

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 3 December.

MR R.F. JOHNSON (Hillarys) [8.17 pm]: I will make a contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate by referring to the comments made by the Premier in last night's media and today's newspaper. I am saddened and disgusted by the way the Premier has handled the report of the Gordon inquiry and by the actions the Government proposes to take. I am upset because the Premier got down into the gutter when he commented on the death of Susan Taylor. He as good as stated that her death was the fault of the previous Liberal Government.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: He did not.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes, he did. He stated that the previous Liberal Government swept the issue under the carpet and did nothing about it. The blame was levelled at us because it was claimed that we had not handled the Department for Community Development - the former Department of Family and Children's Services - in the appropriate way. Such comments never do any good nor do they bring credit to the House. The Leader of the House has stated that the Premier did not say that. An article in this morning's *The West Australian* headed "Last lot at fault: Gallop" reads -

Premier Gallop launched a stinging attack on the former government yesterday for the failed bureaucratic environment in which Susan Taylor died.

That was the first comment I found distressful; that is, to accuse any member who has served in this House of such things. I appreciate that the member for Ningaloo has reminded me that the fourth paragraph -

Mr A.J. Dean: You've not read it, have you?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I have read it, my friend! I was distressed when I read it. I was a member of the previous Liberal Government. The fourth paragraph quotes Dr Gallop -

"You know what that report was effectively on? The administration of the Liberal Party."

We are talking about the tragic death of a 15-year-old girl - she committed suicide - yet the Premier of this State puts the blame on the previous Liberal Government. He cannot deny what he said. I find such comments distasteful, disgraceful and disgusting. We used to hear such comments in this Parliament from the previous Labor Government.

I say a few words in response: the Penny Easton affair involved another tragic death that took place due to the tabling of a petition by a member of the Labor Party in the other House. I thought the Parliament would have learned its lessons about making comments along those lines. It is absolutely disgraceful, Mr Speaker! I have been boiling about this matter all day. I find it so distasteful that I have changed my speech on the Address-in-Reply to talk on this matter.

Also, I find it incredible that only one minister is in the House. I know the Premier is not here - that is fine. I would have liked him to be in the Chamber as I am attacking his comment, but unfortunately he is attending to his duties as Premier. I understand that. However, the only other minister present is the Leader of the House, which I find distasteful. About six members are sitting opposite. What I have to say may not be important to them, but it is an important issue that must be drawn to the attention of the House.

I remind members about a young, four-year-old girl, who was given the name of Melissa - it was not her real name. She was killed by being hung from a doorknob some 10 years ago. Melissa's killer was released some months ago by the Attorney General amid some public outcry. That was one of the most heinous crimes I have ever read about. Who was the minister of the day when that happened? The now Deputy Premier was the minister responsible for the Department of Community Development, as it was known in those days. What did he do as minister? He called for an inquiry. What was the outcome? Who did he ask to set up and carry out the inquiry? It was carried out by Ms Maria Harries, who I am told is an academic in the welfare field. Ms Harries did not present any findings. I believe that what she did was of no benefit to the then Government or this Parliament. Many problems have arisen since the tragic death of that four-year-old girl more than 10 years ago, and we still have not learnt the lessons. Her killer had been placed in the same home where she was in foster care. I have mentioned my opposition to the Aboriginal child placement principle, and dysfunctional behaviour and the dreadful outcomes that principle has produced. The placement of that four-year-old girl was made under that principle. It was known that the killer, who was only a young person at the time, had a disturbing fascination for and sexual interest in little girls, especially four-year-olds. Nevertheless, he was placed in a foster care situation with little girls. That was under the Labor Government before the coalition took office in 1993. What have we learnt since then? Not a lot. The principle has been enshrined in law in the Adoption Amendment Bill (No. 2), and the principle is actively adhered to all the time. Aboriginal groups made

submissions to the Gordon inquiry expressing concerns about the principle and saying it was not working. What did the Government do? It enshrined the principle in law. That is my concern.

The Premier is very good at making media statements and issuing press releases. I have his last one - all four pages of it - with me. He is good at saying he will spend millions of dollars here and there. I want to know when that money will be spent. It is easy to say the money will be spent, but it is harder to spend it and make it work effectively. I looked carefully at what the Premier said he would do with the \$75 million over the next five years. Frankly, he gave no detail. He gave global figures for 100 additional staff over a range of government agencies. However, the Government has been making employees redundant since it came to office nearly two years ago. The Government has made them redundant, and is now re-employing them. I do not have a problem with that as we need staff, particularly in areas involving children.

Our children are among the most vulnerable individuals in the State. Children, the elderly and the disabled need the most help and protection from predators who would take advantage of them. Children need protection from sexual deviants who would sexually assault them, protection from adults who would physically and emotionally abuse them, and protection from adults who neglect them. Neglect can be one of the worst forms of abuse, as it can often put a child's life in danger. This Government has not done an awful lot about that aspect. The minister responsible for children has not done a lot. I have raised with the minister on numerous occasions situations in which children are at risk. I have had to drag the minister kicking and screaming to take some action.

The *Sunday Times* carried a report some weeks ago about a little seven-year-old girl who was sent out begging by her mother. That little girl had to cross a busy railway junction and a busy main road to go knocking on doors begging for 50c pieces - her mother had given her a note to this effect. At one home, she had about three 50c pieces in her hand. She was knocking on the doors of empty houses. That little girl did not know what sort of people would open the door; she could have been in danger if a deviant had opened the door. I am told that the little girl is now in the care of her grandmother, but her 10-year-old sister is still with her mother. I will not mention names, although I do not believe I would put her at any risk. I believe that the Department for Community Development is now concerned about the 10-year-old daughter, but she is still living in that environment.

You, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr A.P. O'Gorman), have children and I have children. I even have grandchildren. You may soon have grandchildren, you never know. My children and my grandchildren are the most precious individuals in my life, and I am sure you feel the same about your children too. We must take every possible step we can to ensure that our children - by that I mean our children collectively in Western Australia - are protected from the deviants and adults in society who for some peculiar reason feel a need to physically or emotionally abuse children or neglect them.

I have mentioned the concerns I have with the Department for Community Development. When its last annual report was published there were 68 outstanding allegations of child abuse. I believe 35 or 36 of those were allegations of sexual abuse and the others were of physical abuse, with one or two allegations of children being neglected. However, it is an indictment on this Government that there were 35 allegations of sexual abuse of children that had not been investigated. All the press releases, ribbon cutting and media coverage that the Premier wants of the Gordon inquiry will amount to zilch until we deal with those cases and take seriously all cases of sexual, physical and emotional abuse and neglect.

The Premier announced an allocation of \$75 million to be spent in the next five years, basically in the Aboriginal children's community. I do not have a problem with that. Obviously, from reading the statistics, there are more problems per capita in the Aboriginal children's area than there are in the non-indigenous children's area. Non-indigenous children continue to be sexually, physically and emotionally abused and neglected, but the Premier says nothing about those children and is doing nothing about those children. He might be doing something about Aboriginal children by trying to open multifunctional police stations, but every police station that the Government opens will take coppers off the beat and off active duty to man those police stations. I am not a great fan of police stations. We can sometimes go over the top and have too many police stations, because they must be manned all the time. If the Government were increasing the manpower of police, it would not be a great problem. However, the Premier's last election promise was to increase the Police Force by 250 police officers. What is the Police Force manpower today? It has about 35 fewer police officers than it had when the Labor Party took government.

The Joondalup police region covers my electorate and yours, Mr Acting Speaker, and that of the members for Kingsley and Wanneroo. I have a great concern, and I know you do too, Mr Acting Speaker, that some police officers have been taken from the Joondalup area and sent somewhere else. You and I know that often there is only one police vehicle on the road at night in the Joondalup area. That is a disgrace. However, what will this Government do? It will assign 21 additional police officers to the Kimberley, Pilbara, goldfields and Esperance

regions. I do not have a problem with that if they are extra police. However, I have a funny feeling that this is double dipping and these police officers will be taken from existing areas to do the jobs in those regions. I do not have a problem with that either if there is a serious problem in those areas. Wherever there is a problem that needs a police presence there should be a police presence, but we are getting a very thin blue line at the moment. My constituents are concerned about that. I know that your constituents are concerned about it, Mr Acting Speaker, because they tell me about it. I know that it is difficult when a government member must take on the Government. I sympathise, because at times I had the same problem. It is very difficult to criticise one's own Government. That is why your constituents are coming to me, Mr Acting Speaker. They are saying to me, "Look, Rob, we can't get much out of the member for Joondalup because he is a government member, but we want you to do something." That is happening, although those constituents are from another area, because the zone covers both my electorate and your electorate, Mr Acting Speaker. However, I wonder where the Premier gets some of the figures in his media statement, which reads -

... major new initiatives included:

- employing 25 additional child protection workers, including allocating 15 to regional areas (\$12million);

Do members know how much that works out per worker? Is there anybody in the Chamber good at maths?

Mr J.B. D'Orazio: Yes.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: How much does it work out per worker then, my friend?

Mr J.B. D'Orazio: I wasn't listening to you.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is \$120 000 a year per worker. We are not paying \$120 000 a year to people who work in the area of child protection.

Ms M.M. Quirk: It's accrual accounting.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Cruel accounting?

Ms M.M. Quirk: Accrual accounting - a-c-c-r-u-a-l.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I know what accrual accounting is, my friend. Even under accrual accounting, \$120 000 for 25 additional child protection workers comes to \$12 million. That is what those workers will get. I presume they will not be paid \$120 000 a year each. I accept that some of that money, which the statement says is for child protection workers, must include on-costs. That may account for another \$10 000 a year. Most police officers are paid about \$50 000 a year and the cost of employing them is probably in the region of \$10 000 to \$15 000 a year on top of that. Where is the rest of the money going? The media statement states that 21 additional police officers will be assigned to the Kimberley, Pilbara, goldfields and Esperance regions at a cost of \$8.6 million. An amount of \$8.6 million over five years divided between 21 additional police officers amounts to \$100 000 a year each. That is the amount that will be allocated to them. They will not get \$100 000 in salary, because most of those officers are probably on about \$50 000 a year. Where will the other \$50 000 per police officer go? We are not told those things. They are just airy-fairy, big-sounding amounts of money that I do not believe will be spent in those areas. It is very difficult to work out where those amounts of money will be spent when we are told they will be spent over five years. The Premier and the Treasurer are the magicians of Western Australia's Parliament, because we will never get to the bottom of where that money went.

Another part of the Premier's media statement states that the Government is expanding the Strong Families program across the State, employing 10 new coordinators at a cost of \$7.7 million and developing locally based security initiatives in Aboriginal communities that will protect children and women at a cost of \$6 million. The Premier does not say how he will do that; he just says he will employ those extra people and develop locally based security initiatives. He is talking in general terms. I say again that it is easy to talk about big money like that, but we want some detail. This is taxpayers' money. I would be delighted if the Premier spent that money on children. He has basically said in his media statement that he will spend \$75 million on protecting Aboriginal children and that this is in response to the Gordon inquiry to ensure that Aboriginal children are not subject to sexual abuse.

The Premier was also critical of the leasing of land by the previous Government to the Swan Valley Nyungah Community. The previous Government did do that, but it offered freehold land to that community and from memory it did not want freehold land because lots of costs went with it. The community would have had to pay land tax and all that sort of stuff and it did not want that. It wanted to lease the land for 100 years at a peppercorn rent. I do not blame it for that, because that was a good deal. However, I do not believe for one minute that we as a Government would have agreed to the community having locked gates like a fortress. That is something that the community itself did.

I appreciate what the Minister for Indigenous Affairs did; he stood up to the Swan Valley Nyungah Community and took away that classroom. He may not be listening to me at the moment, but I am sure that what I say will seep into his subconscious. The Government says that it will knock off the gates, because the community cannot have these locked gates. What does it have now? It has a boom gate! The community will still try to impede people from getting in there. Agencies were at fault for all the problems that went on there, because they did not go into that community. The police did not go in there often enough, even though they had every right to. If the police suspect that somebody is breaking the law and children are being sexually or physically abused, they have the right to enter premises and protect those children. That would normally involve the Department for Community Development. The other problem is that the DCD workers never know where they are.

My concern is that most Labor Governments want to do ideologically and politically correct, sensitive things. They think they are doing the right thing for these minority groups, but often they are not, because they are seen as patronising, divisive and separatist. That is not good for those groups. I do not think it is good to treat Aboriginal groups like that. The Government is patronising them. Aboriginal groups need more help because, according to the statistics, within Aboriginal communities seven times more children are abused than is the case within non-indigenous communities. That is a horrific number, and it concerns me greatly. I get really concerned when I hear that the risk of young Aboriginal children up to the age of 15 or 16 - I include them all as children, because they are children to me - being sexually or physically abused is seven times greater than is the case for non-indigenous children. Every member of this House would share that feeling, because most members are decent people who care about kids. I counsel members to look into whether some of the policies that are put in place actually benefit children. I question whether the Aboriginal child placement principle is effective. Some Aboriginal groups told the Gordon inquiry that it was clearly not working and they had grave concerns about it. Why do we not listen to them? They know better than we do what is going on within certain Aboriginal communities. We all know what went on in the Swan Valley Nyungah Community; it has been well publicised. That causes many Western Australians and me a tremendous amount of concern. It is an absolute disgrace for the Premier to say that the Liberal Party, in government, swept it under the carpet and was responsible for that tragic death.

The Premier has accepted 195 of the 197 recommendations of the Gordon inquiry. That sounds good, but I have seen some of the recommendations. Some of the recommendations are not exactly world breaking; they are things that a lot of sensible people would recommend. I have a serious concern because the one area that has not been properly dealt with by the Gordon inquiry or the Premier is mandatory reporting. The Premier pooh-poohed mandatory reporting; he said that the Gordon inquiry felt it was not necessary or the best thing to do. Where did the inquiry get that idea? Who made submissions to the inquiry? What report was made to the Gordon inquiry on mandatory reporting? I have already mentioned Maria Harries tonight; she is an academic in the welfare field. . . We know her from the days of the previous Labor Government and the previous Minister for Community Development. If Maria Harries was against mandatory reporting more than 10 years ago, is it likely that she had changed her mind when it came to making a submission to the Gordon inquiry? I very much doubt it.

Western Australia is the only State in Australia that does not have mandatory reporting. Somebody in the Government has said that mandatory reporting is not working worldwide and that other countries and States are having problems. The statistics on the number of allegations brought forward in other States of Australia under mandatory reporting show that, per capita, thousands more are made in those States than in Western Australia. I accept that if more allegations were made, a higher number of them would be unsubstantiated. Conversely, more would also be substantiated. We are not doing that. The Government thinks we are doing the right thing in Western Australia and does not want mandatory reporting. There are a lot of problems with mandatory reporting and a lot of work is involved. I firmly believe that if this State were to introduce mandatory reporting, the number of allegations would rise. I have an interesting graph that compares Western Australia with the other States. *Hansard* will not be able to report this, but I will show the graph to members of this House. The graph shows that the number of cases reported in Western Australia is far lower than in the other States, because a lot of people do not want to get involved. However, they should get involved. It should be mandatory that they get involved when a child is suspected of being sexually, physically or emotionally abused or neglected.

This Government has failed the children of this State. It had a fantastic opportunity following the Gordon inquiry to implement something that would work and protect many children. At the moment, this Government is allowing perpetrators to go uncharged, because they are not being followed up. There are perpetrators - heinous people - out there who do dreadful things to the children of this State. The Government is allowing that to happen because of its reluctance to bring in mandatory reporting. That is a dreadful indictment on this State Government. Labor Governments will always put in place ideologically patronising systems. We can always expect Labor Governments to come up with that sort of solution.

MR R.N. SWEETMAN (Ningaloo) [8.48 pm]: I am pleased to be able to make a contribution to the Address-in-Reply, albeit a long time after the Governor opened this new session of Parliament. I had not proposed to

speaking at this stage of my speech on some of the issues raised by the member for Hillarys during his speech. However, because the member has touched on those areas, I will begin my speech by mentioning some of the same points. I agree with the member for Hillarys that some of the things the Premier said were not becoming or appropriate for a Premier to say. I do not think there are any Aboriginal issues with which the Premier can afford to play politics to the extent that he did in his ministerial statement yesterday, in response to questions in the House yesterday and in today's paper. It is simply not right. It is not appropriate for him to ridicule the previous Government. In the Premier's ministerial statement yesterday, he said that about \$75 million would be spent over four or four and a half years on the 197 recommendations of the Gordon inquiry. He also said that \$60 million or \$65 million of that would be new money. I applaud the Government for spending money on an obvious problem. If the previous Government can be criticised, it can be criticised for doing exactly the same thing. There is no question that the previous Government, over two terms, tried to sort out many of the problems bedevilling the Aboriginal community in Western Australia. The previous Government cannot be criticised for not spending enough money in these areas. It seemed that every day, every week or at least every month there was a new program, or an expansion of an existing program, to cater for specific needs developing within sections of the Aboriginal community. The Opposition desperately hopes that this \$75 million will solve all the problems and meet the objectives and concerns outlined in the Gordon report - all 197 recommendations. We earnestly hope that that money and the efforts spelt out in this \$75 million lifeline, as the Premier called it, will hit the target.

The Government needs to take a closer look at the issue. On page 4 of *The West Australian*, under the heading "Key spending", I note that 25 more child workers are to be recruited - 15 in regional areas - at a cost of \$12 million, which will need to be divided by four, or four and a half. Nine new remote police stations will cost \$10 million, again divided by four. Twenty-one more police officers are to be assigned for the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields and Esperance regions. These are huge regions, and I wonder how significant, in real terms, that \$8.6 million will be over four years. It will not put a lot of people on the ground. Eight specialist domestic violence police officers in regional areas will cost \$1.8 million. Divided by four, that is not a lot of money. Creating safe places for Aboriginal women and children in communities will cost \$6 million. An amount of \$3.2 million is allocated for the expansion of the child protection unit at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children. Expansion of the sexual assault resource centre, including new counselling services in nine regional places, will cost \$3.9 million. Fourteen new Aboriginal support workers, based in police districts, to provide advice and support for Aboriginal children will cost \$5 million. That accounts for all of the money. However, it is clear that those spending initiatives are for servicing the problem rather than intervening in it. For so long, the problems have been crying out for a Government to take the initiative and say that enough is enough.

Elsewhere in Australia significant people within the Aboriginal community are standing up and saying that Governments have got it wrong, and the Aboriginal people have got it wrong, and it has been going wrong for a long time. I am not sure if members saw *Australian Story* on ABC television on 11 November. I did not see it, but I heard a lot about it, so I asked my electorate officer to search the Internet and download that program. The program was primarily an interview with Noel and Gerhardt Pearson. I have a transcript of the interview, which I am happy to table at the conclusion of my address. It was obviously a good program, because many people have said that they were filled with some hope after seeing it. They felt that someone was at last giving expression to the things they were concerned about and that they had seen happening but were powerless to do anything about. The program looked at the issues affecting the Hopevale Aboriginal people on Cape York Peninsula, and the way that Noel and Gerhardt Pearson have been able to draw other people into partnership arrangements to improve the circumstances of all the Aboriginal people in Hopevale and other Cape York communities. In acknowledging Noel and Gerhardt Pearson, I would also like to recognise in this House some of the organisations that have joined in enterprise partnerships with the Cape York communities - Westpac, Boston Consulting Group, the Body Shop and the Myer Foundation. Anne Sherry of Westpac said -

The idea of a partnership was really that we pull the best of everything together in one location to see if by working in concert, we could actually make a difference.

The efforts of the Aboriginal community and these outside interests who were desperate to make a difference, but did not know how, and the coupling up in these enterprise partnerships, seems to be making a difference to the communities. Reading some of the statements of Noel Pearson and his brother shows that the circumstances in their Aboriginal communities and others they visit regularly are not a lot different from what we have in Western Australia. I nearly said "regional Western Australia", but I know that the Swan Valley Nyungah Community was really the starting point of the Gordon inquiry, so I cannot talk about issues relevant to Aboriginal communities and restrict them to regional and remote areas of this State, because it is happening everywhere in our State now.

At the start of the interview, Noel Pearson makes reference to the dependence of the Aboriginal people on welfare. That is not really the point I want to labour heavily in speaking about Aboriginal issues.

Mr A.D. McRae: Can I read a short quote from Noel Pearson? Do you mind? You have 22 minutes left. Do you have enough time to hear this?

Mr R.N. SWEETMAN: If it is relevant to this address.

Mr A.D. McRae: It is; it just says something about Noel Pearson's broader view on the legacy that Aboriginal people experience, and live on a daily basis. It reads -

The changes that occurred throughout the nineteenth century in Australian racial ideology reflected the increasing atrocities of frontier expansion. As the frontier became bloodier and uglier, an appropriately vicious racial ideology became necessary. Racial ideology justified the rapacious dispossession of indigenous people . . . Who can deny that this legacy does not linger in the baggage of our national inheritance? Who can say that notions of racial inferiority -

Several members interjected.

Mr A.D. McRae: I have nearly finished. Do members wish to hear it or not?

Several opposition members: No.

Mr R.N. SWEETMAN: Can the member give a date for that statement?

Mr A.D. McRae: Seven years ago.

Mr R.N. SWEETMAN: That was seven years ago. It would be very interesting to have a look at Noel Pearson's life in profile. He is a very significant person - he was then and is now. He is very similar, in my mind, to someone like Ken Colbung, whom I had a bit to do with when I was in local government between the early 1980s and the early 1990s. Ken Colbung started off, in his own words, as a tearaway, wanting to blame everybody else for all of his problems and those of the Aboriginal community. He got a lot of publicity as an advocate and activist on behalf of Aboriginal people. The minute he said that he thought the Aboriginal people had overstated their case, and that, by putting the arguments he was then advocating, he was making things worse for his people, he ceased to get coverage. It has been very similar in the case of Noel Pearson. He was out there saying similar things to people like Murrundu Yanna, who is controversial and gets a lot of coverage over every statement he makes. Noel Pearson was similar, but was wise and knowledgeable enough, and had sufficient insight, to be able to backup and say that what he was saying was counterproductive to the best interests of Aboriginal people. He realises, like many other people in Australian society, that he has a greater responsibility to improve the circumstances of Aboriginal people wherever he can. Almost at the completion of the transcript of *Australian Story* he starts to make reference to some of the problems the kids are having. They are getting into trouble with the law for a host of reasons, including substance abuse and neglect. That brought me back to thinking about problems in Aboriginal communities in my own electorate. I am an advocate for intervention. A lot of Aboriginal people in my electorate are very keen to have someone intervene. To an extent, they feel powerless themselves but they certainly want to back people like me if I am prepared to put up my hand and work on their behalf. They want others in government to intervene to stop the senseless waste of life that occurs day after day in Aboriginal communities. This follows on from an initiative of the previous Minister for Education, which goes back at least four years. He visited Carnarvon and saw a lot of the problems in the school system, particularly the high school, which related to Aboriginal children. They were neglected at home and many of them were abused and knocked about badly. Some were malnourished and untidy; they were not looked after. There were serious cases of neglect. Before he became the Director General of the Department of Education, Peter Browne was in charge of Aboriginal school hostels. I asked him to look at the situation in Carnarvon to see whether it was practical to establish an Aboriginal hostel to try to take care of the children, so that they could turn up to school in a good state of mind after having had a good night's sleep and not been abused or knocked about. The hope was that the children would get a good education as a consequence. There were several meetings in that regard. At the time, Aboriginal people were supportive of the initiative. I brought together eight people representing different family groups in Carnarvon to talk through the issue. They were enthusiastic about the issue but they did not want to be seen publicly to support something like that because it was still too close to issues related to the stolen generations. They were very guarded. To a person, they agreed that something had to be done. That was some time ago and, for one reason or another, nothing progressed on that issue; it all got too hard.

Earlier this year, in desperation, some of those people got together. It involved significant people from the Aboriginal community in the Gascoyne region, including Ronny Crowe and Sid Dale. Tony Stewart and Revell Oakely, who are Aboriginal police liaison officers, and the officer in charge of the police station, also attended. We put all the issues on the table including the law and order problems, the neglect of the children and the problems at school. We wanted to see what could be done. The Aboriginal people present at the meeting said that there was a need for a hostel for the children. No-one put any words in their mouths; they are educated and confident people well able to express their points of view. It was their intention to see the Minister for Education, and Indigenous Affairs during his trip to Carnarvon. I do not know what happened in relation to that

but there was certainly a lot of enthusiasm. They wanted to set up the hostel, and they wanted the children placed in it. Furthermore, they wanted the Government to take responsibility for redirecting benefits paid to the children's parents to the hostel so that the parents could not use the children as a drink ticket or meal ticket. They wanted the parents to only get their children back when they demonstrated they were capable of looking after them. That is a fine and noble idea, but it did not progress. This is the problem. Even if the Premier were to say that if the \$75 million did not work, the Government would consider my proposition or Noel Pearson's to see whether they were realistic and reasonable alternatives to what the Government has tried, I suspect that in four years the \$75 million would have gone and we would still have the problems. Without sounding too pessimistic, I think things will be worse. Things are getting worse on a daily basis. A person does not have to go far into regional Western Australia to see the problems. I know the city has developing problems.

Five years ago, when I was helping the steering committee for the women's refuge, I was accused of being overly preoccupied with Aboriginal issues because of comments I made at a few meetings. I had simply said that we had to be careful where we sited the building because Aboriginal partners and husbands would try to get their wives and children back. I was quickly chastised and put in my place by people on the committee who told me I did not realise how big a problem it was in the broader community. I asked whether that was so. I asked what they thought the ratio was for family violence in the broader community. They told me it was 50 per cent Aboriginal community and 50 per cent white community for family violence issues.

The women's refuge in Carnarvon has been running for a while now and I have been able to obtain statistics for 2002. They are indicative, but not comprehensive. As I said, the refuge has been running for some time, albeit in a makeshift location. It is quite small compared with the final facility, which is due to open in a week or two. Once the new facility is open the number of people using it will increase because it is able to cater for more people. The figures from 1 January to 31 October paint a startling picture. I do not scare easily but the figures do not encourage me in any way that the problems within the community with regard to family domestic violence are getting any better. During that period 241 women attended the refuge. Accompanying them were 330 children. I could talk about the one-night stays and the stays of two to five nights and beyond, but I will leave that out. I will refer to ethnicity. The categories are Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal and other. Of the 241 women who attended the refuge, 235 were Aboriginal. I was not far off the mark when I said that the refuge had to be built with the full realisation that it is an Aboriginal women's refuge. More than 97 per cent of people attending the refuge are Aboriginal ladies seeking shelter from abuse or potential abuse. Only six non-Aboriginal people attended the shelter in the first 10 months of this year.

The statistical information includes the reasons that women stay in the refuge. I will not go into all the reasons, but one of them is family violence. Of the 241 ladies who attended the refuge, 150 were there because of family violence. That is a startling and horrific figure. That is why I get somewhat anxious when I hear someone of the stature of the Premier playing politics with an issue like this. He said that \$75 million will be the answer to all our prayers; it will solve the problem. I then read all the issues listed under the newspaper subheading "Key Spending", accounting for all the money to be spent over the next four years. It will only service the problem. Not one of those programs is likely to intervene and stop the problem. Noel and Gerhardt Pearson are seeking to set up a cape accord or something similar to the grog strategy at Cape York Peninsula and they want support from the Government to make their communities alcohol and drug-free. It is not beyond the wit of man to devise a way to stop the trafficking of alcohol in Aboriginal communities. They know that is the starting point to regaining self-respect and social values as individuals in those communities. They know that they will improve as a consequence of that. I support people like Noel and Gerhardt Pearson and the others who are helping those two men in their endeavours to sort out the problems in Cape York. Within at least a year and certainly within two years, the Government should review its position. It should do that before all the money is gone. I hope it looks at which programs are working and which are not. It should discontinue the programs that represent a scandalous waste of money and redirect that money so that it has some benefit for the people the Government is trying to help. The Opposition gives the commitment that it will support the Government in progressing whatever initiative will keep Aboriginal people alive, stop women from being beaten and protect kids from every aspect of abuse from which they currently suffer. I hope that we can intervene and stop those types of practices in the hope that Aboriginal people will retain motivation and self-respect and take their place in our educational facilities. I hope they complete all their years of primary and secondary schooling and ultimately go on to tertiary institutions. That is what we look for. We are not judging people. If we are critical of Aboriginal people, it is not because they are Aboriginal people. Racism is judging someone according to the colour of his skin. We judge people by their conduct. Whether people are white or black, they are judged on how they conduct themselves.

I have spoken far longer than I intended on an issue I remain passionate about. I recall a discussion with the previous Premier in which he said that there was a chance that if we won the last election I would be considered for a ministerial post. I recall that discussion vividly. We all think of the government portfolios we would like

to get our hands on; the areas in which we think we could really make a difference. I would have loved the resources development portfolio. However, the first thing I said to the Premier was that I would take on Aboriginal affairs for free. I knew that I could make a difference in that area. I have a responsibility to try to assist the people who have sat opposite me at my desk on many occasions and wept over their plight or the plight of one of their fellows in the Aboriginal community. To all intents and purposes, I have been powerless to help them. I think that as a minister, I would have known the people to talk to and the places to start in addressing some of these very serious problems within the Aboriginal community.

I move on to talk about development issues. I will take on the Government about its lack of imagination in fostering development and everything that goes with that: wealth, jobs and prosperity. Development in regional Western Australia encourages decentralisation because people are drawn out of developed areas and into regional locations to participate in jobs. I refer to what I think is a very significant project, although it is not within my electorate. I still think the Oakajee estate is one of the most exciting greenfields industrial sites in Western Australia. I encourage the Government to take another look at that precinct with a view to doing something about making it investor ready. I am sure this is close to the heart of the member for Greenough. Quite often it is not during boom times that companies decide to invest in particular industries or countries. I recall Hugh Morgan being roundly criticised by shareholders when Western Mining Corporation Pty Ltd built its first nickel treatment project. It cost a bomb, but it would have cost much more if it were built in a boom time. He started that project when nickel world prices were at an eight or 10-year low. However, the commissioning of that plant coincided with very high nickel prices, and Western Mining Corporation made money hand over fist from the day the mill opened. Although with the cyclical nature of commodities, nothing lasts forever, the company made hay while the sun shone through that investment. I believe the Government should get Oakajee investor ready. That does not mean that it has to spend a lot of money; it just needs to be diligent and ensure that all the corridors for communications, power, gas and water are in place. It needs to also ensure that the wharf is ready to go so that when - not if - a company, Australian or otherwise, expresses an interest in the area, it can very quickly start its project. Not many areas in Western Australia could be classified as investor ready. I keep encouraging the Gascoyne Development Commission within my electorate to take a closer look at some projects in Exmouth, the Rocky Pool development and initiatives within the pastoral region. It should do something to have those developments investor ready so that when someone comes along with a fistful of dollars, we can accommodate his plans.

Another project which the Government may not know much about but which is potentially a \$1 billion investment is the square kilometre array radio telescope project. It has an interesting history. Our interest started with an article on the second page of *The West Australian* by Professor Ron Ekers. The heading of the article was along the lines of "In search of ET". The article talked about the square kilometre array project, and indicated that the proponents for this project in Australia were considering sites in Parkes, New South Wales. After reading that article, the president of the local chamber of commerce and I thought it would be reasonable to invite the professor to Western Australia to look at sites in the Gascoyne. He came across with Dr Bruce Thomas and they were very excited by what they saw. Although we cannot yet say that the rest is history, they have spent a lot of time looking at and analysing sites in the Gascoyne and Murchison districts. They had three preferred sites. The best were Mileura and Nookawarra stations, which are in the Murchison district and fall within the jurisdiction of the Mid West Development Commission. The commission has done a lot of work at the departmental level. There is some anxiety even within the development commission - you, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr J.P.D. Edwards), may know something about this - that all the work seems to be at a local level. The Murchison shire and the development commission are keen for the Government to understand the implications of this project. Commissioning is not scheduled until 2008 or 2010, and many processes must be gone through in the interim if Australia is to win the project. It is important that the Government engages this initiative and supports the shires and the development commission in trying to get it off the ground. The expenditure of \$1 billion in an area like the Murchison would be significant and result in some revelations. The project will comprise a square kilometre of radio telescope. However, I am out of time and will have to leave the rest of my comments for the loan debate tomorrow.

MR J.L. BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington) [9.18 pm]: I will talk about a few issues in my electorate that are of concern to me and, more importantly, to the constituents of Murray-Wellington. The first is the Pinjarra Courthouse, which over the past 10 years has for various reasons been under threat of closure. Ten years ago it did not fall within my electorate. I think it came within the electorate of the member for Dawesville. I represented the electorate of Murray-Wellington from 1983 to 1989. After the redistribution I moved south until December 1996. It was at that time that it came to my notice that the Ministry of Justice was considering closing the courthouse. It stayed open on that occasion. I again picked up the Murray-Wellington electorate in December 1996, and the issue of the closure of the Pinjarra Courthouse raised its ugly head a year or two later. After some lobbying and pressuring we managed to get the courthouse in Pinjarra to stay open by allowing for motor vehicle licence payments to be made there to make it a viable service and to remove the burden from the

Department of Justice. Unfortunately, six to 12 months ago rumours were flying around that the courthouse was going to close, which became more than just rumours by the middle of the year because the courthouse staff were told that it would close its doors in December this year. Since then we have been lobbying and doing our best to get the Minister for Peel, who is also the Attorney General, to visit the area. The Minister for Peel is supposed to help make towns viable, livable and those sorts of things. However, the Attorney General, or the Minister for Peel, who is in control of the Department of Justice, has shown no interest in keeping that courthouse open. A few weeks ago in Parliament when I asked him a question, he declared that the Pinjarra Courthouse would close on 31 December. Admittedly, the courthouse is not doing as much court work - I was going to say "as we would like it to". We want less court work in that respect, if possible. One of the good things is that it is not doing much court work but it is doing some amount of work. The magistrate visits the courthouse for one day every two months, and justices of the peace are doing some court work in between. However, through the clerk of courts, the courthouse has the ability to do the various activities that are done in a courthouse, plus take payments for motor vehicle licences. A very good service is provided by the courthouse. The problem is that there is no public transport between Pinjarra and Mandurah. Therefore, anyone dealing with the court in the future will have difficulties travelling to Mandurah if they do not have a motor vehicle.

The closure of the courthouse removes another service from the town. I would have thought that the Minister for Peel would be keen to ensure that services remained in country towns. Over the past 20 years a regionalisation policy, not a decentralisation policy, has been implemented. Services such as the Water Corporation and other government services have moved from country towns into regional centres. In 1983 I was first elected as a local member. A couple of months after that the then Public Works Department, which eventually became the Water Corporation, was on the verge of moving into Mandurah - a process that had already been set in motion before I was elected. That move suited the boss at the time because he lived in Mandurah and he did not want to be inconvenienced by travelling 17 kilometres to Pinjarra every day. Over the years services have disappeared from country towns. It is a travesty of justice that the minister has allowed this to occur.

On Monday night a public meeting will be held in Pinjarra. Some months ago the Shire of Murray wrote to the minister asking for a meeting with him and it is still waiting for an answer. It is bad when the minister does not even have the decency to meet with these people at a public meeting. They do not expect him to turn up and are not sure whether any government representative will go to the meeting. I can understand why, because if they turned up, they would probably not be treated very nicely. I remember four or five years ago when another public meeting was held in Pinjarra with regard to the hospital and the courthouse. About 800 people turned up to that meeting. I went to it with trepidation - being in government at the time - and I managed to survive it. The Minister for Peel should show some guts by turning up to that meeting and telling the community what he will do with the courthouse.

The Pinjarra Primary School is another area of concern. Student numbers at the school are beginning to increase; it currently has around 650 students and will have over 700 students next year. As the local member I have visited the school in the past, although I have not necessarily been taken into the classrooms and shown all the facilities. Generally, I have met people at the school who have said things like, "Yes, it is a nice day". They have not often talked about their problems at the school. I have been astounded over the years, because I visit schools, not to have a nice cup of tea and say hello but to find out about their problems so that I can assist. Earlier in the year I was taken on an inspection of the school by the parents and citizens association. The classrooms in that school are around 42 years old and have not had a major renovation in that time. They are depressing because they are dark and dingy. I am surprised that the teachers are prepared to work at the school under those conditions, which are certainly not up to scratch by any stretch of the imagination or of the standard that people in this day and age expect to work in. The other problem is that, because of the high number of students, the sports area is totally inadequate. The school has some land that needs to be levelled off because of grass growing on it. For a small amount of money the area could be improved and expanded and made into a suitable sports area for the students. The school has four demountables, of which three are no good. If student numbers increase to more than 700 next year, the school will need more demountables. The option to build a new primary school must be taken into consideration because the current one is now 42 years old and totally inadequate in my opinion - especially since I have had a really good look at the classrooms. The library is inadequate for that number of students and the toilets are also 42 years old - the P&C association is quite concerned about the smells coming out of them. They probably also need to be knocked down and rebuilt. Many of the students at the school come from the growing Yunderup area and it is probably time for a new school to be built in that area also. The number of students going to Pinjarra could then be reduced and kept locally in the Yunderup area. The nice school facilities that are expected in this day and age could then be provided.

At the time that I inspected Pinjarra Primary School I wrote to the minister and asked him to visit it. He said he would try to get there by the end of the year. The end of the year has now virtually passed and there has been no sign of or talk about the minister visiting the school. At the beginning of the year I also wrote to him about the

Dwellingup Primary School, on another issue and, again, no interest was expressed. A couple of months ago I happened to be watching the weekend news and saw that the minister had managed to visit the Highgate Primary School, because, obviously, it is in a Labor seat. As a Labor member of Parliament he was quite happy to give up his Saturday to visit that school and see what its problems were. I know that many schools have problems and it is not easy to balance the budget. However, it is about time some priorities were put in place so that schools like the Pinjarra Primary School were looked after.

One of the schools that has been on the list for getting a covered assembly area for many years is the Brunswick Primary School. This school, like all schools, has a very good P&C association that has done a lot of work to cover the verandahs and those types of things, which has made extra room for students to have their lunch in during winter. The P&C association has put a lot of effort into doing things around the school and it believes it is time that the school got its covered assembly area. In the past a local school committee consisting of representatives from the various schools has made recommendations on what problems should be addressed first. Oddly enough the Brunswick Primary School has been on the top of the list to have its covered assembly area built. For some reason or other, when the recommendation reaches Perth it is shelved and another school is pulled out of the hat for development. Again, this school is quite an old school. I am not sure how old it is but it was probably built around the same time as the Pinjarra Primary School. The community in that area is a good one that does not complain much. However, it is now starting to become angry that the school is being ignored by the Government and that it is not getting any results with regard to its covered assembly area.

The Pinjarra Murray District Hospital has also been a bone of contention with the people of Pinjarra. When the Peel Health Campus was established by the coalition Government in Mandurah, patient numbers at the Pinjarra hospital dropped off dramatically. The hospital's status dropped from a 90-bed hospital to a 30-bed hospital, because two-thirds of its patients were from the Mandurah area. Removing two-thirds of a hospital's patients has a pretty dramatic effect. Some operations ceased to be performed and certain services also disappeared. People were not really thrilled about that, but they got on with their lives. Birthing was one of the services proposed to be removed. However, after a bit of a battle, we managed to retain low-risk births at the hospital. Since that time, the doctors in the area have decided that they will not provide an after-hours accident and emergency service. I spoke to the different groups of doctors in the town in an attempt to convince them that an after-hours accident and emergency service was a good thing. However, many of the newer doctors do not have the same dedication as the older style of doctor who was around years ago. For a start, they do not live in Pinjarra. One doctor lives south of Mandurah and another in Serpentine. As far as they are concerned, they work nine to five, Monday to Friday and then disappear from the community. They are not prepared to provide an after-hours service. It was unfortunate when a young fellow who lived about 100 metres from the Pinjarra hospital was critically injured and had to be taken to the Peel Health Campus. It is debatable whether that young fellow could have been saved had he been treated at the Pinjarra hospital.

It is a problem when people in the community stop viewing their hospital as a hospital. Earlier in the year, I suggested to the Minister for Health that the way to get the accident and emergency service cranked up again was to tell the local doctors that if they want admitting rights to the Pinjarra hospital, they had to provide an after-hours service. Given that that happens in hospitals in the eastern States, I thought the suggestion was fair. I wrote to the Minister for Health. When he eventually wrote back, he stated that -

In this instance it has been decided by the Health Care Facility that re-opening the Accident and Emergency Department at the Murray District Hospital is not viable at this time, both due to a lack of adequate facilities and given the proximity of Pinjarra to the Peel Health Campus. The Peel Health Campus has the required level of facilities to provide a safe and effective accident and emergency service and would therefore adequately address the needs of the Pinjarra community.

The problem is that it affects not just the Pinjarra community, because the Pinjarra hospital services people in Waroona, which is 30 kilometres away; Dardanup, which is 15 kilometres north of Pinjarra; Dwellingup, which is about 20 kilometres east of Pinjarra; and Boddington. It is not only the people in Pinjarra who are about 17 kilometres from the Peel Health Campus. When people are used to certain services, it is difficult when those services are removed. The Minister for Health's response that the people in Pinjarra would not get an accident and emergency service because he was not prepared to provide the necessary funds nor apply pressure to the doctors was very poor. As far as I am concerned, the treatment of the people of Pinjarra is not good enough. After the member for Yokine first became the Minister for Health, he stated that members should "watch this space", as if to imply that he would fix the health system. The health system is worse than ever. I acknowledge that the health portfolio is difficult, because it comprises an aging and growing population. Moreover, open-heart surgery and hip replacements are expensive operations. However, it is not enough to top up the health system a little bit each year. Radical administrative changes are needed to achieve a more efficient system. Over the years, hospital budgets have been squeezed to make them more efficient. As I have stated on previous occasions, bureaucracy has taken over the health system. Money should be contributed to the bottom end to cure

the sick, to provide speech therapists for those with speech problems and the like. At the moment, money is being directed towards the other end and it is not being adequately administered to ensure that it is used to treat health problems. It is a shame that the minister has indicated that he will fix the health system and that he carries on as though he has made many changes. Changes? I have not seen any changes, except for the change to the Metropolitan Health Services Board, which was a wrong move, even though the minister claims that it will save \$3 million each year. I say rubbish to that, because he has placed those people in a different area in the health system, so their wages are still being paid.

Under the heading of “Gunna principle fails hospitals” the editorial of *The West Australian* on 16 August 2002 states -

The Gallop administration has become the gunna Government.

It’s gunna do this and it’s gunna do that to improve the public hospital system. There can be no doubt that the system has changed in the 18 months of this Government. It has become worse.

I am not the only person who has stated that the health system has deteriorated. Indeed, *The West Australian*, which is the voice of the people, has stated that the health system has become worse. The minister defends himself in this place day in, day out and brags about what he has done. I have not seen any positive measures that will improve the health system. The pain of a hip that needs replacing is quite dramatic. I have spoken to people who have been on a waiting list for one to two years, and they have told me that they cannot sit down, stand up or lie down because the pain is so great. They live on pain-killers, the effects of which can be adverse. Moreover, they age more quickly because of the excruciating pain. There is a double whammy if people are attended to later rather than sooner. We must be able to move people through the system and ensure that they are looked after.

The Government also brags about its economic record. I came across an article that appeared in *The West Australian* on 26 October, which states under the headline “State’s bankruptcies double in number” -

And there were 617 bankruptcies in WA in the September quarter of this year, a rise of almost 18 per cent over the June quarter result.

It is one thing for the Government to refer to certain figures and glowing reports and state that the gross product has increased by three, four or five per cent and that the unemployment level has been reduced. However, the real telling point is the number of people who are going bankrupt because their businesses are failing. In some situations personal debt causes bankruptcy. However, many bankruptcies are the result of businesses finding their circumstances too difficult. For example, as a result of the Government’s changes to industrial relations law, small business owners cannot afford to open on weekends because of the extra labour costs. That is a shame, because we had reached a point in Western Australia at which people could go to a cafe or the shops seven days a week. In the end, people will not open their shops and cafes at the weekend. Again, that is a step in the wrong direction, and the industrial relations changes in Western Australia are a step back in time. Certainly, the Government is not moving in the right direction.

An interesting comment was made by Hon Norman Moore in the upper House regarding the Premier’s workload. He is probably a smart Premier - he does not overdo it. We sit in this Chamber at night. The Premier has possibly been here on occasions, but I cannot remember when he last sat in the Chamber at night.

Ms S.M. McHale: He starts the day at 5.30 in the morning.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: I do not care when he starts. All other Premiers came in here. Super Tonk used to be here.

Ms S.M. McHale: Your Premier went home at eight o’clock. Come on - have a bit of grace.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: The Premier is at home probably tucked up with his teddy now because he is the frontman - the PR man.

Mr A.P. O’Gorman: You would love to have one, wouldn’t you?

Mr F.M. Logan: He’s chopping you to pieces at the moment.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: That is not correct.

Mr F.M. Logan: Every question time you’re going backwards.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: What did the polls say the other day? We are in front.

Mr F.M. Logan: Your leader has a seven per cent approval rating and ours has over 40 per cent.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: Have a look at the figures for the Premier when he was Leader of the Opposition. They were not too good. Most leaders of the Opposition do not get good approval figures. The history of leaders of the Opposition, shows they generally rate low in the polls. The Opposition is written up as low polling and not

aggressive enough in getting into the Government: I have been a member of this Parliament for 20 years and I have seen those figures over that time.

Mr F.M. Logan: You have seven minutes left; use it wisely. You're not using it wisely at the moment.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: Yes, I am. History shows that leaders of the Opposition have low rating in the popularity polls because it is a difficult position. Oppositions are often regarded as not being up to standard. Regardless, the wheel eventually turns and the Government changes. All members opposite have is a show pony of a Premier. He likes to be tucked up with his teddy by eight o'clock at night. Every Premier I have known also has been Treasurer. That is too hard for the current Premier, who has given the responsibility to the poor, old member for Belmont.

Mr M.J. Birney: He has the lightest workload of any Premier in modern history. He still stuffed up the public management matter, as we found out today.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: Indeed. It is interesting; he is a smart Premier in one sense. He is always fresh and not overtaxed with his workload. He gets to bed early at night. It is a very interesting scenario.

Mr R.F. Johnson: His science portfolio does not give a great deal of work. He took on the citizenship and multicultural interests portfolio, but parliamentary secretaries and other members represent him at functions more often than he attends.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: I cannot speak on that as I do not attend too many such functions these days. I went to a few when I was cabinet secretary. I suspect that the poor, old parliamentary secretaries do all the work.

I also wish to speak on the irrigation system in the south west called Harvey Water. Earlier this year, the Water Corporation came down to a public meeting with irrigators, who were told they would have to forgo some water this year. It had not rained at that stage and no-one knew the details of the allocations. Last summer, the allocation was 60 per cent of their entitlement. This year it is about 60 per cent again. These people are set up for irrigation and have invested money in infrastructure for irrigation. This year, with grain prices going through the roof, they will not be able to buy grain to feed cattle. Grain is not needed for feed for grapes or other horticultural products. Crop production will decline without water, and not for this year only. If orange trees and grapevines are starved of water now, it will probably set them back a long time. They cannot simply forgo their water.

The irrigators must ensure that the 60 per cent of their entitlement allocation is used in the best manner. They may be lucky and get summer rain, but that is rare in our area. The unprofessional approach of the Water Corporation was intriguing in a sense. The corporations officers said, "We would like your water - give it up. We will pay for the water." When someone asked what would be paid for the water, it was not known. If the corporation makes an offer to buy the water rights from a person, it should have a figure in mind. Not all people need the water allocated to them. I know one person who has bought a property as a lifestyle decision rather than for farming purposes, and he is happy to sell some of his water rights. However, he will not sell if he does not know what he will receive for it.

First, the Water Corporation was extremely cheeky to ask for the water when it had no idea how much water would be made available this year. We are waiting for rains to see how much will enter the dams. Secondly, the corporation did not know the price it would pay people. Thirdly, it is important to produce food so the water should stay in the south west, rather than be put on green lawns in Perth. It should be retained in the Dardanup, Harvey and Waroona areas rather than be pinched so the Government can feel happier about not applying more stringent water restrictions in Perth. Also, the Government gives more serious consideration to underground water; there seems to be plenty of it, but a reluctance to tap into it. It is all very well to say that farmers do not really need the water and are getting it at too low a price, but the question remains: do people want food or not? It is important that people who have invested in infrastructure for irrigation get as much water as they can from the area, instead of being starved of it to grow lawns in the Perth metropolitan area. Most of the water that comes to Perth ends up on lawns. It is time more pressure was applied to make people more efficient in their water use. Water prices have risen, so farmers in the south west have become more efficient with their usage. They have laser levelling so that water is placed on the paddocks more evenly and less is used. They have trickle irrigation systems and the like, so the amount of water used by each farmer has reduced dramatically over 20 years. It is time some Perth people became more efficient in their water usage as well.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-Reply thus adopted.

House adjourned at 9.48 pm