

**ZIMBABWEAN FARMERS**

*Statement by Member for Ningaloo*

**MR R.N. SWEETMAN** (Ningaloo) [12.54 pm]: I inform the House about a meeting I had at Parliament House with a Zimbabwean couple who are farmers. About three or four months ago I was e-mailed by the couple, who represent a considerable number of Zimbabwean farmers who are feeling insecure, partly as a result of the wrath of their mad President, Robert Mugabe. Like many other farmers in Zimbabwe, they are keen to leave their country and are looking for a host country. There are difficulties with the migration program for Zimbabwean farmers. Unfortunately, over the past 20 years the Zimbabwean dollar has declined. The parity between the Zimbabwean and the US dollar has changed; whereas \$Z7 once equalled \$US1, now \$Z700 equals \$US1. Under the business migration program, Zimbabwean farmers are finding it difficult to amass points. The Parliament must try to understand this problem - I understand that immigration is primarily a federal Government issue - so that it can assist with the immigration to Australia of people who have built up generations of farming skills across a variety of areas. This State and nation will not look back if we can facilitate the movement of Zimbabwean farmers in great numbers to this country.