concerned. They at least received their holiday pay and knew that after the Christmas break they would have a job for at least three or four weeks.

I am not decrying that part of the Government's action. But what is happening now? I understand from the Department of Labor and Immigration that no more interim grants are to be made in this area. The Department is endeavouring to send around a team of experts to check up on the various firms which the Government has already propped up in order to ascertain whether or not they are going to be viable. As I understand the situation, it will be some months before this team of experts gets around to half of the firms that have already been propped up. What is going to happen in the meantime? The situation that has been created by those firms receiving financial assistance to enable them to keep their employees over the Christmas break and for three or four weeks after the Christmas break is coming to a head. The employees concerned will have to be retrenched. I suggest that within the next three or four weeks there will be further massive retrenchments in the textile industry. So much for the Government's attempts at assisting employment.

Let us look at the Government's latest effort. I refer to the handling by the Minister for Housing and Construction (Mr Les Johnson) of the Googong Dam project. In this project tenders have been called for the supply of a quantity of special pumping equipment which can be and has been manufactured in this country. A firm in Castlemaine—Thompsons (Castlemaine) Ltd—is one of the few firms that tendered for this work. That firm specialises in that particular type of work. The tender price is something like \$350,000. In the usual manner in which information comes down the grapevine the firm has been advised that its tender was very close to being acceptable. The tender includes materials of Australian content to the value of \$220,000, with the balance being made up of pumping material

which has to be imported. Irrespective of who does the job, that pumping material will have to be imported. But the most important part of this contract is that it will provide 5 500 man hours of labour. Do you know where this contract is going, Mr Speaker? It is going to Russia.

One wonders why these sorts of things should happen in a country which supposedly is governed by a socialist government which obviously is dictated to by the trade union movement. Yet it does this sort of thing to the men and women who are employed in our various industries. The point will be reached where a large number of men employed in such foundries will have to face possible retrenchment for the simple reason that a Russian firm is going to get this contract—and I wonder how many more contracts. Perhaps the Russian firm's getting this contract is one of the very great successes of the Prime Minister about which we have not heard. Perhaps one of the reasons why he went overseas was so that he could sell away all of our manufacturing industries. Apparently his philosophy is: If you cannot nationalise them, sell them out.

We are faced with a massive unemployment situation. What a great government we have handling things! Instead of trying to do something to encourage industry, what does it do? It sells us out overseas and then tries to prop up the employees by paying them money when many of them would rather receive an honest wage than dole money. But the Government knows nothing about the proper way to look after the people of this country. It is about time the Government had a good think about that great Australian slogan: Buy Australian made; sell Australian made.

It is a shame that large manufacturing concerns have to rely on government contracts to keep them going and then find out that overseas organisations are taking away their export trade. Thompsons foundry had a magnificent export trade in pumps all around the Pacific islands, but that trade has now gone. It lost it when the Government revalued the Australian dollar. Of course, our industries went right out of the market and we cannot get those markets back now. We have lost them. On top of losing our export markets, we are losing our own Australian markets—and to whom? They are not being lost from private industry to private industry; not on your life. Private industry is losing the opportunity to supply our own Australian Government. Is that not really something? The Australian Government supposedly is standing up for and supporting Australian employees, the working people. That is a lot of hoo-ha. I only

hope that the Minister for Housing and Construction can come down to earth a little and reconsider the letting of the contract to which I have referred. He should ensure in this instance that, even if there is a slight difference in price, an Australian firm gets the contract for the supply of those pumps for the Googong Dam project. I conclude with this question: How many more contracts for that project are going to be let to overseas firms?

Mr WENTWORTH (Mackellar) (10.57)—In the few brief moments that remain to me I want to bring to the attention of the House a most serious contempt that has been committed against it. As the House is aware, we have before us a Bill entitled the Family Law Bill. That Bill, as honourable members very well know, leaves a great number of things open to regulation and it is not specific on many points. The implementation of the provisions of that Bill would depend very largely upon—

Mr Donald Cameron—I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. Is it in order for a member—

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I am aware of what the honourable member is about to draw to my attention. The honourable member for Mackellar is not allowed to debate a matter which is before the House. He may proceed as long as he does not get on to the subject matter of the Bill. If he gets on to the subject matter of the Bill I will stop him immediately.

Mr WENTWORTH—Thank you, Mr Speaker. The serious contempt to which I refer is that draft regulations under the Family Law Bill have been circulated to people other than members of this House. They have been discussed by outside bodies. They have been made available to outside bodies under confidential seal. It is a most appalling contempt of this House. The Minister or whoever circulated the draft regulations—it may not have been a Minister—has been very guilty of contempt of this House. It is particularly heinous, if I may say so, because the Family Law Bill, in the terms in which it has been drafted, leaves so many things open. The impact of the Bill will depend very largely upon the way in which the courts, acting under rules and regulations, interpret the very wide and nebulous provisions which in point of fact are in many parts of the Bill. That being so, it is very serious indeed that anybody should circulate to people other than members of this House, for their approval or their comments, draft regulations and rules which were not circulated to members of this House. The Family Law Bill is

currently under consideration by this House. I think I have made my point.

the House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! It being 11 o'clock,

House adjourned at 11 p.m.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

The following answers to questions upon notice were circulated:

Quarantine Procedures

(Question No. 185)

Mr Lloyd asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

(1) Will he detail the tougher quarantine measures, to prevent the entry into Australia of plant and animal diseases, to which he recently referred.

(2) Has he considered banning the swill feeding of pigs in areas adjacent to ports, as this method of feeding has been shown to be responsible for foot and mouth disease outbreaks in other countries.

(3) How many seaports and airports now have incinerators for the disposal of waste from ships and aeroplanes.

(4) What airports and seaports used by overseas transports are still without an approved incinerator.

Dr Everingham—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) (a) The already established reporting system operating along the northern coastline of Australia is being reviewed. This has been done on a number of occasions in the past under the previous Government, since changes in population movements and the development of previously isolated areas often necessitate a different approach being taken to the location of coast watchers. It is particularly important to ensure that observers are so placed as to give early warning of possible movement of people and livestock into Australia, having regard to population movements and changes in disease status in territories north of Australia. The Departments of Customs and Excise, Defence, my own Department, and the Department of the Northern Territory, as well as the Governments of Western Australia and Queensland, actively participate in the operation of this scheme. The system has been successful in giving early warning of the landings of boats which have brought food waste and live animals to this country, and it is intended to develop the organisation in such a manner as will maintain a successful coastwatch despite the increasing number of foreign fishing vessels approaching the coast.

(b) It has been customary, under previous Governments, as well as under the present Government, for quarantine requirements for importation of materials or goods, which may have been in contact with animals or animal products, to be reviewed to ensure adequate disease safety. This is now particularly stressed in view of the increase in imports from countries in which diseases exotic to Australia may be present. The increasingly severe quarantine restrictions are exemplified by a prohibition on importation of glue pieces from foot and mouth disease countries unless they are limed or treated in an approved manner prior to shipment. Because of the continued occurrence of swine vesicular disease in the United Kingdom, importation of pigs and pig semen from that country has not been permitted. In view of the risks of introducing rabies, dogs imported into the United Kingdom for transhipment to Australia are now obliged to remain in that country for 12 months prior to shipment. There is also a total prohibition on importation of poultry meat and eggs from New Zealand because that country has imported poultry under conditions of disease testing and certification which would not be considered adequate for imports to Australia.

(c) The previous Government imposed foot and mouth disease precautions on incoming passengers, principally because of outbreaks of foot and mouth disease in northern

Europe. However, it has been found necessary to critically examine these precautions and to extend their scope to ensure that travellers from other areas in which the disease occurs receive special attention. As a result, passengers from the Channel Islands, Bali, France and Holland have also been subject to these precautions, namely a requirement to fill in a check list of questions concerning contact with animals and, where the replies warrant it, to submit footwear for inspection and, in case of frank soiling by animal discharges or excreta, for mechanical cleansing.

(2) The control of disposal of swill for feeding to pigs is a matter for State and local authorities concerned, except in the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory where the Australian Government is responsible. However, I am greatly concerned at the risk of introducing, particularly, foot and mouth disease and swine vesicular disease in swill, and my Department has been instrumental in having the feeding of swill reviewed by the Animal Health Committee. This Committee recommended to the Standing Committee on Agriculture that swill feeding should be prohibited in Australia and this recommendation has been endorsed by the Australian Agricultural Council. My Department will support a prohibition on swill feeding of pigs, especially in view of the risk of introduction of exotic diseases of animals in areas adjacent to ports and airports.

(3) The seven terminal airports for scheduled international flights and the airports at Hobart and Launceston are equipped with incinerators. Thirty-two seaports have been supplied with incinerators and four other incinerators are projected in Western Australia and in South Australia. The total number of seaports with incinerators now includes the port of Sydney, where the Australian Government has made arrangements for the disposal of overseas ships' garbage at the new Joint Council incinerator at Waterloo.

(4) (a) The policy of providing incinerators for the disposal of foodwaste from overseas aircraft arriving at Australian international airports has been extended with the development in traffic using such airports. Alternate airports are not provided with incineration facilities but garbage and waste from overseas aircraft may not be removed from the aircraft at alternate airports. All waste must be retained on board for final disposal at a terminal airport provided with incineration facilities.

(b) Seaports at which overseas vessels call, and where incinerators have not, in the interests of disease security, been provided, are as listed below. At these ports garbage is not permitted to be brought ashore except with the approval of the Director of Health in the appropriate State or the Northern Territory.

Western Australia

Barrow Island, Broome, Cape Cuvier, Carnarvon, Dampier, Derby, Esperance, Geraldton, Exmouth, Port Hedland, Port Walcott, Shark Bay, Wyndham, Yampi Sound.

Northern Territory

Gove, Milner Bay.

New South Wales

Eden, Port Kembla, Coffs Harbour, Trial Bay, Yamba and Goodwood Island, Ballina, Byron Bay, Newcastle.

Tasmania

Long Reach-East Tamar.

Queensland

Proserpine, Karumba, Hay Point, Cape Flattery, Archer Point, Cooktown and Port Douglas.

South Australia

Thevenard, Port Giles, Wallaroo, Edithburgh, Port Stanvac.

Education: Tertiary Institutions

(Question No. 979)

Mr Killen asked the Minister for Education, upon notice:

What tertiary institutions operate in Australia, and what are the present enrolments and staffing at each institution.

Mr Beazley—The answer to the honourable member's question is set out in the following tables. For the purpose of this question 'staffing' has been defined as academic staffing. Figures for technical and administrative supporting staff have been excluded. The tables exclude private institutions, and a small number of government supported institutions which do not fall within the normal definition of 'university' or 'college of advanced education'.

UNIVERSITIES, STUDENT ENROLMENTS AND ACADEMIC STAFF 1974

University	Student enrolments (1)			Academic staff (2) (full-time equivalent)
	Full-time	Part-time and external	Total	
Sydney	13 933	3 406	17 339	1 557
New South Wales	12 957	4 921	17 878	1 438
New England	2 891	4 110	7 001	466
Macquarie	4 038	3 960	7 998	581
Newcastle	2 343	1 834	4 177	307
Wollongong	812	904	1 716	128
Melbourne	11 022	4 517	15 539	1 400
Monash	9 538	3 299	12 837	1 120
La Trobe	4 433	2 048	6 481	422
Queensland	9 353	9 559	18 912	1 280
James Cook	1 189	596	1 785	202
Griffith	3	1	4	15
Adelaide	6 200	2 891	9 091	783
Flinders	2 425	748	3 173	264
Western Australia	6 033	3 931	9 964	684
Murdoch	9	9	18	14
Tasmania	2 291	1 123	3 414	299
Australian National	3 535	1 997	5 532	1 108
Australia	93 005	49 854	142 859	12 068

(1) Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, University Statistics (Preliminary) 1974.

(2) Source: Annual Universities Statistics Collection, 1974.

List of Colleges of Advanced Education, student enrolments and academic staff—1974

Institution	Student Enrolments				Academic Staff (Full-time equivalent)
	Full-time	Part-time	External	Total	
New South Wales					
Alexander Mackie College of Advanced Education	537	214	..	751	78
Armidale Teachers College	761	..	352	1 113	88
Department of Technical Education*	1 111	945	..	2 056	178
Goulburn Teachers College	564	..	266	830	57
Hawkesbury Agricultural College	354	2	..	356	34
Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education	990	..	..	990	93
Mitchell College of Advanced Education	1 155	113	889	2 157	131
Nepean College of Advanced Education	343	..	195	538	39
Newcastle College of Advanced Education	1 384	214	351	1 949	148
New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music	411	3	..	414	60
Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education	361	19	62	442	38
Nursery School Teachers College	171	..	..	171	15
Orange Agricultural College	22	..	..	22	7
Riverina College of Advanced Education	1 009	189	343	1 541	100
Sydney Kindergarten Teachers College	316	..	..	316	26
Sydney Teachers College	1 787	11	14	1 812	212

Institution	Student Enrolments				Academic Staff (Full-time equivalent)
	Full-time	Part-time	External	Total	
The New South Wales College of Paramedical Studies	656	40	..	696	78
The New South Wales Institute of Technology	1 082	4 048	..	5 130	278
Wagga Agricultural College	171	..	..	171	17
Wollongong Institute of Education	683	..	332	1 015	79
New South Wales—Sub-Total	13 868	5 798	2 804	22 470	1 756

* The Commission on Advanced Education funds courses at the Advanced Education level conducted by the New South Wales Department of Technical Education at Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle.

Victoria

Bendigo Institute of Technology	603	295	74	972	102
Burnley Horticultural College	57	..	..	57	13
Caulfield Institute of Technology	1 791	1 707	..	3 498	229
College of Nursing, Australia	124	..	..	124	18
Dookie Agricultural College	75	4	..	79	17
Emily McPherson College	318	36	..	354	32
Footscray Institute of Technology	856	803	..	1 659	124
Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education	381	206	363	950	55
Gordon Institute of Technology	921	487	..	1 408	128
Lincoln Institute	487	45	..	532	58
Longerenong Agricultural College	46	..	2	48	15
Prahran College of Advanced Education	574	441	..	1 015	6
Preston Institute of Technology	793	594	..	1 387	107
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology	3 805	5 701	884	10 390	564
State College of Victoria—Ballarat	585	49	..	634	57
State College of Victoria—Bendigo	665	3	6	674	59
State College of Victoria—Burwood	1 176	..	15	1 191	104
State College of Victoria—Coburg	894	8	..	902	88
State College of Victoria—Frankston	874	13	3	890	73
State College of Victoria—Geelong	635	12	..	647	57
State College of Victoria—Hawthorn	1 165	36	..	1 201	76
State College of Victoria—Institute of Early Childhood Development	455	46	1	502	47
State College of Victoria—Melbourne	3 173	193	192	3 558	349
State College of Victoria—Rusden	1 624	181	126	1 931	162
State College of Victoria—Toorak	908	..	18	926	83
Swinburne College of Technology	1 910	2 244	..	4 154	271
The Ballarat Institute of Advanced Education	632	146	..	778	78
The Victorian College of the Arts	122	1	..	123	20
The Victorian School of Forestry, Creswick	27	..	..	27	5
Victorian College of Pharmacy	335	8	..	343	48
Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education	292	233	60	585	45
Victoria—Sub-total	26 303	13 492	1 744	41 539	3 150

Queensland

Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers College	477	20	..	497	35
Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education	1 113	333	..	1 446	107
Kelvin Grove College of Teacher Education	1 475	44	..	1 519	125
Mount Gravatt Teachers College	1 204	104	..	1 308	111
North Brisbane College of Advanced Education	865	..	..	865	65
Queensland Agricultural College, Lawes	354	2	..	356	55
Queensland Conservatorium of Music	92	62	..	154	17
Queensland Institute of Technology, Brisbane	1 472	2 240	..	3 712	366
The Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education	787	200	84	1 071	73
Townsville Teachers College	470	..	..	470	37
Queensland—Sub-total	8 309	3 005	84	11 398	991

South Australia

Adelaide College of Advanced Education	637	813	613	2 063	93
Kingston College of Advanced Education	247	19	..	266	18
Murray Park College of Advanced Education	922	472	30	1 424	81

Institution	Student Enrolments				Academic Staff (Full-time equivalent)
	Full-time	Part-time	External	Total	
Roseworthy Agricultural College	103	..	..	103	19
Salisbury College of Advanced Education	945	112	..	1 057	85
South Australian Institute of Technology	1 745	2 047	..	3 792	315
Sturt College of Advanced Education	783	202	..	985	62
Torrens College of Advanced Education	1 325	851	297	2 473	154
South Australia—Sub-total	6 707	4 516	940	12 163	827
Western Australia					
Churchlands Teachers College	820	..	..	820	62
Claremont Teachers College	628	6	3	637	61
Graylands Teachers College	486	..	4	490	47
Mount Lawley Teachers College	838	..	..	838	85
W.A. Secondary Teachers College	411	1 578	..	1 989	75
Western Australian Institute of Technology	3 670	4 668	889	9 227	520
Western Australia—Sub-total	6 853	6 252	896	14 001	850
Tasmanian College of Advanced Education	1 621	640	..	2 261	210
Canberra College of Advanced Education	1 455	1 915	..	3 370	229
Australian Total	65 116	35 618	6 468	107 202	8 013

Source: Annual Commission on Advanced Education Statistics, 1974

Leyland Motor Corporation of Australia Ltd

(Question No. 1456)

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

(1) When did the Leyland Company inform his predecessor of its approaching financial crisis.

(2) Did the company seek advice or assistance from the Government.

(3) If so, what was the response.

Mr Crean—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) Early August 1974.

(2) and (3) Yes. There were subsequent discussions with the Managing Director of Leyland and after consideration by Ministers the company was advised that its Waterloo site and also a number of vehicles would be purchased by the Government as part of overall arrangements to enable restructuring of the company's activities in Australia and minimise disruption and hardship to employees.

Scientific Exchange Agreements

(Question No. 1764)

Mr Snedden asked the Minister for Science, upon notice:

(1) With which countries does Australia share a scientific exchanges agreement.

(2) When was each agreement initiated.

(3) What is the purpose of each agreement.

(4) What has been achieved under each agreement.

Mr Morrison—The answer to the right honourable member's question is as follows:

Australia has two agreements solely concerned with scientific exchanges. The details of these agreements are:

(1) (a) U.S.A. and (b) U.S.S.R.

(2) (a) October 1968 and (b) January 1975.

(3) (a) and (b) To exchange ideas, information, skills and techniques and to collaborate on problems of mutual interest in civil science.

(4) (a) Collaboration under the U.S./Australia Agreement for Scientific and Technical Co-operation has included exchanges of information, visits by scientists, joint research projects, and binational seminars. These activities have covered a wide range of fields; e.g. plant photosynthesis, drugs of dependence, biomedical research, atmospheric sciences, rangelands science, and solar energy.

(b) The Australia/U.S.S.R. Scientific and Technological Co-operation Agreement was signed on 15 January 1975 during the recent visit of the Prime Minister to Moscow. A visit to the Soviet Union by a group of Australian scientists to discuss earth sciences has already taken place. Visits by Australian scientists to discuss entomology, plant industry, radio astronomy and textile technology are planned to take place within the next six months.

In addition, there exist a number of cultural agreements, administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs. Those countries whose Cultural Agreements with Australia include mention of scientific exchanges in their texts, and dates of signature, are:

- Indonesia (1968)
- India (1971)
- Republic of Korea (1971)
- Iran (1974)
- Thailand (1974)
- Italy (1975)

The purpose of each has primarily been cultural.

No scientific exchanges have been recorded under any of the above Cultural Agreements.

As well, Australia has been visited by the Minister of Science and Technology, the Republic of Korea, Dr Hyung-Sup Choi, in December 1973, and the Minister in Charge of Research, Indonesia, Professor Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, in July 1974.

Ministerial Staffs
(Question No. 1847)

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

- (1) How many persons are on his personal staff.
- (2) What are their names, designations and salaries.

(3) Which of them are (a) permanent, or (b) temporary public servants.

(4) From which departments have the permanent public servants been seconded.

(5) How many advisers and consultants have been or are employed by him, and what are their names and salaries.

Mr Crean—The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

I refer the honourable member to the reply given by the Special Minister of State to Question No. 1862, see Hansard of 5 December 1974, page 4841.