

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 3) 2002

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR L. GRAHAM (Pilbara) [3.21 pm]: Some time ago I was contacted by the media, who wanted to know my views on whether a statue in honour of the late Lang Hancock should be erected in Western Australia. I was extraordinarily affronted by the suggestion that there should be a statue of this man. I make no comment about his involvement or otherwise in the iron ore industry. I withheld my comments about this statue for some time but ultimately made some remarks about his involvement in Wittenoom. That ensuing saga led to the Rinehart and Hancock families placing a series of advertisements in *The West Australian* about what the late Lang Hancock did or did not know about asbestos and asbestos-related diseases. There were two themes in those rather bizarre advertisements. The first was that Lang Hancock did not know and could not have known about the dangers associated with asbestos mining. The second was what the Americans call the dog's defence; even if he did know, it was the Government's fault because the Government allowed the mining to proceed. I will deal with those themes because they are both significant and important to Western Australia.

I am on record many times as stating that the tragedy that is Wittenoom is Western Australia's great disgrace. Even to this day the State has not fully fronted up to its responsibilities. I will deal with some of the matters raised in those advertisements and in so doing I will quote three times from a book written by Ben Hills entitled *Blue Murder*. I thoroughly recommend it to any member of Parliament who has even a passing interest in asbestos and the mining history of this State. On page 13, Ben Hills writes -

There is no 'safe' level of exposure to asbestos. The disease is progressive. There is no treatment. The victims never get better. They always die, often of a 'complication' like bronchitis, pneumonia or the heart failing as it battles to pump blood through the silted-up network of blood vessels in the lungs.

What does it feel like? First you notice a shortening of breath: you can't play sport any more, you struggle with the stairs. You develop a dry, rasping cough, and when you go to the doctor he hears crackling in your lungs through his stethoscope, the sinister signature tune of asbestosis. As the years go by, the disease gets worse. You have to give up work, even sex. You don't have the oxygen; you don't have the energy. As you approach death, your lips may turn blue, and you may develop a strange thickening, 'clubbing' the doctors call it, at the tips of your fingers. By now your lungs are nearly dead, and so are you. Your last lingering days or weeks or months are spent in bed with an oxygen mask strapped to your face. The only thing to look forward to is a hospital compassionate and skilled enough in pain-killing drugs to dull your final agony.

This medical horror story was widely known by the 1930s, when young Lang Hancock was fossicking around on Mulga Downs station in search of minerals. In fact, 1930 was the year the most comprehensive and conclusive study of the disease was published in England.

Page 172 of the book states -

Lang Hancock, at least, was upfront in his own gross and misinformed way when he was asked about his own responsibility for the Wittenoom disaster. You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs, he rumbled, and demanded space in the Perth *Daily News* in 1978 to explain what he meant: 'Before becoming misled about the dangers of asbestos, one should remember that there are many substances in everyday household use which are potentially more harmful than this useful fibre. Sugar, for instance, when taken to excess, is more harmful than plutonium. In the case of Wittenoom, the mine was originally opened so that gasmask manufacturers could provide a filter capable of saving millions of lives; yet 28 people from Wittenoom are reported dead before their allotted span, to enable a greater number to live.'

Representatives from the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia are in the gallery today. It is an organisation for which I have great respect. It received a letter in October this year from Ms Gina Rinehart. I would like to read into *Hansard* the response from the Asbestos Diseases Society to the first contact it has ever had with the Hancock family. The letter is dated 1 November 2002, and states -

Dear Ms Rinehart

LANG HANCOCK

Thank you for your letter of 24 October 2002. We have not previously heard from you and your family. Your letter, however, is factually erroneous and insensitive.

The antipathy that is felt by members of this organisation towards your late father is based upon a number of indisputable facts. These are:

1. **LANG HANCOCK WAS THE FATHER OF THE BLUE ASBESTOS INDUSTRY IN W.A.**

Although he may not have been the first to discover, or even to mine the blue asbestos, it is doubtful that there would have been a blue asbestos industry in Western Australia but for the activities of Lang Hancock. Your father, according to his own biographies, pegged the leases of blue asbestos around Wittenoom Gorge in the late 1930's and early 1940's. After being appraised of the value of the fibre on the London markets, he entered into arrangements to mine and sell the blue asbestos to British companies.

This asbestos, as Mr Hancock later proudly admitted, went into the making of war time gas masks in England. He said that it therefore saved hundreds of lives. Although this claim is doubtful, it is beyond dispute that a substantial number of the women who worked making the gas masks for the English company "Boots" have since died of mesothelioma. Your father claimed in an interview with "The Daily News" in 1978 that the saving of the lives with the blue asbestos was a small price to pay for the 28 people who had died as a result of mining asbestos at Wittenoom. In other words, Mr Hancock took the credit for the benefits, and by necessary implication, the responsibility for the deaths from blue asbestos mining, by this claim.

As was predicted long ago, Wittenoom, now however, accounts for substantially more than 28 deaths.

The numbers of deaths from Wittenoom now lies in the hundreds (by 1999 194 had died from mesothelioma alone) and are continuing.

As well as mining blue asbestos, your father conducted a white asbestos operation at a place called Nunyerry. This was a shocking, dusty operation and a number of people who worked there have since contracted asbestos related disease. One, Ian Dignam, worked at Wittenoom as well, and, by 1945, had asbestosis. This diagnosis, the first recorded at Wittenoom, within two years of CSR operating the mine, was duly reported by the mine manager CH Broadhurst to his superiors in Sydney. Your claim that the potential for disease from asbestos was not known in the 1940's, a matter we deal with further below, is at odds with this diagnosis and report. Moreover, CSR sought to avoid responsibility for Dignam's illness, by blaming the dusty conditions at Nunyerry. It seems clear that whatever was happening at Wittenoom, your father was operating mines with no greater regard for the health of the people working there, than was CSR at Wittenoom, a company that was at the time employing him.

Your father introduced CSR to the Wittenoom prospects. He took a share of the company, and was appointed a director of the company on 18 February 1944 until 5 September 1944 when he was replaced by his partner Wright. Wright remained a director until 1949. Dozens of people who were employed at the Wittenoom mine in that period, including the late Tim Barrow - whose case examined the issue of the conduct of the mine in that period, and the knowledge available to its management of the dangers of asbestos - have contracted asbestos related illnesses from the shocking conditions and died. (Indeed, Mr Barrow also worked for your father prior to joining CSR).

In addition, your father was appointed as district superintendent at Wittenoom, and was an assistant manager at the mine through this period. What did he do to improve the dust conditions at the mine? What did he do to advance the health of people exposed to these appalling conditions? Did he make a stand for those inhaling the dust and fibres in massive quantities? Did he resign in frustration at the failure to implement well-established safety precautions? Did he, or do you now, accept any responsibility for the illness and disease that occurred while he was in a position of authority, and a shareholder and director of this operation?

It should be remembered, that it was in this period, that Dr Eric Saint began his regular visits to the Wittenoom mine (February 1948 to March 1951). He remembered and spoke of your father in recalling his visits. In early March 1948, Dr Saint visited the mine and mill and was deeply concerned over the "huge cloud of dust that hung over the mill". He described the dust conditions within the mill as worse than surrounding the mill but that the dust spread a fair

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

distance. One of his most striking memories was that “at the top there was very little movement of air and as you drove up the valley you could see this great white haze over the top and surrounding the mill area”. Dr Saint wrote, in 1948; “The asbestos mill at Wittenoom operates without any form of dust extractor whatsoever, and since the incubation period of asbestos is so much less than silica, in a year or two ABA will produce the richest and most lethal crop of cases of asbestosis in the world’s literature”. What were the directors of ABA (including your father and Mr Wright), the assistant manager (your father), and the district superintendent (your father) doing about the situation described so eloquently by Dr Saint, to his superiors and to the management of the mine?

Dr Saint was not alone in his raising of the alarm at the time. Charlie Oliver, the secretary of the Australian Workers Union, on 19 April 1948 advised the State Mining Engineer “the whole atmosphere in the vicinity of the treatment plant, when in operation is dust laden. There can be no doubt that employees occupied in the process are exposed to serious danger from a health point of view”. The State Mining Engineer delivered a copy of the letter to ABA on 7 May 1948. Oliver was reported on radio station 6WF on 13 May 1948 as saying, “that everything about the mill was laden with thick dust and the union was concerned over the danger to the health of the workers”. ABA obtained a copy of the script and forwarded it to the management of the mine at Wittenoom. “The Kalgoorlie Miner” on 13 May 1948 carried a headline “AWU ask for Departmental Inspection at Wittenoom - Says Workers Health Endangered by Dust In Asbestos Mill. Fibre Causes Power Unit to Fail; Men Not Covered by Compensation”.

The Union raised similar issues at the 1949 Arbitration Court proceeding where the nature of the disease of asbestosis, and the contribution of crocidolite to its cause, was expounded, and this should have been more than enough to have resulted in the introduction of adequate and appropriate -

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms K. Hodson-Thomas): Member for Pilbara, I seek some clarification. Are you quoting from a document?

Mr L. GRAHAM: Yes, I am.

The ACTING SPEAKER: It is a general rule under standing orders that quotations are limited and that you should paraphrase quotations in your own words. I have been sitting in the Chair now for about five minutes listening to you. I ask that you couch the speech in your own words.

Mr L. GRAHAM: Madam Acting Speaker, I understand the standing orders on the point. However, the intent of my speech is to read into *Hansard* directly a letter and then, time permitting, I will comment on it. I am watching the clock and it may very well be that I will seek a further extension of my normal 10 minutes. In the 13 or 14 years that I have been a member of this place, numerous members have stood and quoted at length. The point of my speech is to quote this letter at length.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Although I understand that the member for Pilbara would like to quote from the letter - this has happened to me too - it is a general rule of the House that quotations are limited. I ask the member for Pilbara, who has been on his feet for 13 minutes, to bring the quote to a conclusion and then make his address to the Chamber.

Mr L. GRAHAM: I have read three pages of a five-page letter. Madam Acting Speaker, I am happy for you as the Chair to rule me out of order. However, I intend to read and if you rule me out of order in a ruling from the Chair, I will, of course, abide by that ruling. The letter continues -

The Union raised similar issues at the 1949 Arbitration Court proceeding where the nature of the disease of asbestosis, and the contribution of crocidolite to its cause, was expounded, and this should have been more than enough to have resulted in the introduction of adequate and appropriate dust control measures which were well known in the mining industry by that time. They were not put in place. The workers at Wittenoom, and their families, have paid the price. Did your father or Mr Wright speak up in support of the Union?

The second leg of the advertisements, Madam Acting Speaker, was about whether the Government wanted the mine to continue and whether the Government should or should not allow the mine to continue. The letter from the Asbestos Diseases Society goes on to say -

2. THE STATE WANTED THE MINE TO CONTINUE?

Had the matter been left there, it is possible, despite what we regard as a highly significant role in the genesis of the blue asbestos industry, and your father’s occupation of a position of

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

managerial responsibility in which he could have done something to have protected those who have since suffered, that your father's role may have been forgotten. However, when CSR closed the mine in 1966 (well aware of the likely human cost that was already emerging) your father bought the mine and mill with a view to reopening it. In "The Weekend news" of 14 August 1967, in an article headed "Doctors Want Mine to Remain Closed" your father said that "the reopening of the asbestos mine would follow the bringing into operation of the iron ore railway and Port." To have contemplated reopening the mine in 1967, having regard to what was then known about blue asbestos, was not just ignorant, but an insult to all of those workers and their families who had already suffered and died by that time, as a result of the conditions at Wittenoom.

Moreover, once your father reacquired the leases to the mine and the town, he had a clear legal responsibility, having regard to the known dangers of blue asbestos tailings, to prevent or discourage people (however much they might have liked the place) from living there or visiting. Warnings should have been placed around the town, the pool and the mill and access restricted or prohibited.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms K. Hodson-Thomas): Order, member for Pilbara! I remind the member that pursuant to standing orders it is not general practice for a member to read his entire speech from a letter. If the member chooses to paraphrase it and make a number of remarks around it, I will accept that, but the member is just reading that letter directly into *Hansard*. I encourage the member to perhaps make his comments in a different way.

Mr L. GRAHAM: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. I am encouraged. I have about three paragraphs to go. The letter continues -

The tailings should have been cleaned up, covered up, or stabilized. None of this happened, and we now have a growing list of deaths (including former employees of your father) in people whose only exposure was at Wittenoom after January 1967.

Another two paragraphs talk about equating the destruction of human life to a broken egg. In deference to your ruling, Madam Acting Speaker, I will ignore those and move to the final two paragraphs, which I will attempt to abridge. The letter continues -

Perhaps rather than erect a statue to the memory of a man whose name, for the reasons outlined above, evokes sorrow and anguish among the workers who toiled in (and died from) the blue dust, (and those they have left behind), we note that the scientists at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital who have been struggling for funds to endeavour to develop a vaccine, or cure, for that most dreadful disease, asbestos related mesothelioma, have not heard from you either. It would seem to us that a far greater memorial, with much more lasting benefit to human-kind would be the establishment and funding of the "L G Hancock Memorial Centre for Research into Occupation Lung Disease" at the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. Were such a Centre to find a cure for mesothelioma, it would represent one of the most significant breakthroughs in medical science ever.

In deference to your ruling, Madam Acting Speaker, I will again ignore the final paragraph and move on to general paraphrasing. When I came into this Parliament in 1989, Wittenoom was one of the contentious issues and it was then in my electorate. I seek an extension of time.

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Mr L. GRAHAM: It took me some five years to get the Government of the day, which was by then a Liberal Government, to agree to the establishment of a select committee to inquire into Wittenoom. That committee reported in 1994, and it changed the way in which the State Government dealt with Wittenoom. I do not say that with a sense of self-promotion. I was chair of that excellent committee. The members were the then member for Albany, Kevin Prince; the member for Dianella, Dr Kim Hames; the member for Maylands, Dr Judy Edwards; and the then member for Murray, Mr Arthur Marshall. It came as a great surprise to the members of that committee to find that in 1994 - not 1944 - the Hancock group of companies still had employees working in the blue asbestos mine in Wittenoom. It was extraordinary and unbelievable. Despite all the protestations by the Hancocks that they could not have known about the dangers, the facts and the evidence reveal the exact opposite.

For 30 years people have lost court cases because they could and should have known about this. I pay credit to the then minister and member for Riverton, Hon Graham Kierath, because he acted expeditiously when the committee report was presented in 1994 and changed the laws allowing the then Department of Mines or the Department of Occupational Safety and Health to make Hancock Prospecting Pty Ltd remove its workers from those asbestos workings. I stress that that happened in 1994; half a century after it was widely known that

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

working with blue asbestos caused serious, life-threatening and terminal diseases, the Hancock family still had employees working in the mine. It took a specific Act of this Parliament to cease those operations. The Hancock family and its companies stated that they did not know and were not aware, and that the Government allowed it. It is stated at page 62 of the committee's report that the Hancock group of companies, or in this case, Hancock and Wright, transferred responsibility for what was known as the catwalk road to the Shire of Ashburton. The advertisements two or three weeks ago would have us believe the company did not know about the risks, but on 10 May 1994 Hancock and Wright demanded that the Shire of Ashburton indemnify them from all claims relating to asbestos-related diseases in connection with the transfer of responsibility for that road. It is impossible to argue that Hancock and Wright - particularly the late Lang Hancock - during any stage of the development of the asbestos industry in Wittenoom were not aware of their responsibilities.

Out of deference to you, Madam Acting Speaker, I will not go through the appendices, but I will paraphrase some of the key dates to rule out completely the thought that any responsible person operating a company could not have known about the effects of asbestos dust. In 1898 the annual report of the British Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops stated -

“The evil effects of asbestos dust have also attracted my attention. . . .”

I will not read through it all. In 1922 a Commonwealth of Australia Department of Health publication listed asbestos work as a hazardous occupation. In 1930 - bearing in mind that this is when the Hancock family claimed to have started asbestos mining - the International Labour Organisation classified asbestos mining as a dangerous occupation. In the same year the Mereweather and Price report in the United Kingdom dealt with all aspects of asbestos exposure, and it was reported in nine significant journals, including medical journals. In 1935 the first Australian case of asbestosis was reported in a mill hand. In 1935 the Western Australian, Victorian and New South Wales health departments - particularly the Western Australian health department - raised concerns about the James Hardie factory which used Wittenoom asbestos.

In 1938 the International Labour Organisation reported that work in a dense concentration of asbestos dust over a comparatively short period will lead inevitably to the development of a profound fibrosis, provided that the worker lives long enough for it to develop. In 1945 the Victorian Government introduced regulations limiting exposure to asbestos dust. In 1945-46 concerns were raised about the dust levels at Yampire Gorge and Wittenoom asbestos mills, after Western Australian government inspections conducted by Inspector Adams. In 1945 the first case of asbestosis was diagnosed at Wittenoom. In 1947 the United Kingdom factories inspectorate published its annual report - received by CSR - showing clear evidence of the risk of lung cancer from asbestos exposure. In 1948 Dr Saint warned mine management of the extreme danger of conditions at the Wittenoom mill. In 1950 the ILO conference in Sydney, attended by industry and Government, again drew attention to the risks of asbestos exposure. In 1955 Sir Richard Doll produced a paper confirming the risk of lung cancer from asbestos exposure. In 1958 Dr Jim McNulty, a great Western Australian, went to Wittenoom and raised concerns about asbestosis, the levels of dust and the use of tailings in the town. Those concerns were raised and repeated in the media and in this Parliament. In the main, they were ignored. In 1959 the work of Dr Richard Wagner concerning crocidolite fields in South Africa turned up in medical journals. That scientifically and conclusively confirmed the extreme risks from crocidolite. In 1960 Dr McNulty diagnosed the first case of mesothelioma from Wittenoom. I say again that it is impossible for any reasonable person operating in the mining industry over that 30-year period to not be aware of the risks associated with asbestos. It is unacceptable to rewrite history by excluding all that knowledge in order to glorify someone.

It is important to note some other cases. The first claim in Australia made by an asbestos worker for compensation was in 1938. That was when the Hancock family was discovering and developing its mines. Other compensation cases had already been settled at that time. The first full compensation case occurred in 1945. In the famous case of *Barrow & Heys v CSR Ltd* it was established that the risk of asbestos disease was known and was foreseeable by CSR at the time Barrow commenced work at the Wittenoom mine. That hearing was held in 1988. I recommend that members track down the speech given by the Chief Justice at an ecumenical service recently in which he outlined his role in that event. He talked about the absolutely fascinating facts to come out of that case.

As a child, Vivian Olson was exposed to asbestos tailings that were spread around her home town until she left her home in 1961. The argument that we could not or would not have known about the dangers of asbestos has been significantly defeated. It is not open to the Hancock family to argue that it did not know of the risk or that the Government allowed the practice to continue.

I will finish with a short, valid quote from the book *Blue Murder*. I strongly recommend that members with even a passing interest in these matters read it. The book states -

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei; Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

Among the first white settlers was a family named Hancock. One of Wittenoom's inland fjords is actually called Hancock Gorge, but some say this is not enough: it should be carved in giant letters on the cliff face above the town as a memorial to all those who lived and worked and died because of Wittenoom. Without Langley George Hancock, scion of that pioneering family, there would probably not have been a Wittenoom.

That paragraph says it all. The asbestos industry has caused hundreds of deaths in this state. Lang Hancock cannot be divorced from that industry. He was and he often claimed to be the father of the asbestos industry. I have no desire to cause any offence to his family, but I violently object to the innovative rewriting of history and the excuse-making that allows the Hancock family to avoid its obligations and to delete from history the contribution he made to the deaths of hundreds of people in this State.

MR J.H.D. DAY (Darling Range) [3.54 pm]: I participate in the debate on this Bill to raise two issues. The first concerns the education portfolio and the other concerns my electorate. The matter concerning the education portfolio received some coverage in *The Western Australian* newspaper yesterday; that is, the decision by the Government to discontinue its grant and funding to the Centre for Excellence in Teaching, which is located in Fremantle, but which performs a statewide service. It provides and arranges high-quality professional development for members of the teaching profession in the government and non-government sector in Western Australia.

The then Minister for Education, the now Leader of the Opposition, established the centre just over five years ago in October 1997. The decision to establish the centre followed much consultation with the teaching profession. Members of the teaching profession were very keen to establish such an organisation to ensure that the highest possible standard of professional development could be provided for teachers in this State. I understand that over the past five years it has worked very well under its own board, which is made up of people who are working in the teaching profession. It has done a very good job in providing high-quality professional development courses for teachers. In addition, it has organised very professional and high-standard conferences on a biennial basis and it has organised a mentor program for new teaching graduates who enter the teaching profession. The most recent conference, entitled "Valuing Boys, Valuing Girls", was held only a couple of weeks ago. I understand that it was another very successful conference.

The Opposition supports the development of a college of teaching. We made that decision when we were in government. The approval to commence drafting legislation for it was given before the last election when we were in government. Given that we are now almost two years into this Government's term, I am surprised how long it has taken this Government to introduce the necessary legislation. If the Government had given the registration of teachers the priority it should receive, legislation would have been introduced before now. The Opposition supports the establishment of the college.

I understand that the Government intends that the role of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and the organisation of the professional development of teachers are to be incorporated into the college of teaching. However, the college of teaching will not be fully established until at least 2004 and we have not yet seen the legislation. The college of teaching will not have any legislative basis until at least sometime next year. Presumably it will not operate fully until at least the beginning of 2004.

There is a very good argument to maintain the Centre for Excellence in Teaching, either as a stand alone organisation, as one that is closely linked to the college of teaching, or as one that is brought under the umbrella of the college of teaching in some way but retains its own identity. Over the past five years it has played a valuable role and has developed a very good reputation. The current Government has decided to close the Centre for Excellence in Teaching. It will not exist in any form at all. Worse than that, the Government is cutting off its funding from next January, which means that it will not be able to operate at all during 2003 prior to the full establishment of the college of teaching. Over the next 12 months there will be a vacuum, when there will not be a dedicated organisation that is run by the teaching profession for the teaching profession in Western Australia to arrange high-quality professional development for teachers. That is a matter of very great concern for anybody who is interested in ensuring that high-quality school education is provided to our young people in this State. It is very much the case that high-standard professional development needs to be made available to teachers. The Centre for Excellence in Teaching has gone a long way towards providing that. However, the withdrawal of funding by the Government will mean that such a role will not be played, at least during 2003.

The Labor Party's election policy for the 2001 election campaign states, among other things, that genuine educational improvements cannot occur in the absence of sufficient resources to support teaching professionalism. The policy states also that the Labor Party would add an additional \$5 million to the education budget for improved professional development opportunities for teachers. I would like to know, first, where all that money has gone and, secondly, how the Government reconciles its decision to cease funding for the centre

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

from January next year with the attempts in its election policy to give the people in Western Australia the impression that it cares about providing high-quality professional development for teachers. The two actions simply do not match. The Government's current decision is a great shame, and I hope that it will be reversed by the minister. I am glad the minister has come back into the Chamber. Perhaps he can make some response by way of interjection. I call on the minister and the Government to reverse the decision that has been made to cease funding to the Centre for Excellence in Teaching. I am sorry that the minister cannot stay in the Chamber to provide a response to that issue.

I am not seeking to make this a political issue. I am seeking that the centre continue to operate and carry out the very good work that it has done, so that the teaching profession and, therefore, the children in our State, can benefit from its functions. I hope that the minister will take on board the comments I am making. He heard them very briefly when he came back into the Chamber, but we have also discussed the issue privately. I hope he will reconsider this issue so that the \$300 000 can continue to be made available during 2003 and that the centre can continue to operate. The allocation of \$300 000 out of a \$2.1 billion education budget is a very small amount. I am not saying that it is of no consequence - \$300 000 is a lot of money in many contexts. However, out of the total education budget, it is a very small amount, given the benefits that have been achieved as a result of the operations of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching. I call on the minister to reverse the decision that clearly has been made and to reinstate the funding at least for 2003, so that the people who have been providing a very good service through the Centre for Excellence in Teaching can continue to do so. I hope the minister will take this on board and give it serious consideration. If the minister is not prepared to reverse the decision that has been made, he is taking a very short-sighted view of the role of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and, more importantly, the need for a high standard of professional development for teachers in Western Australia. It is absolutely crucial that this service be provided. The actions of the Government speak loudly about its lack of priorities in ensuring that this sort of professional development is made available. As I have said, it is more about the professional development that is provided by the Centre for Excellence in Teaching. The centre also had a very important role in organising high-quality conferences and in providing a mentor program for new teachers. I reiterate: I hope the minister will take on board what I have said and reverse the very unfortunate decision that has been made.

Another issue I will raise relates to my electorate. I am pleased that the Minister for Health is in the Chamber. It will come as no surprise to him that the issue relates to the ongoing saga of the Kalamunda District Community Hospital.

Mr R.C. Kucera: You shouldn't be sorry. It received \$250 000 worth of renovations.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Actually it was \$270 000, and that is exactly what I am about to refer to. Of course I welcome that amount of funding. It is welcome as far as it goes. I do not want to overstate this, but I will state it as I see it. I do not welcome the fact that the minister has sought to make great play of this allocation of \$270 000 for what is obviously necessary work to fireproof the hospital, provide new airconditioning and resurface the car park. That funding is welcome as far as it goes. However, the fact that the minister has sought to attract positive publicity out of this begs the question: what is not being done at the hospital by this Government?

Mr R.C. Kucera: First, are you suggesting that we make negative publicity out of the fact that we are looking after Kalamunda hospital as we said we would? In addition to that, you are well aware that I have met with councillors, doctors and all the people involved with the forward planning and other issues at Kalamunda hospital. They have a very clear view about the Government's direction and priorities. It appears to me that the only mischief that is being made in the area is by either the member or the group that he organises. The reality is that we have made commitments to Kalamunda hospital. The money that you say we are making much play about is simply for what we said we would do. I do not think there is anything wrong with a Government clearly stating its intentions and advertising what it has done for the hospital in your electorate. You should applaud the Government for making sure that it supports your hospital and the people in your electorate.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: As I said, I welcome the allocation as far as it goes.

Mr R.C. Kucera: We would all like more.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: As the minister has said, the councillors - I think he is specifically referring to the President of the Shire of Kalamunda - and the doctors have met with him. However, I am not sure that they have anything like a clear view of the Government's plans for the hospital. If they do have a clear view, it is a very concerned one about the Government's lack of commitment to the long-term future of the hospital and to ensuring that the services that are currently provided at the hospital continue to be provided.

Mr R.C. Kucera: I suspect that their concern is largely being driven by you.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I assure the minister that I am not seeking to stir up this issue in my electorate. I am seeking to represent the views of my electorate. If the minister thinks that this matter has been initiated or engendered by me, I invite him to come to a public meeting in my electorate to hear from the residents in the area who have expressed to me their concerns about the lack of action on the full redevelopment of the hospital, which was started by the previous Government and which this Government promised to continue.

Mr R.C. Kucera: I have attended meetings in the area, I have attended the hospital and I have kept the shire council, the hospital and the doctors well abreast of everything we are doing. A demonstration of that commitment was undertaken this week at Kalamunda hospital; that is, the program to ensure that your hospital is kept safe from fire. The fact that we must now put firewalls in the hospital after all this time should be an indictment on you as the local member and as the previous Minister for Health. Matters as fundamental as putting firewalls in a bush hospital were not attended to. The member should applaud this Government for what it has done.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: With that salvo, the minister now departs. He might like to read my response to his comments in *Hansard* even if he is not prepared to stay and listen to them. What the minister has just suggested is absolutely laughable. Is he suggesting that I, as the local member of Parliament or as the Minister for Health, should have inspected hospitals, whether in my electorate or elsewhere, to see how fireproof they were? What an utterly ridiculous statement! Kalamunda hospital has been operating for about 30 years under both Labor and Liberal Governments. I have no reason to believe that firewalls are being installed in Kalamunda hospital as a result of the personal intervention of the current Minister for Health. It would happen because the issue had been brought to the attention of building management people in the Department of Health. They would have been made aware, presumably by fire authorities or other building management advisers, that some work needed to be done to bring the Kalamunda Community District Hospital building up to acceptable fire protection standards. That is why it is happening. It is not because the current Minister for Health became aware of the issue and decided to right some massive wrong that he is suggesting the former Government did not right.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: He has disappeared.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: He made his comments and then left, and that is in *Hansard*.

Residents in my electorate will be very interested to read this speech and the interjections from the Minister for Health, because in addition to making those quite ridiculous comments, he referred to meetings that he has had with various people and suggested that they had a very clear view of the Government's commitment to the hospital. They do have a clear view. They are very concerned about the lack of action by this Government on the hospital's redevelopment. They have only to look at the lack of action. They also formed their view as a result of the minister's saying that \$2.3 million of the \$5.5 million for the redevelopment was available in this year's budget. The Minister for Health put that in writing to me. At last the Government was getting on and doing it. That was welcomed by me and the people in my electorate. I distributed a letter throughout my electorate advising what was happening and welcoming the fact that the Government was getting on with it.

Since then, the minister has said through the media, and I think also in correspondence, that he has changed his mind about going ahead with that redevelopment. He cannot deal with both the Kalamunda Community District Hospital and other albeit important issues in the health portfolio, namely, nursing numbers, elective surgery waiting lists and upgrading emergency departments in tertiary hospitals. He must be the first Minister for Health who is unable to deal with those issues at the same time. The issues of nursing numbers and elective surgery waiting lists have nothing to do with the physical redevelopment of Kalamunda Community District Hospital. As I have said previously to my electorate, the minister is trying to fudge the issue and mislead people with those comments, but my constituents are not being misled.

On the one hand, I welcome the fact that the Government has made a small amount of the \$5.5 million available - about five per cent - but I am expressing concern on behalf of my electorate as a result of people coming to me and a community action group being formed as a result of the substantial concerns of community members and groups in my electorate. I am expressing those concerns to this Parliament and to the Minister for Health. The Government is not getting on with the full redevelopment of the hospital and is not making its intentions clear. The comments of the Minister for Health are in black and white in *Hansard* and in correspondence. For him to try to suggest that the Government has a strong commitment to the hospital and that everybody is clear about the direction being taken simply indicates that the minister does not understand the issues and certainly does not understand the concern being expressed by my constituents.

I would welcome at any time the minister's coming to a meeting of any group of people in my electorate or the public in order to explain exactly what are his plans for the Kalamunda Community District Hospital. At best, he has been very confusing and, at worst, his comments so far have been misleading.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

MR M.P. WHITELEY (Roleystone) [4.15 pm]: I shall discuss two issues, one of which is peculiar to my electorate; but before I do, I want to express my disappointment with the eulogising today of Lang Hancock. Quite frankly, I find it impossible to stand by and allow to go unchallenged eulogies to a person who deserves our contempt and not our praise. I do not want to speak ill of the dead, and I would not normally do this sort of thing, but this Parliament reflects what we believe. We should espouse our highest beliefs and values in this place. I do not know what motivated the making of the eulogies that were delivered today, but I cannot let them go unchallenged.

I will not condemn the man with my words but with his own. When I received notice last week of the intention to recognise Lang Hancock's contribution to the State, it triggered a memory from the early 1980s. I remembered that Lang Hancock had said some outrageous things about Aboriginal Australians. I could not remember the exact date, but with the assistance of library staff, I was able to locate the article in *The West Australian* of 7 October 1981. The article is titled "Hancock stands by his remarks". This was written in 1981, not 1881. It reads -

Perth mining magnate Lang Hancock will not back down on his inflammatory statements that half-caste Aborigines should be sterilised -

I repeat, "half-caste Aborigines should be sterilised" -

and full-bloods should be relocated in the Ord River area.

Those were the words of Lang Hancock. They were not out of character, as we have heard from the member for Pilbara today. When pressed on those comments, he offered reasons for his extraordinary statements that would deny some Australians on the basis of their ethnicity the right to breed and others the right to choose where they live. The reasons that he offered were set out in the article, which reads -

- The failure of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting and the Australian Government to solve the problems of the Aborigines.

His solution was to sterilise what he described as half-castes and to enforce apartheid on the rest. The article continues -

- To alert the Australian taxpayers that he was due for another tax slug unless a use could be found for the Ord River "white elephant".

It had nothing to do with the welfare of the people whose lives he sought to direct but was simply to do with finding a use for a white elephant. It continues -

- To suggest a place (namely, the Ord River) where a land-rights title could be of some practical benefit to the full-blooded Aboriginal as opposed to teaching him to repeat the parrot cry of "land rights".

Those are the statements of the man who was eulogised in this place today. Was the Leader of the Opposition aware of those statements? They received a lot of publicity at the time and certainly they are deep in my psyche. The Leader of the Opposition was obviously somebody who, at that time, was interested in politics, current affairs and events.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You make your speech and we will listen to it.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: Was he aware of those statements?

Mr C.J. Barnett: I am not here to answer questions from a clown like you.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: This is a man that the Leader of the Opposition eulogised. Now that the Leader of the Opposition is aware of the comments, is there any comment he would like to offer by way of interjection that tempers his remarks today?

Mr C.J. Barnett: None at all. If you had listened to what I said today, you would know that I talked about Lang's contribution to the iron ore industry; in fact, I think it was shameful that the minister with the responsibility for mining did not acknowledge in this House the contribution Lang Hancock made to the discovery and development of iron ore. It should be noted that the Labor Government did not acknowledge that. That will be noticed in the mining industry.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: I do not know what has happened to the Leader of the Opposition. I remember that well before the last election and during the republic debate, the Leader of the Opposition gave one of the most inspiring speeches I have ever heard. He gave a statesmanlike performance when he talked about the need for Australians to come together, to accept a common cause and a common principle and to rise about petty politics.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

I was at the Perth Town Hall. I was one of those people from the Australian republican movement who, despite the fact that I was a member of the Labor Party, leapt to his feet and gave the Leader of the Opposition a standing ovation. I cannot believe the transformation in the Leader of the Opposition. Given the comments I have made, I do not know why he does not want to condemn outright what Lang Hancock said. I can only hypothesise on his motivation. I do not know what is the price for his performance, but I am sure that in his soul he must feel a little dirty. The member for Hillarys is obviously an immigrant, and I do not mean that in any untoward way. Did he arrive after 1981?

Mr C.J. Barnett: What are you suggesting?

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: I am asking the member for Hillarys if he arrived here after 1981.

Mr R.F. Johnson: I arrived in February 1988 after coming here to look around in October 1986.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: So that the member for Hillarys is aware of the comments made by Lang Hancock, I will repeat them. He advocated compulsory sterilisation of Aboriginal half-castes and compulsory apartheid in the north of the State around the Ord River for full bloods. Would the member for Hillarys like to comment on that? Does he stand by the eulogy his leader gave for the man's contribution?

Mr R.F. Johnson: Two people were to make contributions by personal comment: the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party. I know that Lang Hancock made a contribution to this State over many years. I am not aware of the remarks that he made.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: I will give the member a copy of the article that contains those remarks. I would appreciate it if he addressed this issue perhaps next year when he has had time to reflect on it. However, surely Lang Hancock's remarks were so vile that they should elicit a spontaneous reaction.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Nobody supports them.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: Why have people eulogised the man? It is akin to the Parliament of Italy eulogising Mussolini for making trains run on time. It is like the Parliament of Cambodia rising to deliver praise to Pol Pot because he delivered discipline in schools. It is an outrage. Remarks like those that Lang Hancock made should make members' blood boil. Members opposite are our community leaders. They should be outraged, as I am.

Mr J.H.D. Day interjected.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: The member for Darling Range is someone for whom I have a degree of admiration. What is his reaction to those comments?

Mr J.H.D. Day: No-one supports that nonsense.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: Does he think that Lang Hancock's attitude demonstrated an appropriate mentality? The direct reference was his contribution to opening up the Pilbara and the iron ore industry. Are they the right values that should have been taken to the Pilbara? Does that show appropriate respect for the people who live there? Does that lead to harmonious, cohesive and effective relationships? Does the member for Hillarys want to say something? The member for Greenough is new to this country, and I presume he arrived after 1981. He heard the comments. Is there anything he would like to say?

Mr J.P.D. Edwards: It is your debate. I am happy to listen to it. If I want to say something on the issue, I will make a speech.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: Does he stand by the glowing eulogy delivered by his leader? Some things are so fundamental that they transcend politics. Some things are about having respect for human beings. I deplore political correctness, but this has nothing to do with political correctness; it is about respecting the rights of human beings. I am not criticising the language of "half-caste" or "full blood" because some people may take offence to that, and I respect that; I am talking about a man who said it was appropriate to sterilise people because of their ethnicity. Is there anyone on the opposition benches who wants to say anything about that? What about the member for Kingsley?

Mr J.H.D. Day: No-one supports that. It is nonsense, so move on.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: Why do members opposite not have the guts to stand and say that that man deserves our contempt, not our praise? It is beyond the pale. I wonder what the quid pro quo is. How many pieces of silver will be delivered as a result of this?

I refer now to an issue that directly affects my electorate, namely the solid waste to energy recycling facility - an issue that I thought was dead and buried. The late November edition of the *Comment News* carried an article titled "Labor scare mongering ended SWERF bid". It states that Opposition environment and science spokesperson and Vasse MLA, Bernie Masters, claimed a scare mongering campaign by the Labor Party ensured

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

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the proposed solid waste to energy recycling facility in Maddington was scrapped before it could be investigated properly.

Basically, the opposition spokesperson for the environment was accusing the Labor Party of orchestrating a scare campaign to unfairly knock this project on the head. It is worth outlining the details of the process. Fifteen or 16 months after the Australian Labor Party took office, and when the SWERF issue was raised with me in the community, the Minister for Energy implemented steps to prevent it proceeding in Maddington.

I first became aware of the SWERF in the lead up to the election, but it was a non-issue bubbling away in the background. On 25 February 2001 some community members organised a rally on an oval in Maddington, the first proposed site for the SWERF. I had been in Parliament for only a few weeks and my feet had not hit the ground, so I had not had a chance to develop a position on the proposal. However, the members for Thornlie and Southern River and I attended that rally and quickly reached a position that we thought was reasonable. Words were agreed between the three of us and, with the authority of the other two members, I said that unless it could be shown conclusively that the proposed SWERF plant would be safe and good for the community, it would not be established there.

That was our initial position. It was a reasonable position that the onus of proof of the safety of the plant would be on the proponents, not on the community; but we had an open mind. I started with an open mind; I thought it was a very exciting opportunity that looked like a new way of dealing with our municipal solid waste problems. A considerable degree of community anger emanated from that rally. I must admit that I was concerned because some of the statements seemed to be over the top, so I was anxious to establish a forum in which the community could air its concerns. I instigated a meeting at Paul Andrews, the member for Southern River's office on 29 March last year. I invited representatives from the proponents, BrightStar, representatives from the local council and anyone from the community who wanted to attend, with the idea of establishing a community consultative committee that could examine the SWERF proposal in great detail.

I chaired the initial meeting and we agreed on a number of ground rules. Those rules became the basis for how the consultative committee would run. Our first consultative committee meeting was held on 15 May, at which I spoke and indicated that I was attracted to the proposal because it appeared to have benefits; however, I had reservations because the technology was new and at that stage unproved. I said I thought that it was probably a good idea but we had a long way to go before we could say it was proven technology. It is on the public record. I have minutes of that meeting, which show that that is the substance of what I said.

One of the issues with the first proposed site, which was at the back of the football oval on Kelvin Road, Maddington, was a planning issue. Therefore, I wrote a memo to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. Basically, again I outlined my approach to the solid waste to energy recycling facility. It was pretty clear where I was coming from. I will quote from that memo. I said -

The arguments for and against the SWERF are highly technical and beyond my comprehension. I am concerned however at the "leading edge" (read experimental) nature of the technology. Apparently the only similar facility that is operated by Brightstar is in Wollongong.

The idea of transforming domestic waste to electricity is very attractive and the SWERF may be the right idea at the right time. I am however sceptical that the Maddington Recreation Ground is the right place. A location away from residences and light industry workplaces may well be more appropriate.

I advise -

This is the key point -

that we proceed very cautiously, and at all time err on the side of public safety, in considering the proposed SWERF location and related zoning decisions.

That was our approach the whole way through this debate; that is, to err on the side of public caution, and that position developed.

Soon after that, in June last year, I think, I presented a petition that further detailed the position that I argued. Initially, a group of very angry community people wanted me to oppose the SWERF totally. I said that I would not oppose the SWERF because I did not know enough about it and I wanted to find out about it. I wanted to find out whether it was a worthwhile proposal, and I did not want to just fight a not-in-my-backyard campaign; I wanted to be able to argue the matter on reasonable grounds. With some persuasion, the group agreed to the content of the petition. There were about 1 300 signatures on the petition, and it had three elements to it. The first element was that the SWERF should be assessed at the highest available environmental review and management program level. After a series of appeals, that was ultimately achieved.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

The second element was the real sticking point, and it was the thing that caused me to change my mind. It made me turn around and oppose the SWERF. I opposed it because the proponents would not accept this condition. I argued that the environmental assessment must include and consider an independent evaluation of all atmospheric emissions from the SWERF constructed in Wollongong, New South Wales, for at least 12 months after it became fully operational. I argued that the world's only SWERF, which was a pilot plant with a restricted licence, should operate for a full year, and that there should be an independent emissions data analysis of that SWERF before we gave the green light to a SWERF in Maddington. That was the sticking point. That is the point that turned me against the proposal. It was the failure of the proponents to accept that as a reasonable request that turned me against their proposal.

The third point was that the State Government, along with local government, should develop and coordinate a waste disposal management plan for the Perth metropolitan area. To the great credit of the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, she has taken on board the spirit of that recommendation, and the Waste Management Board is doing great work in that regard. It has gone further than that and is in fact involved in developing site selection criteria for waste-to-energy proposals like the SWERF and others that are on the books, and also criteria for conducting the technical assessment of these waste-to-energy proposals. Given that they are emerging technologies, that is an entirely sensible approach.

Ultimately, the first of the requests was met; that is, that the proposal should be subject to the highest level of environmental assessment available - the ERMP level.

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Mr M.P. WHITELY: The third request was also granted; that is, that the State Government should take a coordinated approach to waste management.

As I said, the proponents fought this every step of the way. They fought the idea that the proposal should be assessed at the highest level - the ERMP level. Initially, they argued that it should be at an environmental protection system level, which I think is the lowest level. They then conceded that it should be at a public environmental review level. Finally, the Minister for the Environment and Heritage upheld an appeal by some 22 appellants, I think, of whom I was one. We argued that it should be at ERMP level, given the developing and emerging nature of this technology and the unproved history of these types of proposals. The proponents fought and lost their fight to have the assessment carried out at a lower level. I might add that along the way they criticised me publicly for arguing that the assessment should be at the highest available level - the ERMP level - all of which started to change my perception of them. Added to that was their performance at a series of community consultative meetings, of which there would have been at least 10. Typically, Brightstar Environmental would come along and present its information about a particular aspect of the plant's operation, and then people would ask questions during a question-and-answer session. Although I lack technical expertise, I sensed that we were not getting the full picture. Along with that was the proponents' reluctance to accept the highest level of assessment. The final thing that turned me around was their reluctance to accept the 12-month emissions analysis from the Wollongong SWERF. That is when I decided to oppose the SWERF.

This did not happen quickly; it was over a long period. In fact, the September edition of the *Examiner* was very critical of the Minister for the Environment and Heritage and the Government for not declaring their hand on the SWERF. I wrote a letter to the editor. For the sake of brevity, I will paraphrase what I said. Basically, I said that it was ridiculous to expect us to be for or against this type of proposal when we simply did not have the evidence on the table and we did not have the information. I said that it was important that we go through appropriate and proper processes. There was considerable community pressure on me to oppose this proposal. Throughout this process, I said that I would not oppose it because that would simply be a cheap political stunt. Far from running an orchestrated scaremongering campaign, I said, "This is how the process should run. Let's go with the process."

Mr J.H.D. Day: Why did you oppose it eventually?

Mr M.P. WHITELY: In the end, I opposed it for a very good reason. I issued an ultimatum in a 90-second statement. I said either the proponents accepted the criterion that when the Wollongong SWERF became fully operational at a commercial level we would have a 12-month independent analysis of the emissions data or I would oppose the proposal. I said that to them half a dozen times, and then I formally informed them of it. I made that statement in the Parliament in early December. An article was published in the 18 December edition of the *Comment News*, which put that ultimatum to the proponents. They again characterised my request for a 12-month independent emissions analysis of the Wollongong SWERF as unreasonable. I basically said to them that they should put up or shut up; they should accept my request or I would oppose the proposal. I am not saying that the Government said that. I am talking about why I eventually opposed the proposal. In fact, in about February or March this year - that is, a full year after the process had been kicked off and after I had set up

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

the community consultative process - I put out a leaflet opposing the proposal. I had also visited the New South Wales SWERF and the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority. It had very strong concerns about the operation of the SWERF in Wollongong. I also visited Greenpeace in New South Wales. In fact, as a member of Parliament, the only junket I have been on and the only time I have used my imprest account so far has been to go to Wollongong. I do not know whether members are familiar with the words of the Aunty Jack song -

I've been everywhere . . . I've been to Wollongong, Wollongong, Wollongong”

That is my song in terms of parliamentary travel. The only imprest trip I have taken since I got into Parliament was to Wollongong to visit a rubbish plant. I eventually opposed the plant. It is important to say at this time -

Mr J.H.D. Day: Are you opposing it outright?

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: At that stage I opposed it outright. The Wollongong plant had a developmental licence for 30 000 tonnes of municipal solid waste a year. Its final anticipated commercial operating level was 150 000 tonnes a year. Its licence represented 20 per cent of its final capacity. I cannot remember the exact figures, but for the first nine months of the 2001 year - that was the data we had available - it operated at 1.5 per cent of its final anticipated capacity. It processed fewer than 2 000 tonnes of municipal solid waste. It operated at that level because the operators could not get the plant to work. The char gasifier - I will not bore the member with the technical details - was shut down. In the end, nameplate capacity testing on the plant was suspended because they could not get the thing to work. As far as I know, it is still not working at anywhere near its developmental capacity, let alone its final anticipated capacity.

My opposition to this proposal has been characterised as scaremongering. What would a scaremonger do? He would orchestrate a campaign. He would get in at the start and spread fear. I tried to reduce the heat on this issue and shed some light on it through the community consultative committee. I suggested a pathway. I did not do this alone. I had the assistance of the member for Southern River, who was kept informed of this every step of the way. It also affected his constituents.

Mr P.W. Andrews: It was absolutely the right process.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: I suggested a pathway forward. It was the middle ground; a cautious approach. The initial commitment that I and the members for Southern River and Thornlie made was that there would not be a facility in that area unless it could be proved conclusively that it was safe. We were simply following through and adding detail to that process. It is completely wrong to characterise it as scaremongering and as running a nimby campaign. It is wrong. In the end I became a passionate opponent of the project simply because the proponents refused to accept the 12-month independent emissions requirement. In the end it was not the intervention of the Minister for the Environment and Heritage that effectively killed the proposal to locate it in Maddington; it was the intervention of the Minister for Energy. The Minister for Energy outlined his reasons for that in response to a grievance in May. The proposed location was lot 280 Kelvin Road, Maddington, which is in a thin industrial strip between the suburbs of Maddington and Kenwick. The Minister for Energy accepted that a suburban location like that was entirely inappropriate for developing unproven technology. I do not think he said it as strongly as I did. I referred to the development of unproven and therefore potentially risky technology.

Mr J.H.D. Day: It was a very hasty decision made by the minister prior to the completion of the environmental reviews. It seemed to be political.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: The process had been going on. There was enough evidence that this mob could not do what it said it was going to do. I visited the Wollongong SWERF with an industrial chemist who worked in Beckenham. He asked a question about the operating temperature of the controversial back end of the plant - the pyrolysis section. The operator refused to answer the question on the ground that, as someone with expertise, the engineer could back-engineer the plant from that simple bit of data. It simply did not ring true. The operators were miles away from having anything near proven technology. I am not opposed to these things, but if they are to be built, the operators must first prove them, and then take a cautious approach and locate them away from people. Eventually if a project develops a track record of operating safely, we can consider locating the plant closer to people. I did not want to be responsible for such a plant being situated in my area. I may have only one term in this place. I did not want my legacy to the people of Maddington to be the same legacy as that left to the people of Wagerup.

MRS C.L. EDWARDES (Kingsley) [4.44 pm]: On this occasion I again talk about the labour relations reforms that were introduced by the Government this year. I have cited in this House a number of examples of the effects of those reforms, and I will continue to do so as they come to my attention. I believe that all the concerns that were part of the so-called fear campaign the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection accused me

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

of carrying out during the debate are coming to fruition. The concerns about the costs to businesses are now fact. That has several ramifications. Businesses have a number of options if their wages costs increase: reduce the working hours of staff, increase the costs of those services and/or products to their clients and/or customers, or close up shop. It is early days, but already significant examples are coming forward, and many are from those industries in which businesses trade seven days a week. However, I will later refer to an example of an operation that runs from Monday to Saturday. It is not a seven-day-a-week trading enterprise. It closes at lunchtime on Saturday. The wages cost impact on that business is enormous.

When we debate this issue in this House or in the community, the Government is very quick to say that small business is still important, and it reminds small businesses about what it has done for electricity reform. Mark Pownall's editorial in today's *Western Australian Business News* states -

But an 8.5 per cent cut in electricity prices over a decade or more will hardly make up for poor policies, such as industrial relations changes . . .

The editorial refers to a couple of other issues, such as cracking down on contractors etc. However, it focuses on the industrial relations changes that will affect small business. An 8.5 per cent reduction in electricity costs nowhere near equates to the increased costs of wages, as I will again point out.

One of the examples I bring to this House is that of a caravan park proprietor. We have talked about tourist operators. The Labor Party said in a pre-election policy statement that small business and tourism operators are the lifeblood of the tourism industry. A caravan park operator that employs cleaning staff on a flat hourly rate has calculated that the new rates make it barely viable to employ people on Saturdays, and it is even worse on Sundays. The previous rates of \$14 to \$16 an hour have jumped to \$21.15 an hour on Saturdays and \$24.67 an hour on Sundays. That is not counting the cost of linen, utilities and consumables. That expense is for a cabin that is rented out for \$49 a night. The operator will not make any money on that. It will have to rethink the operation. Another example relates to tourism operators in Margaret River and the Swan Valley. A 21-year-old counter hand was paid \$468.74 for working the Easter weekend this year. Next year that same employee will have to be paid \$960. The reality is that that employee will probably receive nothing next year because the cost of employing him will be prohibitive.

In the November-December edition of *BusinessPulse* a financial consultant gives a hypothetical example of a small office that employs six staff under state workplace agreements. Those employees fall under the Clerks (Commercial, Social and Professional Services) Award. The business operates a 41-hour week. It works business hours Monday to Friday and 9.00 am to 12 noon on Saturday. Workers compensation premiums are 1.5 per cent of wages, and the superannuation guarantee is paid at nine per cent on all hours. The business in this example falls under the payroll tax threshold. Any organisation that meets the payroll threshold of \$675 000 would have to factor that into the cost of losing its workplace agreements system. Currently grade 1 rate is \$11.35 an hour, grade 2, \$12.50 and grade 3, \$13. The total cost for those employees per annum is \$176 844. If they are transferred to the award, their hourly rates will become \$12.59, \$13.28 and \$13.82 respectively. That does not sound like a big increase. However, with the addition of all the cost components, including three hours on Saturday mornings at 1.5 times the rate for the first two hours and double time for the third hour and annual leave loading of 17.5 per cent - no superannuation is paid on overtime - the total cost for those employees will be \$196 996 per annum. That is an increase of 11.4 per cent for the same level of productivity. That company has the option of employing casual or part-time staff to work the Saturday hours, increasing prices, reducing opening hours, introducing new technology to reduce staff requirements, or going to Australian workplace agreements.

I will refer to the comments of the minister yesterday on the Office of the Employment Advocate and his assessment of the no-disadvantage test. I will address that matter because it is very important. Individual Australian workplace agreements will allow more flexibility in staff utilisation and reduce hourly rates on Saturday.

Another example is Matilda Bay Restaurant, which will add a \$3 surcharge per person on Saturday and Sunday. Warwick Lavis of that restaurant, in an interview with Paul Murray on 6PR Radio on 2 December, referred to the fact that the majority of cafes are charging 10 per cent. One cafe he visited in Fremantle is charging 12.5 per cent; that is \$3.10 for a coffee plus 12.5 per cent on a Saturday or Sunday. Those coffees on a Saturday and Sunday are now becoming very expensive. Members should bear in mind that Fremantle is a tourist precinct in addition to a business and residential area. A previous caller on the same radio program said that the legislation had forced him to add a surcharge to his business totalling \$100 a day, or 10 per cent. Basically these examples highlight the fact that the legislation is putting businesses back into the penalty rate system; that is, forcing seven-day operations to incur extra costs. Paul Murray said that when he was the editor of *The West Australian* he negotiated penalty rates out of the system there because, as he correctly said, a newspaper is a 24-hours a day,

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

seven days a week business and there should be no penalty rates for journalists but, rather, a reward for the work they do.

Mr Lavis of the Matilda Bay Restaurant said that under workplace agreements he rewarded employees on their performance. He, therefore, had 18 and 19-year-old youths getting the equivalent of a full pay rate because their agreement was based on performance; whereas now some of those employees have lost out because he must pay them award rates. He said that he does not have enough of a margin to reward those people, so they have had to go back onto the award. He said to Paul Murray -

We've put all our staff back onto award and so there has been some losers and unfortunately the winners aren't necessarily my best performers.

That is another example at the Matilda Bay Restaurant.

The member for Dawesville referred another example to me of a restaurant down his way. He and his party arrived at the restaurant at seven o'clock, their orders were taken at 7.30 pm but by 10 o'clock their main courses still had not been delivered. The proprietor said that he had to put off all his staff in the evening and only he and his wife ran the restaurant after hours. That business will not be able to continue to attract the patronage that it rightly deserves because it can no longer afford the penalty rates that employees will now have the right to demand.

There was a story in *The West Australian* of Friday, 27 September about the Blue Duck Cafe, in which Mr Kim Gamble was reported as follows -

"The Blue Duck is an icon, an institution. But at the end of the day it is a business," Mr Gamble said.

...

"I just don't know if my customers will wear paying \$4 to \$4.50 for a cappuccino," he said.

Many of his staff were university students who wanted to work weekends and public holidays to fit in with their studies.

Another restaurant, Cicerello's Fish and Chips, was referred to in the same article, and owner Tony Unmack said he was already cutting staff to try to contain costs.

I raised a question in the House last week about Munro's Plantation tearooms. In his response to my question, the minister said that Munro's had been operating successfully prior to 1993, which is when Munro's were on awards. However, the minister failed to recognise that the staff numbers in that business grew under the coalition Government's legislation. Therefore, the number of people that the owner was able to employ prior to 1993 was far fewer than the number of people he employed after 1993. That is what our legislation provided for: a level of flexibility to allow businesses to grow. Businesses that would like to grow are having second thoughts. They do not want to jump in and take that opportunity.

I refer to the minister's comments yesterday about the Office of the Employment Advocate. There is more to be said about the way the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission is likely to interpret the no-disadvantage test for employer-employee agreements. The minister has failed to recognise that the Office of the Employment Advocate conducts no-disadvantage tests very thoroughly and no-one overall will be worse off. Therefore, seven-day-a-week operations will be disadvantaged if they cannot trade off and/or annualise wage rates together with penalty rates. The examination in the no-disadvantage test overall is very strict. People have a choice of when they want to work but they cannot choose not to take the money. The minister implied in an answer to a question without notice that people were choosing not to take the money. However, overall no-one will be worse off because penalty rates can be annualised. In the answer to the question, the minister referred to the Foodland agreement. I know of several supermarkets and other retail outlets that were caught by the Foodland enterprise bargaining agreement. Several representatives from those supermarkets have come to my office wanting to know how they can get out of it because the effect on their operations and costs is not exactly what they thought it would be. It does not allow them the flexibility to work from Thursday to Sunday, which is when most small businesses operate. I would be concerned, therefore, if the minister continued to hold up the Foodland agreement as a good example because it has already started to fall into disrepute with a number of people who have inadvertently been caught in it.

Another sector which will be affected greatly and which we will be looking at carefully in next year's budget is community care services. That sector employs people who earn a limited amount of money for the services they carry out. They provide a range of services that enable people to live in their own homes and to participate as members of the community. They provide services such as home nursing, domestic assistance, day centres, transport, care coordination, personal care, in-home respite, meals on wheels, information and other services. Those services do not cater for people with disabilities who personally employ people in their home to carry out

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

these functions; that is another group of people who do not come under the umbrella of large charitable or religious organisations. The people who receive community care are frail, have disabilities, are recovering from illnesses or injuries and have mental illnesses; their carers are often their family members. A large proportion of those employees are casual and part-time workers, a high proportion being women aged 45 years or over.

I have other statistics that identify that 17 per cent of those care workers come from non-English speaking backgrounds. The following recent legislative changes have had a significant impact on that sector: the abolition of state workplace agreements; increased minimum employment conditions; the clarification of the definition of casual employee and entitlements of casual employees; and the move towards coverage by the award. The last item is probably the one that will cause the most problems for this industry. No award in this State covers the community care service sector and obviously that issue will be progressed by the respective unions and community care organisations. If those organisations are expected to pay the wages and the penalty rates required under the award, they will require capacity to fund those increases over the short and medium term. This is critical for those organisations. Many people within those organisations are fearful for their jobs and a number have already lost their jobs. If those organisations do not receive funding to cover those increased rates, there will be a loss of services. The federal and State Governments provide the funding for those organisations.

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: The Minister for Community Development has always said that this is a matter for the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection. It is not a matter for the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection; it is clearly a matter for the Minister for Community Development, because she is the one responsible for making sure that those services continue at at least the same level as they are being delivered today. If as a result of the Government's legislation those employees are put back onto an award rate, which includes penalty rates, it is incumbent on the Government to make sure that the community care sector has the necessary funds to cover those increased costs. We have heard nothing from the Minister for Community Development that that is even under consideration and she continues to refer the matter back to the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection. The Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection will not be sorting out the budget of the Minister for Community Development. It would be the first time if that were the case. I would have loved another minister to have come in and fought for my budget when we were in government. It does not happen that way. The only way this will happen is if the Minister for Community Development does an analysis, assessment and a review of all of those organisations, together with those people who are being employed directly by Home Care, to ensure that those services will still be provided at the current rate, and that will mean an increased level of funding. At the moment, those organisations are paying the minimum wage rate. If they move under an award, the organisations must have money to cover the increase. A number have already gone over to a collective federal agreement; some have looked at employing their staff as contractors. They are already starting to make decisions about how to employ staff, because they are concerned that their care costs will increase significantly and they have no capacity to earn extra money. Their only option would be to cut services. People who work in those fields are compassionate and they would find it very difficult to cut the services they provide to their clients.

I would like to raise another issue for the minister's attention. Last week a couple of matters came to my attention about what is happening on building sites. I know that when the minister gets letters from contractors and builders he looks for the words "this is a formal complaint". I do not know whether he really does that, but he does not accept letters as a form of complaint and forwards them to Building Industry and Special Projects Inspectorate for investigation. That is a concern. If somebody takes the time to write to the minister about a problem, hey, they are complaining and they want that complaint investigated. Last week a couple of people raised with me the issue of intimidation by the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union on a particular building site involving subcontractors whose work was outside the main enterprise bargaining agreement contract. The EBA contract covered a particular area of work and this work was being carried out on an adjoining location. The CFMEU had an EBA in connection with the first site and insisted that those subcontractors and their workers also join the CFMEU, so they had to employ a union builder's labourer to help them with their job. One bloke said, "Hey, I'm out of here; forget it!" The other bloke put up with it for a while until he was stopped from carrying out the job himself. He is a hands-on owner-operator, he is in there doing the work himself, and he was stopped from doing that work, which was outside the area of the EBA.

The other issue involved cartons of beer. Contractors are having to drive around with cartons of Crown Lager in the boots of their cars. They may be members of another union, such as the Transport Workers Union - not members of the CFMEU - and they may want to use a lift on the building site. It means a carton of Crown Lager for the bloke to press the button to move the material up in the lift; it means another carton of Crown Lager to move the tools out of the lift onto the landing; it means another carton of Crown Lager if he wants to come back down again. This does not involve the main building contractors; this impacts on the small subbies, little people

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

in small businesses who cannot afford to buy Crown Lager for themselves. Illegal practices are occurring on these sites and the Government is turning a blind eye.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: That is totally untrue.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: As I understand it, these matters are not being investigated.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: They are being investigated. Charges have been laid and convictions have been recorded.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: This only happened two weeks ago.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: You are saying a blind eye is being turned to it. That is totally untrue. Complaints are fully investigated. What often happens is that people complain to you or me, and when the Building Industry and Special Projects Inspectorate investigates the matter, the complainants say they do not want to make a formal complaint. However, when they do complain, the matter is investigated. If the facts are there, charges are laid. Charges have already been laid in a number of cases and one clear conviction has been recorded.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: The other thing is the intimidation encountered when laying a complaint. They say, "So you're the scum who rang up the BISPI office." The pressure that is put onto that subcontractor is enormous. The issue is that they do not receive the same support from BISPI that the builders and the subcontractors used to receive from the building task force. I have raised in this House a number of times the practices that have been occurring on building sites for a long time and which have increased and become worse. Unless an effective body is in place and the Government makes a commitment to stamp out these practices, they will never be stamped out. People will always have to travel around with a boot load of Crown Lager to ensure that things get done on building sites. That is not acceptable. People feel intimidated if they complain.

The tragedy is that none of the troubles that are now being experienced by small businesses needed to be experienced. The Government introduced the legislation and it was quite clear that it would result in union domination. The Government has continued to say that it will put balance back into the system. However, the balance is not there; the balance has swung the other way. The Opposition has raised the issue of costs in the Parliament. At one stage, I thought that the Government was oblivious to the debate that was taking place. I think the Government just does not get the fact that there are costs involved with running a business. People do not go into business unless they can make money. Most business operators take home less than they pay their employees. Quite clearly that will be the case under the new labour relations legislation. I will continue to raise these issues with the Government as they arise in an endeavour to get it to make changes. The impact on small businesses will be enormous. Some small businesses will go out of business; some people will have their hours of work reduced, which means they will take home less pay; others will lose their jobs; and university students will not have jobs. Young people and women will be impacted on the most.

Again, I raise the issue of workers compensation. If the Government proceeds with the amendments that it has proposed in its October draft position paper, the cost of the workers compensation system in this State will increase. Based on the Government's report, the cost will increase from 7.5 per cent to 13.8 per cent. The PricewaterhouseCoopers actuarial report estimates an even higher figure. Yes, there will be increased costs in the order of \$100 million in the first year. That is not an exaggeration; that is based on current costs. Yesterday the minister acknowledged that insurers have collected \$600 million and have paid out in the order of \$340 million, but that the gap of nearly \$300 million was not profit. That gap is to cover the tail of the costs for claims that are still in the system. Therefore, the minister does not fully understand that there will be extra costs over and above the current costs as a result of the changes that this Government has proposed to the workers compensation system. It cannot keep working on the current premiums, because there is retrospectivity. As soon as the legislation is proclaimed, as outlined in the Government's position paper, there will be retrospectivity. Therefore, the insurance companies legally must ensure that those funds are available to cover the claims. If those insurance companies fall over, that money must be available in a fund to cover those workers compensation claims. The impact of the changes to the workers compensation system on the current costs will be in the order of \$100 million in the first year, and probably just under \$60 million in any one year. It is naive of the Government to believe that these costs will not be passed on by way of increased premiums. With the support of the Parliament, the previous Government reduced workers compensation premiums. The challenge for this Government is to live up to its commitment that any changes it would make would result in a net-out effect or at least would reduce premiums. I do not believe that will happen.

MR P.D. OMODEI (Warren-Blackwood) [5.14 pm]: It amazes me that we are discussing such an important Bill as the Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No. 3) in the dying hours of this session of Parliament. The importance of scrutinising the affairs of the Government and its budget is paramount. Bills that have been passed through this Parliament in the past couple of weeks will not receive passage through the Legislative Council, and the Leader of the House knows it. To debate this Bill at the eleventh hour is not good enough, particularly at this time of the year when members need to attend a number of government department functions

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

outside of the Parliament. I would have thought it would be preferable to deal with this legislation when the Parliament had plenty of time so that it could be thoroughly analysed.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has a budget of \$3.449 million. The overruns can mainly be attributed to additional expenditure on the Safer WA program. Answers to questions asked in Parliament indicate that the \$1 million for the Safer WA budget has not been spent. Does that mean that the budget will increase from \$1 million to \$2 million, or has the Government syphoned that \$1 million from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet for another purpose?

Mr J.N. Hyde interjected.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: It has not been spent at all to date? We are halfway through the financial year. This was the answer to a question that was asked yesterday in the Legislative Council about how much the City of Stirling had asked for and how much was expended. I do not have a copy of the answer to that question with me. However, I know that the member for Perth has an interest in this matter and I suggest that he read the answer. It gives the impression that there will be a further \$1 million when in actual fact the \$1 million that was budgeted has not even been spent.

Another issue is the increase of \$499 000 in rent for ministerial offices and the \$300 000 cost of the restructure of ministerial portfolios. The Government has reduced the number of ministers by three and I thought that the parliamentary secretaries would do what they normally do. I note with interest that it appears as though they are acting as de facto ministers.

The budget of the Department of Conservation and Land Management is \$6.955 million. The overruns in relation to compensation for a reduction in the volumes of native forest log production for jarrah, karri and native forest chip logs have been reduced. That has reduced CALM's revenue base by \$4.6 million. Surprise, surprise! It was always an implication of the Government's old-growth forest policy that there would be a reduction in CALM's revenue. I thought that Treasury would have made that very clear to the Government when the budget was set. Now it must find more money for CALM. There has also been an overspending of \$900 000 in the creation of the Conservation Commission of Western Australia and the Forest Products Commission. I thought that the legislation that went through the Parliament while the previous Government was in power would have made it very clear to this Government that a certain cost would be involved in setting up government departments; yet there is a requirement for nearly an extra \$7 million.

The cost of wildfire suppression exceeded the budget allocation by \$3.2 million and CALM has been able to absorb \$2.8 million of the total wildfire expenditure, so the net extra cost will be \$400 000. If we have more days like today, and a number of lightning strikes occur in this very dry weather, this budget, too, will blow out. It gives the lie to the Government's comments about putting more money into fire control. The budget has not been increased at all, so we are being deceived by the Government. The \$7 million for conservation and land management is additional to the \$2 million for the productivity and labour relations workers assistance package for the forest industry. I wonder whether that relates to the Government's budget into which the Government counted \$15 million of federal Government money.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: The federal Government has not given us that money.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I know, but the Government counted that money into its budget when it knew full well that there was no certainty about that money coming forward. There is the Regional Forest Agreement, the level of 286 000 cubic metres of jarrah under that agreement and the commitment of \$20 million of which \$5 million has been spent. As for the remaining \$15 million, the federal Government could quite rightly say that the State Government has cut that 286 000 cubic metres down to less than 140 000 cubic metres, so it will give the State Government not \$15 million but \$7.5 million. The impact of that on business would be that tax would be paid on it, so the net benefit to business in Western Australia would be \$3.5 million. It is not good enough. The minister needs to have a good look at it. He needs to make sure that he is aware of these issues. He should have been well and truly aware of the impact of the decision when he made it, and sufficient funds should have been allocated at that time.

Another issue is that \$20 million was allocated to the Metropolitan Health Service Board; \$52 million is the health contribution to the hospital fund; \$15 million is allocated to implement reforms; and \$1.5 million has been allocated for the nurses enterprise bargaining agreement. The list goes on. I would like more time to delve into the budget. I daresay that there will be time between now and the end of the financial year to get some more definitive answers from the Government.

I now refer to some matters in my electorate. I promised the Leader of the House that I would not speak for too long on this debate, but there are some disturbing things happening in my electorate. I have alluded to them by way of question and debate in this place. The number of new families that are being directed to Manjimup -

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

particularly Aboriginal families with special difficulties - is causing huge pressure on that community's resources, whether they be the police, the Department of Education, the special education centre, the Department for Community Development, the hospital, mental health facilities, diabetes facilities, or allied health facilities. They are all being put under great strain because of a policy. I expect that those people are being directed to Manjimup because of the cost of housing and the availability of more Homeswest housing. However, no support services have been put in place to cater for that influx of people. It is burning out very good public servants in Manjimup. The impact of that large influx of families is causing the socio-base of Manjimup to alter quite significantly.

The visiting medical practitioners' agreement that was signed by the Department of Health, on the basis of a contract of three years with a clause on a three-months cessation of the agreement, means that very few doctors will move from the metropolitan area to rural Western Australia. How many young doctors do members think will go to downtown Manjimup or Pemberton, even though they are lovely places in which to live, on the basis of a three-year contract with a clause that enables the termination of that contract with three months notice? I put it to members that not too many doctors will go to those areas.

The local newspaper in Pemberton has the headline, "No quick fix for doctor shortage in Pemberton". The truth of the matter is that the Department of Health has been deficient in resolving the issue that has come about between the local doctor with visiting rights and the director of nursing in Pemberton Hospital. The chief executive officer of the south west health service is aware of the situation. I have assisted in getting four people from the community to sit down to try to resolve the issue, but the Department of Health has failed to resolve the issue and satisfy the concerns of the doctor who had visiting medical rights for that hospital.

Five or six of our pioneers have been turned away from Pemberton Hospital in the past couple of months. A Pemberton matriarch of 102 years who was taken to the hospital by her 70-year-old son, because her doctor did not have visiting medical rights, was not allowed to enter that hospital. Was she going to dirty some sheets? Would she use up some resources? A 97-year-old pioneer, Jack Collins, whose family was one of the founding families of the Pemberton district, had to be sent to Bridgetown because he could not be admitted to the Pemberton Hospital. Mrs Moltoni, an 85-year-old matriarch of the large Moltoni family, had to be turned away from the hospital. This week one of our champions, Vic Conti, is in the Mount Hospital. He was very emotional this morning when I went to see him, because he was not sure whether he could go back to Pemberton and stay in the brand new \$7 million hospital for which he worked very hard to raise funds, because his doctor does not have visiting rights. The Department of Health stands condemned for not resolving this matter.

I could mention a host of other things, but I have gone on for more than the 10 minutes that I said I would. I have serious concerns, and I will raise these matters again and again. It is a disgrace when a brand new, \$7 million hospital in a country town, with a nursing wing and acute nursing wing, is being bypassed by ambulance drivers who are frazzled because they are overworked and the Department of Health has not been able to resolve the issue. I want the Minister for Health to take that on board, get his staff to read this speech, go to Manjimup and Pemberton, talk to Mr Moodie and get the answers for the local doctor who has great credibility in that community, sort out the differences between him and the Department of Health director of nursing, and let us have a hospital that has a doctor with visiting medical rights. It is not good enough that a brand new hospital is being bypassed by a whole range of people. One can only imagine what is going through the minds of those elderly people in their 80s and 90s when they cannot gain access to the very hospital into which they have put their money, hard work and toil, and they must be transferred. What does that do to their mental state, the mental state of their families and the mental state of the elderly support group? It is not good enough. I ask that the Government heed this plea and make sure that these matters are resolved as soon as possible.

MR N.R. MARLBOROUGH (Peel - Parliamentary Secretary) [5.29 pm]: I want to touch on a couple of matters in the short time available. The first is the proposed transfer of the live sheep trade from Fremantle to Kwinana. I made a speech on this matter in Parliament some six months ago when I opposed such a move. I raise the matter again because the Environmental Protection Authority released a report last week that said such an industry can be accommodated at James Point in Kwinana. I want quickly to reiterate why I oppose that EPA position and hope that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure will see fit also to oppose it.

Simply put, the position is this: I am not opposed to the industry, although I live in Fremantle and to the degree the industry impacts on Fremantle, I suffer from it. I am not asking for the industry to be moved from Fremantle to James Point. The industry provides a lot of export dollars. My preference has always been for the industry to be carried out in Western Australia. Governments need to look at the issue of this State's jobs being exported overseas, and we must strive wherever possible to prevent that in this or any other industry. My electorate suffers from an unemployment rate of 12.9 per cent, which is the highest in Australia. The young men and women in my electorate who leave high school at year 12 would appreciate those jobs being in Western

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

Australia. It is time we reviewed the live sheep export industry. If the industry is moved to James Point, 250 000 sheep will be kept in holding pens next to the wharf for fairly lengthy periods. People are not permitted to live within the industrial buffer zone because the scientific studies carried out by the EPA indicate that it is not in the best interests of their health, given the air quality within those zones. If, on the basis of those studies, it is not good enough for humans to spend lengthy periods in an industrial buffer zone, it is not appropriate for sheep to be held in pens for a number of weeks between ship visits.

There are no holding pens on the wharf at Fremantle because there is not enough room. The semitrailers park alongside the ship, off-load the sheep and send them straight up a ramp on board the ship. It is costly and takes four or five days to load a ship. One of the reasons that a greenfields site like James Point is being considered by industry is that it would provide an opportunity to load the sheep very quickly, unhampered by the infrastructure of the wharf.

In accordance with the Fremantle-Rockingham Industrial Area Regional Strategy report, initiated by the previous Government and supported by the Australian Labor Party, the Government is well on the way to completing the purchase of all the housing in Hope Valley and Wattleup. It presently owns about 70 per cent of the houses. By the end of next year a new industrial estate of about 840 hectares will cover the areas of Hope Valley and Wattleup. It will be twice the size of Kings Park. It will be the biggest industrial estate in the whole of Australia. If it is not good enough for human beings to live there 24 hours a day, for the same reasons, it is not appropriate to leave sheep in holding pens for up to two weeks waiting for vessels. The live sheep export industry would be placed cheek by jowl with growing existing industries. With the conversion of the Kwinana power station to gas, its capacity is being doubled. The Government has recently ticked off on the HISMelt project, which will be established just south of Point James. I can see the potential for industrial problems with workers working in the vicinity of 250 000 sheep being held in open pens alongside industry. I emphasise my objections to the Environmental Protection Authority's proposal on those grounds. It would be inhumane to hold sheep in that area in an industrial buffer zone for any lengthy period, just as it would be inhumane to allow humans to reside in a buffer zone, as the scientists have been telling us for many years.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: I understand that the Premier is concerned about the premature demise of those sheep.

Mr N.R. MARLBOROUGH: As I said earlier, my preference is that the sheep slaughter industry be carried out in Western Australia so that there would be no need for live exports. As the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure correctly said - I know she shares my concern in this regard - if 250 000 sheep were held in pens in that area and there was an industrial incident, the sheep would not be given priority, human beings would be. The possibility exists, be it ever so slight, that there would be mass injuries to or deaths of sheep.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: It would be lambs to the slaughter!

Mr N.R. MARLBOROUGH: The minister took the words right out of my mouth! No more needs to be said about that. Three words fully describe the minister's and my concerns.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Four words, actually.

Mr N.R. MARLBOROUGH: Four words - I cannot count.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: You have compassion for our furry friends!

Mr N.R. MARLBOROUGH: I share the minister's compassion. Lambs to the slaughter could well be the outcome of such an event.

On a more serious note, as I have said in my previous speeches on this matter, this is an ideal industry to be placed in regional areas such as Albany, Geraldton and Bunbury. It should be encouraged to go to regional areas and Governments should continue to work on strategies that will increase job opportunities in those areas. I hope that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, who I know has a keen interest in this matter, will consider those views as well as the Kwinana Town Council's opposition and that of the majority of people in the Kwinana region to the establishment of this industry in James Point. As I said before, that area is unique real estate, which should be exclusively set aside for heavy industry based on export. That is what it is for; not for a live sheep trade. It should be there exclusively for industries like Alcoa and HISMelt that need to be on the waterfront, close to wharf facilities to accommodate their export requirements.

I take a slightly different view of Lang Hancock from that of other members I have heard today. Lang Hancock is dead. That is an obvious fact. It should be in our minds and in our hearts when we consider what we say about the man who, whether we like him or not, played something of a significant part in our industrial history. Some of the most upsetting aspects of the whole Hancock saga arose before his death, in which I was directly involved, because I am one of the very few people -

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: Did you say you were directly involved in his death?

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

Mr N.R. MARLBOROUGH: I was referring to matters that occurred before his death of which I was directly aware, because I think I am one of the very few people in this House who had the opportunity to meet him and talk to him. The comments about Aboriginal people attributed to him in the early 1980s were certainly not comments I support and I doubt that anyone present today in this Parliament would support them, although I know at least one politician who might have, historically. Lang Hancock should be remembered in the context that he was not a member of Parliament, elected to represent people. He was not a member of any political party. He simply happened to be an industrialist whose comments were news copy of the day. If he made a statement, the media picked it up and ran with it. He held no community responsibility other than in his role as an industrialist. To compare him with an historical, political figure is not an appropriate measure. However, it is appropriate to say clearly that I objected to his statements at the time and I would again if he made them today. I am surrounded by many people whose views of the world I would object to. He must be seen in that context.

The other issue surrounding Lang Hancock is his history in connection with asbestos. I also have a history with asbestos. As a young apprentice at Chamberlain, I worked with asbestos in the tractor assembly and testing area. Chamberlain made its own brake linings and tested them. After the brakes were tested, we used an air hose to clear out the brake drums. I have always carried a concern that I may have been affected by asbestos residue as a result of the work I did as a fitter and turner.

Secondly, in my working life in 1973, I was the convenor of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union at Cape Lambert. I think I hold the historical distinction of being the first person in that era to ban the use of asbestos. At Cape Lambert, as a 28-year-old in charge of 280 metalworkers, I put a ban on the use of asbestos. I will tell the House what happened to me. I banned the union's members from working with asbestos. At the end of the day, Cliffs Robe River Iron Associates, as it was then, and I entered into an agreement under which union members on site would not work with asbestos, but contractors would be allowed to come in and do the work, if they deemed it fit to do so. The deal was that every time a new group of contractors came on site, I would meet them and tell them precisely why they were there. They were there because we had banned the use of asbestos because we believed it was highly dangerous. In those days, I had come across evidence from America that indicated for the first time, to my knowledge, how dangerous it was. What happened when I put that ban on in 1973? It is obvious. Two things happened. Industry wanted me to lift the ban, and so did the union. Across a broad spectrum of people, that was the view at that time about the dangers of asbestos. When, in 1973, I, as a 30-year-old, put a ban on the use of asbestos at Cape Lambert, the leaders of my union flew up there and wanted me to lift the ban. We did not lift the ban. It stayed in place for the whole time I was convenor, until 1977. In 1983, when I was a union official, I had cause once again to put a ban on the use of asbestos products in the Perth metropolitan area. I moved to ban asbestos. Water supply workers were involved because asbestos products were in the pipes. Once again, in 1983, I was approached by a federal official - the federal secretary of the union - to remove the ban.

The only reason I tell those stories is this: people run at different speeds on different issues. We are all affected by our background or our need to know or to tell. Regardless of whether Hancock had knowledge of asbestos in 1933 or whenever, he fits into that category. People like I did not need much warning before we said it would be banned. I did it on two occasions. On both occasions, the union movement told me to lift the ban. I did not lift it on either occasion, by the way. I just wanted to put that into perspective.

People in political life have taken action against Aboriginal people, and I would be far more concerned about that than anything Lang Hancock may have said; and I have already indicated my non-support of his position. As a young 28-year-old, I stood on the road at Karratha to try to stop the Noonkanbah convoy that went through the north west, led by the then Premier, Sir Charles Court. I took a stand, in person, against that. I say to members that the Lang Hancocks of this world were not political people; they were industrialists. Lang Hancock found a bit of iron ore. It just happened that in later years it became a very important piece of iron ore.

I am not seeking to build a monument to Lang Hancock; I do not believe that there is much of a place for monuments. I am seeking that people, right across the political spectrum, have at least an understanding in their hearts that Lang Hancock was an industrialist who holds a place in Western Australian history. His personal views of the way in which the world should operate were completely out of step with mine. However, today, after his death, we should be compassionate enough to recognise that he played a role. I do not want to see a monument to him on the road to Kings Park, in the middle of Perth or anywhere else. However, I think that we should be able to find it within our hearts to recognise the significant role he played in developing the iron ore industry. As I said earlier, some of the most disturbing aspects surrounding Hancock are the things that have happened since his death. Nobody who has looked at the media in the past 12 months could sit idly by and not have a view about the way in which both sides of his family have acted in the past 12 months. I am sure that he deserved and would have wanted something better than that. I just wanted to say those few words, and I will leave it at that.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

In closing, on this last day of sitting, I wish all my colleagues on this side of the House, the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Acting Speakers and all the staff who have looked after us all year a very happy Christmas and new year. I particularly want to wish Madam Whip a merry Christmas, because she might look after me better next year; she has been very tough on me this year. It goes without saying that I pass on my regards to the Opposition and wish them all a merry Christmas and a happy new year. I believe that it is appropriate to do so at this time. Although we spend time in this House debating state concerns, the truth of the matter is that this is one of the few times in Australia's political history when the events that are happening outside the nation dwarf the events occurring inside the nation. That is the truth of politics today. We can go on as much as we like in this House, but at the moment the truth is that people are concerned about what is happening in the world. We should be concerned about that, and we should make sure that we understand it. I have been around for a long time now - I am 57 years of age. I had a father and a brother who went to war. There is little to be gained from those sorts of activities. We should understand that people in the community are concerned about the future. I have a 12-year-old boy. I know that he is concerned about the future. He sees all the news. He does not ask his dad about what is going on in State Parliament; he asks about what is happening in the world. He asks me whether we will be safe, and not blown up, when we go to the local Perth Glory soccer game. For four weeks he asked his mother - he did not ask me - whether his dad, as a member of Parliament, would be safe. World politics are dominating the scene today, and that is what we should be concentrating on - where this State sits at this time in this nation, and where this nation sits with the rest of the world.

MR R.F. JOHNSON (Hillarys) [5.47 pm]: I will make a couple of comments on what the member for Peel said. I agree with what he said. However, this State Parliament must also look after the interests of those people in Western Australia who desperately need help from the Government. As much as I regret doing it, on a point of order I ask you, Madam Deputy Speaker, to consider the state of the House.

[Quorum formed.]

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I make no apologies for calling a quorum. I am not using this opportunity to attack the Government or any individual minister, although I could do that. A week ago I thought of doing it. Today I make a plea that is both personal and on behalf of the 600 Western Australians who each year suffer brain damage and spinal cord injuries from mainly road traffic accidents. I think members are generally aware that a specialised unit has been receiving \$500 000 a year for the past four years. It had a three-year agreement with the Road Safety Council, which was extended for a further year. There is no guarantee that the funding for that unit will continue after this year. I commend Gary Hodge, the former chief executive officer of the Road Safety Council, who was the driving force for providing that \$500 000 a year. The \$500 000 goes to the Western Australian Institute of Medical Research and is directed to the neurotrauma research program. It is a very specialised program. I make my plea to the Minister for Health as a cabinet minister with a special interest in this matter. I have been told that he supports the program. I appreciate that very much. I know that many members opposite also support the unit, which is doing groundbreaking research. I know that the members for Girrawheen, Ballajura, Mandurah and Collie support it. I know that members in the other House also support the unit, including Hon Ed Dermer, members of the Greens (WA), members of One Nation, Hon Ljiljana Ravlich and Hon Tom Stephens.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: And us.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Every person on this side of the House supports the unit receiving that grant. I appreciate that the Treasurer is listening to this, because at the end of the day he has control of the purse strings and can say yes or no. The ministers can go to him with funding applications, but at the end of the day he has the authority to say yes or no. I am grateful that he is in the House to listen to what I have to say.

This unit is conducting groundbreaking research. It is providing light at the end of the tunnel for the 600 people a year who suffer brain damage and spinal cord injuries. It is their only hope. It costs the State \$100 million a year to care for those people with terrible disabilities. A \$500 000 investment in the unit represents about five per cent of the revenue from the Multanova cameras. The revenue from the Multanova cameras goes to consolidated revenue. Some money is given to the Road Safety Council, and the Government spends the rest on providing roads, fixing black spots and the like. I plead with the Treasurer to allocate \$500 000 a year to this specialised unit and give it certainty. It would like more; it could do with more.

Mr E.S. Ripper: Do you have any information about the type of research it does or its research objectives?

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: It is nasal stem cell research.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes. It is not embryonic stem cell research. It is nothing like that. No ethical issues that people might have difficulty with are involved. The researchers use stem cells from between the nose and the eye. They have found that those cells can regenerate. They have done tests on rats that have had their spinal

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
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ords broken. The stem cells rejuvenate the spinal cord. It is a world first. Western Australia is attracting some of the world's best experts in this field. A conference on this issue is being held and another will be held at the end of January. Christopher Reeve has come from the United States to attend the conference because the issue means so much to him. I would hate to see that sort of groundbreaking research and technology go abroad. We should look after Western Australians. This program belongs in Western Australia; this is where the technology has been discovered. It gives people hope. Somebody who is brain damaged or has spinal cord injuries and is confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life has no hope of changing that situation and getting back into anything like a normal life. I have met quadriplegics and paraplegics who have no hope of getting out of their wheelchairs. I have met people who are brain damaged. I know someone who is brain damaged. That research is the only hope they have. This would be the best Christmas present they would ever get. I am asking for a very small amount of money in the scheme of things. I think that the Treasurer is a man of integrity. I am not saying that just because I want him to provide money to the spinal research unit. I have said to him outside the Chamber that he and I get on pretty well. Deep down, we are decent people, although we have different philosophical viewpoints. We are miles apart in that respect. Every one of the government members is basically a good person; none is evil. We have different philosophical viewpoints; we always will. However, I do not doubt that if any government member saw someone lying down injured, he or she would help that person. I ask the Treasurer in particular and the minister for Health, whom I am told supports this, to help. I know ministers operate under budgetary constraints. I am not looking to the Minister for Health to tell me whether he supports this program and whether he will do anything. It is a difficult thing to reply to tonight. I am not asking for an unequivocal yes or no tonight. Deep down, the Leader of the House is a decent person, although we have differences of opinion. I ask the Premier to take the lead on this. The Premier will be told about what happened in the Parliament today. This is a special plea to the Premier, all cabinet ministers and every member of the Labor Party in this Chamber. I am asking the backbenchers to help. I know that the member for Ballajura supports what I am saying.

Mr J.B. D'Orazio interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: He does. He has walked out of the Chamber. That is a shame, because he supports the unit. The researchers told me that he has told them so. It may be that he was not being truthful.

Ms M.M. Quirk: He misunderstood you. He is a great supporter of it.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is good. I would prefer him to be in the Chamber proper rather than behind the Chair. I am told that he is a supporter of the unit. I promise him that it is a good thing. I ask the ministers who are here to talk to the other ministers and the Premier and to suck up to the Treasurer.

Several members interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We have an annual state budget of \$11 billion. All we are asking for is \$500 000 a year for this vital research. The research is so important and the amount being asked for is insignificant in the scheme of things. I want all the members of the Labor Party, including the member for Joondalup and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, to help. He is a decent bloke. I want all those people who have not told this unit that they support it to help. They may not have had a chance to tell it they support it. I plead with members to talk to the Premier about this before Christmas. A funding commitment would be the best Christmas present that could be given to those in Western Australia who have been brain damaged or suffer from spinal cord injuries.

This issue does not affect only people who have been critically injured, mainly in car crashes; it affects their families also. I am talking about many thousands of people. It does not affect every member in this Chamber. Members may not have somebody in their family who is in that unfortunate situation. God forbid that they have, because they will appreciate what I am saying today and this genuine plea that I am making. This is Christmastime and the time of goodwill. I do not want to keep the House much longer. However, I do not apologise for calling for a quorum because I want to talk to government members about a matter that is not controversial. The quorum was called not to have a go at any minister, member or the Government in general. This issue will have an effect on many people who are among the most vulnerable in our society. Three groups of people are particularly vulnerable in our society: children, the elderly and the disabled. Many people who are critically disabled live in hope that something will be found that can knit their spinal cord together again. We think we have found it. We could be looking at a time frame of five years before tests can be done on human beings. If this vital research cannot be done, it will never happen. At some stage, this tremendous light at the end of the tunnel will go to America, I suggest, because it is of great interest to people in other parts of the world.

Mr M.F. Board: A lot of intellectual property in WA is for sale.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 5 December 2002]

p4116b-4138a

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
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Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As my colleague the member for Murdoch said, there is a lot of intellectual property for sale in WA. Let us not lose it from WA, not for \$500 000 a year. This research has been funded for four years. It was established by the previous Government and I am delighted that this Government continued it. I do not know who would make the announcement if the Deputy Premier agreed and he persuaded his colleagues to agree. I would publicly applaud the Premier if he made that announcement. If it were the Minister for Health who announced it - to an extent it is a health issue - I would applaud him. If the Minister for Police - who is responsible for road safety - announced it, I would applaud her. If the Minister for Community Development announced it - because it touches on that portfolio too - I would applaud her also. I would applaud government members opposite if they could do this for those people who live desperately in hope. That is all they have - hope. There is nothing else they can have but hope. Without this funding, that hope will diminish. I emphasise that we must continue that hope.

MR E.S. RIPPER (Belmont - Treasurer) [6.02 pm]: I thank members for their comments. I will deal firstly with the speech of the member for Hillarys. I give the member an undertaking that I will have this matter investigated. I am not aware of the details of the funding source that has provided the grant for this spinal research, but I will have the matter investigated to determine where the money has been coming from and what opportunities exist for its continuation.

Mr R.F. Johnson: It was from the Road Safety Council.

Mr R.C. Kucera: There is a process that the group must go through to apply for a grant. The group is in the middle of that process. I understand that the grant goes to the road trauma trust fund for consideration and that process is ongoing.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Yes, but they are looking for certainty. That process will not be completed until some time next year, possibly June.

Mr R.C. Kucera: That process is the same for every research program.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Please let us not talk about budget processes. This is too important for us to talk about budget processes. The money has come so far from the Road Safety Council, which was a fantastic initiative by Gary Hodge. I take my hat off to him for that. It provided that money for three years. I commend the Government for giving an extra year's grant. However, that is all it has been given. It is going through a process but I am asking the Government to give some certainty to the people dependent on that fund. This issue affects thousands of people in Western Australia. Let us give them a good Christmas by knowing that they will get it from the Government rather than from the Road Safety Council.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: I appreciate the arguments put by the member for Hillarys. I understand the tragic circumstances that have befallen some people who have suffered spinal cord injury, the loss of mobility and other effects. The member does not have to convince me that it is a worthy cause. As he knows, there are more worthy causes than there are funds available to support them. I cannot, therefore, give the member an undertaking right here and now that those people will be funded or that they will get the certainty that the member is seeking. However, I give an undertaking that I will have the matter investigated, and get a report on the previous funding sources and the options available. I will make sure that the arguments put by the member for Hillarys are properly considered and that the Premier is aware of them. That is the best I can do for the member this afternoon.

Mr R.F. Johnson: That is fair enough. I appreciate the fact that the Treasurer will go to that trouble and even talk to the Premier. My plea is that it would be the most wonderful Christmas present for a lot of people if the Treasurer could make a decision before Christmas.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: I understand the argument that the member for Hillarys is making. I do not think there is more that we can do on that issue today. I say sincerely that I will have the matter investigated.

I turn now to some comments by the Leader of the Opposition in his opening remarks. He asked me why we were dealing with retrospective appropriations for three financial years' worth of expenditure under the Treasurer's Advance Account. That is a legitimate question. Usually there would be one of these Bills a year rather than one Bill covering three years. The answer is that the 2001 state election and the later than usual 2001-02 budget following on from the state election got in the way of doing that in the two previous financial years. Presumably, the Court Government made a decision, because of the impending election, not to load up the legislative program. I do not know exactly what its decision was, but I would have expected it to deal with the 1999-2000 Bill some time in 2000.

With regard to our part in the decisions, last year we spent a lot of time on our first budget because we had to come to grips with the total finances of the State. As members know, the budget came down in September rather

Mr Larry Graham; Acting Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Martin Whitely; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Paul Omodei;
Mr Norm Marlborough; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Eric Ripper

than May, which meant that the subsequent budget was introduced after only an eight-month gap. All those matters put pressure on the Department of Treasury and Finance and the politicians, which is why we are dealing with one Bill covering three years of unexpected expenditure, rather than three Bills each covering one year.

The Leader of the Opposition also asked about \$148 000 that had been spent in 2000-01 on the restructuring of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. I am advised that money was used to provide support for cabinet committees that were established to deal with environmental policy, regional policy, social policy and economic policy. The incoming Government established that cabinet committee structure and that structure is supported by policy people in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The additional expenditure of \$148 000 was used to establish that support structure.

The Leader of the Opposition also asked why \$596 000 was spent on terminating the position of Commissioner of Workplace Agreements. I understand that the payment involved a superannuation liability of \$425 000 and a redundancy package of \$171 000. As members know it was government policy to abolish the position of Commissioner of Workplace Agreements, and when we implemented that government policy, naturally the needs of the person who occupied that position had to be taken care of. At some stage he would have been entitled to superannuation, and in addition to that he was paid his redundancy package. We also had a policy to remove 60 people from the Senior Executive Service of the Public Sector, and I assume the Commissioner of Workplace Agreements would have been one of those.

The Leader of the Opposition also asked about the \$330 000 that had been spent in the Office of State Revenue on support for an audit of the primary production exemption from land tax. The Leader of the Opposition raised the argument that this was as a result of a policy change by the incoming Government and that it made a conscious decision to crack down on the primary production exemption. As I indicated by interjection to the Leader of the Opposition, I thought that we had in fact inherited something from the Court Government in this area. I have since had that confirmed by advice from the Department of Treasury and Finance. The amount of \$330 000 was for a Court Government initiative to provide a database for improved compliance in the land tax area, and that improved compliance activity involved checking on the primary production exemption.

Finally, the Leader of the Opposition raised a question about DNA legislation and tried to argue that we had made some savings by deliberately delaying that legislation. I tried by interjection to explain that there had been delays in the DNA legislation and this had produced consequential savings, but we did not set out to delay that legislation to achieve the savings. I have since received advice from the Department of Treasury and Finance through my office - so it is not formal advice; it is just a handwritten note from my staff member - that the original appropriation for DNA legislation was based on an assumption about the date at which that legislation would go through Parliament.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: So there were savings.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: There were savings, because the appropriation was based on an assumption that the legislation would pass through Parliament by a particular date. When the legislation passed through Parliament not by that date but at a later date, it was implemented later and consequently the full appropriation was not required.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: I bet you don't get it back into Treasury.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: I am not aware of precisely how that has been accounted for. In many cases when an appropriation is given to an agency and it is not fully spent in a financial year it rolls over into the next financial year. In this case, as the agency was seeking additional money, the underspending might have been offset against the agency's demand for additional money for some other purpose that had arisen in the portfolio in that financial year.

That deals with the specific questions that were asked by the Leader of the Opposition. During their contributions to the second reading debate most members gave speeches on matters of general public policy rather than specifics relating to the Bill, as is their right. It is probably not appropriate for me to comment on the interesting speeches we heard about asbestos and other issues. However, I thank members for their comments.

This is a routine piece of legislation, but it is important as part of the overall accountability framework that the expenditure under the Treasurer's Advance Account be scrutinised just as expenditure in formal budget appropriations is scrutinised. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time, proceeded through remaining stages without debate, and transmitted to the Council.