

WORK CAMPS, REHABILITATION BENEFITS

501. Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON to the Attorney General:

Can the Attorney General advise the House whether there is evidence that work camps now operating in Western Australia are proving beneficial to the rehabilitation of the criminal offenders?

Hon Tom Helm: Yes; now sit down.

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

I am pleased Hon Tom Helm has such confidence. He is correct that the answer is yes. I do not at this stage have proper scientific research on which to base my comments about the effects -

Hon Ken Travers: Then we do not want to hear your answer.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I do.

Hon PETER FOSS: I do have considerable anecdotal evidence from people who are involved in the scheme. Only the other day I was approached by someone from Badgingarra who was particularly pleased about not only the benefits to the community but also the obvious benefits to the prisoners passing through the work camps. Similar evidence has been offered by the people of Walpole.

Point of Order

Hon TOM HELM: Mr President, I would like you to advise the Attorney that we are not confused by the word "Yes".

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order. I do not want to waste question time.

Questions Without Notice Resumed

Hon PETER FOSS: Former prisoners have been able to secure employment after their release. I have been approached on several occasions by former prisoners who have said that the work camp experience was the most positive aspect of their time in prison and that they will now be going straight. They say that the work camp experience was one of the major contributing factors to that decision. Ample anecdotal evidence is available about the effectiveness of the camps, but I hope to be able to provide slightly more scientific research in due course. We have also had very positive feedback from the York community and the women prisoners at Nyandi.