

Hon Kim Chance; Hon Norman Moore; Hon Peter Foss; President; Hon Dr Chrissy Sharp; Deputy President;
Hon Bill Stretch; Hon Kevin Leahy; ; Hon Paddy Embry; Hon Dee Margetts; Hon Robin Chapple

CLOSE OF SESSION

Valedictory Remarks

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural - Leader of the House) [11.22 am] - without notice: I move -

That this house acknowledge the contribution to the Parliament and the people of Western Australia that has been made by the retiring members.

If I may crave your indulgence for a moment, Mr President, I will speak briefly to the motion before other members make their comments. This is probably the only opportunity that those of us who will not speak to the motion will have to make a point or two about our friends and colleagues who are retiring. First, Mr President, I thank you for what has been a truly remarkable term as our President. Not only have you provided us with a fair and learned umpiring role in the conduct of this house, but also, and even more importantly, you, in combination with Mr Speaker, have left a mark on the facility and the amenity of Parliament that future members will benefit from for many years to come. On behalf of not only the members of this place, but also members of the other place and the people of Western Australia, because, after all, this is their place, I thank you very much.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon KIM CHANCE: Hon Kevin Leahy has completed an unusual period of service to this place. He was formerly a member of the other place, which he served with great distinction. I imagine that he never thought he would return to Parliament at all, least of all as a member of the Legislative Council. As some of my colleagues might recall, Hon Kevin Leahy was inclined to be somewhat scathing in his references to this place on the odd occasion. I should not speak about him while he is not in the chamber. Having served with such distinction in the other place, he went back into business in Carnarvon and then received the call that he was probably dreading for years that he needed to return and be an honourable person. I thank Kevin particularly for so willingly answering that call and for his service with us, most particularly of late as the deputy Whip. I thank you, Kevin.

Hon Peter Foss was a self-declared one termer way back in 1989.

Hon Peter Foss: That is not quite correct.

Hon KIM CHANCE: He even has to argue when I am saying nice things about him!

Several members interjected.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Notwithstanding the finer points, Hon Peter Foss has made a huge contribution to the Western Australian Parliament, even though it took a decade or so more than we first thought it would take. His contribution has added enormous value to the way this place has operated, not only for the present, but also for the future. Although many of the things that Hon Peter Foss has done have taken a while to take a hold in this place, we will manage the business of this place in the future with the benefit of the lessons that Hon Peter Foss has brought to this place. In saying farewell to Peter, I express my appreciation not only of his skills as a legislator and his ability as a member of Parliament, but also for the friendship that we have formed with Hon Peter Foss, and that is something that will last for a very long time. The contribution he has made to this place has been very significant.

Similarly, Hon Derrick Tomlinson, Hon Peter Foss's friend and east metropolitan colleague, has made a very significant contribution to our Parliament, and also to the benefits of chamomile tea. His extraordinary oratorical skills are legend in this house and will remain so. The effect of those skills will probably ring in my ears for another decade or so.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Occupational health and safety can do something about that!

Hon KIM CHANCE: Indeed! I have served not only in this house but also on committees with Hon Derrick Tomlinson, and his contribution and intellectual capacity to work through complex issues and somehow make them simpler is something that I have always appreciated, and I will continue to do so.

One of my colleagues recently said of Hon Bill Stretch that if we were in a really difficult and dangerous situation, such as the Australian soldiers were at Tobruk, the one person that we would really want by our side would be Hon Bill Stretch, because we know that Bill would never, ever give up. That has marked Bill. I think it was Hon Ken Travers who raised that issue with me, but as soon as it was said, I thought that he was right. Hon Bill Stretch is the one person we would want to rely on if the situation was really sticky. I express my regret that he had that unfortunate experience to which he referred in his speech. I think that was unfortunate. However, that will never detract from his integrity and the way in which he has represented country people, for which I am personally very grateful.

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Members: Hear, hear!

Hon KIM CHANCE: Nobody would envy Hon Alan Cadby's last few months in this place. It is hard to imagine a more difficult situation for a member of Parliament. I know that whatever our position is on what Alan's choices were, every one of us has admired the grace and dignity with which Alan conducted himself. I have said previously that Hon Alan Cadby has a great deal to contribute to public life, and I look forward to seeing the contribution that he will make. I know that Alan will continue to be an important part of the Western Australian community over the coming years, in whatever form that may take, and I look forward to following Alan's future career.

Hon Chrissy Sharp has brought to this place special skills that I do not believe this House has previously had the benefit of. I express my appreciation to Chrissy Sharp for the sincerity and passion that she has brought into this place. She has brought into this place a new way of looking at things. That is probably the thing that Hon Chrissy Sharp would most want me to say about her role in this place. She has substantially altered the way in which we look at things, not only from an emotional or visceral perspective but also because she has brought an aspect of science to the way in which we deal with issues that formerly I do not think we quite appreciated. I thank Chrissy Sharp for her tremendous role in this place.

Hon Dee Margetts, my colleague from the Agricultural Region, has also brought special skills and talents to the way in which we look at our place in this world and at how world affairs affect us. Because she is a former Senator, I suppose we should look to Dee to do that. She has caused us to look critically at the role we play in national and international agreements, particularly the World Trade Organisation and the spin-off of national competition policy. She has caused us to question every step we take in that process. This is her area of speciality, certainly, but she has asked us to look at matters differently, and I believe she has left a permanent mark on the way in which we will deal with those issues in the future.

Hon Lynn MacLaren in her brief career in this place has shown that she has the ability to be a great legislator. I sincerely hope that in the future she will have the opportunity to express that over a full term of Parliament. Lynn is clearly a person of great intelligence and character, and I hope the time will come when the state will gain the benefit of her work in a fuller sense.

Hon Robin Chapple came into this place as a member for the Mining and Pastoral Region. He brought with him not only an intensive knowledge and understanding that we have all benefited from, but an intensive knowledge and understanding about the north of Western Australia in particular. He has provided fearless, tough and uncompromising representation of the people in his electorate, and that has been greatly appreciated by not only members of this house but also, of course, the people of the Mining and Pastoral Region.

Hon Jon Fischer has also brought into this place a deep knowledge and understanding of the north of Western Australia. Although Hon Robin Chapple and Hon Jon Fischer hardly ever agree on anything, they agree on the fact that the north of Western Australia needs a level of representation that other regions do not need simply because it is so remote and so little understood by those Western Australians who live where the majority of Western Australians live; that is, in the south of the state. I thank both Hon Jon Fischer and Hon Robin Chapple for what they have brought to this place, and in particular for making it possible for members to gain a better understanding of the northern regions of this State than they had before those two members came into this place.

Hon Frank Hough has brought into this place a colourful and articulate style that I am sure we have never seen the likes of before and perhaps will never see the likes of again.

Hon Graham Giffard: He reckons he will be back in four years!

Hon KIM CHANCE: He may well be. Hon Frank Hough has a very Australian way of looking at things. When I said of the then three One Nation members that they had brought a breath of fresh air into this place, that was true, because they certainly did. We heard truths expressed by Hon Frank Hough in a way that we probably have never experienced in this place previously. Those truths were sometimes arguable, and sometimes intensely arguable, but they were always expressed in a very entertaining way. Hon Frank Hough made the sort of speeches that no-one, if they had a choice, would want to miss. There was always something to look forward to when Hon Frank Hough spoke. That meant that the issues that he wanted to express were heard and the message got through very clearly.

I have left Hon Paddy Embry to last, for very good reasons. Hon Paddy Embry is one of those persons whom I think we would all regard as a friend. I have known Hon Paddy Embry's family for a long time although surprisingly I did not know Paddy himself all that well until he came into this place. Paddy has brought his own strongly felt beliefs to this place, and although on occasions I did not agree with Paddy all that much, it always seemed to me as though when we went outside to talk about what we did not agree on I could always find a way through to him. Paddy has a deep intelligence that I think was reflected in many of the things that he said. I

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know how passionately he feels about that part of the world that he represents, and Western Australian society in particular.

I say to all of the outgoing members that we will not only be losing one-third of our membership at the end of this Parliament, but we will be losing our friends. I hope we do not lose touch with them all, because they have all, in their own ways, become very special to us. On behalf of the government, and if I can presume to speak for the people of Western Australia, I thank all those members for their service. Each of those members has served this Parliament in a different way, but they have all done it with great sincerity, and they have made a special difference to Western Australia in giving that service.

HON NORMAN MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [11.37 am]: I want to join with the Leader of the House in offering my congratulations to those members who are retiring from this place on this occasion and to say a few words about each of those members. The Leader of the House has clearly outlined the tremendous contribution that the retiring members have made to this Parliament and how much they will be missed. One of the good things about this house is that we have the capacity to work together on committees and within the chamber, and that allows members to develop an understanding of each other's positions and attitudes towards things in a way that perhaps does not happen in larger houses. It also enables members to get to know each other personally regardless of their politics and to form friendships. A lot of good friendships have been made and will continue, I think, in the future, and that can only be a good thing.

I have said to you on previous occasions, Mr President, and I say again today, that you have done your job in an excellent way. You have been very impartial as President, and that is one of the most important aspects of the role of President. I commend you for the significant contribution that you have made to the Parliament in many ways, but in particular in respect of the building itself. Your understanding and appreciation of the traditions surrounding this building have meant that you have been able to encourage the government to spend money on the building and to make sure that the traditions that are important to the place are maintained. I commend you and your colleague in the Assembly, the Speaker, for the tremendous contribution you have made to this Parliament House.

Hon Kevin Leahy was a very good member of the Legislative Assembly when he was the member for Northern Rivers. I hate saying that because the Liberal Party was trying very hard to stop him from being the member for Northern Rivers. Nonetheless, he was a very good member and is very well respected in his community. One other good thing about him was that he replaced Hon Tom Stephens, and that can only be a good thing from my point of view!

Hon Ken Travers: You miss him.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Yes, like a bad cold! I am being facetious. Obviously Hon Tom Stephens and I will maintain our long and deep friendship as the years go by!

Hon Graham Giffard: Thank you for clarifying that.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I have already spoken about my colleague, Hon Peter Foss, on a number of occasions. We have had a few send offs and we will have a few more. He has had a brilliant parliamentary career, and his contribution has been without peer. He was a very capable and competent minister and he will be very sadly missed for many reasons, not the least of which is his great legal knowledge. He also has a great general knowledge. I have often said that Peter is the only person I know who knows everything about everything. That is an important attribute as a member of Parliament. Peter has been able to make a contribution on just about anything in this chamber. He understands its processes and the issues and, therefore, has been able to make a very important and significant contribution on all issues. His departure has prompted the Liberal Party to reassess its method of evaluating endorsements for membership of this chamber. We must select people with legal knowledge if we are to do the job that this place requires us to do. We must work out some way of recruiting at least one or two legally qualified members on our side who can do that work.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson is a man of great compassion and great intellect. His contribution to the debates in this chamber has been truly impressive. It is important to have a person of Derrick's ability and intellect to enable us to understand in more detail and more thoroughly some of the issues we debate. When issues are presented in this house, we often consider them superficially in the rush of debating and passing legislation. People such as Derrick can sensibly and logically work out many of the underlying issues that surround the matters we debate. His contribution has been quite extraordinary, and I thank him most sincerely for that.

As we all know, Hon Bill Stretch is a person of great wisdom. Whenever he makes a speech, whether it is in the chamber or anywhere else, people stop and listen for the duration because they know that he is talking sense. He displays a lot of commonsense and is very much respected by his colleagues on both sides of the chamber. I

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particularly thank Bill for his contribution on behalf of country Western Australia because he is a true country person and has the interests of his constituents and country Western Australia at heart.

I have already said on a couple of occasions how sorry I am about Hon Alan Cadby's circumstances. He knows how I feel about his situation and there is no need for me to repeat that. As a new member, he has made a very significant contribution over the past four years. I think he could have gone on to become a very excellent member of the house. I wish him good luck in whatever he does in future and advise that he retains my friendship.

I do not always agree with Hon Chrissy Sharp, and that was the case even as late as last night. However, as I have said to her, she must understand that when we criticise someone it is not about personal views; we are criticising the argument, not the person. At times, it is rather difficult to see that very fine distinction. I have not always agreed with her but I cannot deny her dedication and commitment to the causes she promotes and the goals she aspires to. I think she is returning to farming or something like that, and I wish her luck. She has made a very important contribution to this chamber. As I said on a previous occasion, one of the important aspects of this chamber now is that we hear a range of points of view, albeit we do not necessarily agree with them. It is nonetheless important to hear those views so that we at least understand that there are more views around than just ours. That has been an important part of her contribution to the chamber.

The same applies to Hon Dee Margetts, who really should have stayed in the Senate - not that she had any choice in the matter. The issues that she has considered important and that she has sought to bring to this chamber have been of a national flavour. In that sense, perhaps she is more suited to the national scene. In the same way as I have enjoyed listening to Hon Chrissy Sharp's speeches, I have enjoyed listening to Hon Dee Margetts' views. They are views that I have not often been exposed to in my lifetime, and I have discovered recently that that is not a good thing. I have come to the conclusion that I agree with her comments about national competition policy, to which the Leader of the House also referred. As a result, I now have a real problem! I did not really support national competition policy much when it was first imposed upon us. Many problems are attached to it that we must sort out, not the least of which is the sovereignty of the state Parliaments. However, that is a bigger issue for another day. That debate must be held very soon by the Parliament and by the political parties that are engaged in what seems to me at present to be a massive power grab by the commonwealth. I wish Hon Dee Margetts well but I suspect she might end up back in the Senate.

I cannot comment on Hon Lynn MacLaren because I have heard her make only her maiden speech. I was impressed with that and I wish her well with whatever she does in her next career. When she came here I missed her predecessor, Hon Jim Scott - Jim Green, as we affectionately called him. The only sadness about his leaving was that he did not win the seat of Fremantle from Hon Jim McGinty.

Hon Peter Foss: I offered to help.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: We all did.

I was rather sad when Hon Robin Chapple was elected because he was elected at the expense of one of my colleagues. To this day, I do not believe that the counting of the votes should have achieved that outcome. Regardless of what we think about Hon Robin Chapple's views, he is a passionate supporter of the Mining and Pastoral Region, particularly the north west of Western Australia. He has enormous respect for the people who live in that part of the world and an enormous understanding of the issues affecting the north west. He will continue to look after those particular interests that are important to him, particularly in the north of Western Australia, as he has done in the past and during his time as a member of Parliament. It is important that his perspective be taken into consideration by people making decisions for the north of the state.

Hon John Fischer has been an excellent local member of Parliament. He has covered his electorate - I will not say like a rash - and has been at almost every event held in the Mining and Pastoral Region for the past four years. He has taken up the issues on behalf of his constituents in a very impressive manner. I congratulate him on a job very well done on behalf of his constituents. He is very highly regarded by people throughout that electorate. My only sadness about his election is that he is not a Liberal Party member, albeit he tried once to become a member. Without going into the vagaries of that preselection, it is probably well known that I was sorry that he did not get the job, but that is another story for another day. As I said, he has been a very good member and I am sad that he is going.

I have always thoroughly enjoyed Hon Paddy Embry's speeches in this house. He is a very articulate member, who has been able to express the views of his electorate, and he is very passionate about country Western Australia. I agree with most of what he has said since he has been here. It is a pity he is not staying on as a member to continue presenting the views on behalf of his constituents.

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I agree with the Leader of the House that Hon Frank Hough is a colourful character. He is a person who can put things in a way in which nobody has any doubt about what he means, albeit the flamboyance is sometimes not what we are used to hearing in this chamber. Hon Frank Hough has a very clear, down-to-earth understanding of what Western Australians think about things, and he is prepared to say it. Political correctness is not something Hon Frank Hough ever had a problem with. It is important that people like Hon Frank Hough be elected to this house, because they say the things that many of us think but are too frightened to say. It is sad that he will not be around to keep telling us what his views of the world are for our edification.

I think that covers all the members who are retiring. May I say to them all on behalf of the opposition that I congratulate them on a job very, very well done. We have enjoyed the friendships we have made with all of them. We wish them well in their future endeavours, whatever they may be. It may well be that some of them might feel like returning here in the future if circumstances allow. I wish all of them well for the future and look forward next week to seeing what their replacements are like.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon John Cowdell): Members, for some years there was always concern when Gough Whitlam visited this state. We did not know whether we would get speech 31, which was two-hours on one vote, one value, or speech 27, which would be a two-hour speech about the centralisation of the railway system, the centralisation of the hospital system or the centralisation of anything else that Gough had on his mind at the time. So there may be some reason for concern today as I refer to Parliament House. I approach this speech with some trepidation. After all, when they do the inevitable condolence motion, they will pull out the entry in the biographical register, they will look at the maiden speech and perhaps they will read this valedictory speech. The only consolation is that all of the stuff in the middle does not count for much.

It has been my privilege for the past four years to make some small contribution as one of the two Presiding Officers of the Parliament. I have sought to enhance this building and through it the role of Parliament; to provide an improved working environment for members and staff alike. We have in the term of the thirty-sixth Parliament managed to build a new \$2.7 million northern wing with 18 additional offices, including party and members' meeting rooms and much-needed staff accommodation. We have restored the Parliamentary Library to its original home and made it one of the four great rooms of the Parliament. At the same time we created in our centenary year the Aboriginal People's Gallery and Room - a symbol that we have become more than just a white settlers' Parliament. I was particularly pleased that our two indigenous members could speak at the opening and that Aboriginal elders from around the state could attend. I look forward to the Parliament building up its collection of indigenous art, so that all Aboriginal peoples of the state are represented, as indeed all 144 local government districts are represented in the paintings that appear on our walls.

The Cabinet Dining Room has been enhanced and revamped as the Centenary Room. We have upgraded security with cameras, security doors - much to the consternation, of course, of some members - and bollards, without I believe significantly impeding the access of the public to its Parliament. We have enhanced our traditional Edwardian gardens while also providing a showcase for our native flora on the banks facing the city. We have sought to preserve and enhance our buildings with extensive expenditure on stonework and facade restoration. We initiated the listing of Parliament House by the National Trust and agreed with the Minister for Heritage that Parliament House would be placed on the state Register of Heritage Places in our centennial year of 2004. We are not a museum, however, and this building must be continually adapted to the needs of the public and members. I thank the government and the Treasury in particular for their generous financial support. Sometimes this has come at a cost. I remember going into Expenditure Review Committee discussions on one occasion and being told, "We'll have to beat up Laurie for a while but then we will give you the money. We were willing to sign up on that basis."

This Parliament has an enviable record in terms of securing its history. We have built on that record by publishing revised members' registers and a history of the parliamentary building *House to House* and of the Presiding Officers, Speakers and Presidents. Our oral history program is continuing apace, and we may expect in the near future publications highlighting the roles of officers and staff of Parliament, the changing nature of membership of the chambers and, for want of a better word, a coffee table publication highlighting the architectural features of Parliament House and a survey of our art collection. We have recognised the particular role of those involved in recording and preserving our history by the creation of parliamentary fellowships and the appointment of David Black, Harry Phillips and Phillip Pental to be the first three fellows. I do pay particular tribute to the role played by Mr Peter McHugh in the parliamentary history program. It is a passion of his. We have sought to highlight aspects of our history with the creation, as members can see, of honour boards and displays to be seen as people come into the Parliament - more of an ambit claim on government. We have established a special members' collection in the Parliamentary Library consisting of all publications by or about members and of course the oral histories.

Extract from Hansard
[COUNCIL - Thursday, 19 May 2005]
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We have been particularly committed to Parliament reaching out to the community. Our in-house parliamentary education program has been extended to the regions. A joint program has been initiated with the Constitutional Centre and the Electoral Commission. Local presenters have been employed to reach schools throughout the state. Two regional Parliaments were conducted last year. For the first time regional sittings of the Parliament have been initiated, with the Legislative Assembly sitting in Albany and our own chamber in Kalgoorlie-Boulder in September 2004. I hope that this initiative will continue into the new Parliament, as many towns and regional centres are eager to have a parliamentary visit. The Parliament in Perth has been made more accessible. A Parliament open day was held last year. I hope that this will continue on a regular basis. Access has been provided for youth Parliaments, youth general assemblies, youth commonwealth heads of government meetings and the like. Access has also been provided for community forums, such as drug summits and water summits, and last Sunday we had what might be called a talent summit, recognising the twenty-fifth anniversary of the WA Academy of Performing Arts. In addition, great progress has been made in providing electronic access to proceedings of Parliament, not to mention virtual tours. A citizen's guide to the Western Australian Parliament was published last year, and videos and other educational aids are regularly updated.

Parliament is a workplace but it is also a community. I have striven to improve the working conditions for staff. This is not only through improved pay and conditions but also through improved career paths and the recognition of both length and quality of service. For me, the annual awards are a highlight of the parliamentary calendar. We have instituted a special Parliamentary Service Award as well as recognition for every five years of service by staff.

Marian Woods might once have said that members would only pay attention if she stopped feeding them. We were paying attention, and the flags of this Parliament House flew at half-mast for Marian last year.

Parliament plays an important role in promoting the state. It plays host to dozens of international delegations. I value the overseas friendships I have built up as a result of these visits. However, they are not as many as those forged by Hon Clive Griffiths. Regular briefings and discussions are held with consuls, consul generals and ambassadors. Only last week we hosted a visit by the Dutch ambassador and the Dutch consuls for every state in Australia and Papua New Guinea. Sometimes we are a bit remiss in relations. For example, last year I led a parliamentary delegation to Hyogo prefecture in Japan to celebrate 10 years of our parliamentary friendship agreement and over 20 years of our sister-state relationship. In that time our sister-state assembly had sent more than 20 delegations to Western Australia without ever receiving a reciprocal visit. This week we participate in the visit of Mr Wu Bangguo, the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China. I must apologise for being absent for a period this afternoon as I go to welcome Mr Wu.

This is starting to sound more like a "state of the Parliament" address and it probably is. Then again, I have so few opportunities and members have so many. Let me make a parting reference, as I outlined to the Parliamentary Services Committee on Tuesday, to plans that are in hand. We have plans drawn up to make the courtyard a usable space. At the moment, it looks like the back of an ablution block. It is a particular embarrassment whenever we bring international guests to Parliament. I hope that the prefabricated structures that sprawl into our courtyard can be folded back onto the Harvest Terrace wing and that the whole area can be roofed. At long last Parliament would then have a year-round usable space. We would have a space of sufficient size to accommodate major functions and delegations, not to mention school groups. This is not a radical change. Many Australian Parliaments have proceeded by stages and finally roofed the space between the upper and lower house chambers. At 101 years, we are just taking a little longer than most. In the near future we will have to address our city aspect. The fountains are crumbling and are almost unusable. The forecourt needs to be paved properly. We have already addressed the Harvest Terrace front and paid for alterations to Harvest Terrace with islands and traffic-calming devices. I pay particular tribute to the parliamentary gardeners, who have done such a brilliant job on the Harvest Terrace side.

The chambers remain a top priority. Seating alterations will have to be made following recent legislative changes. More importantly, plans are well under way to provide for the airconditioning of the chambers and improved security arrangements in the public galleries. The next major building initiative should be the construction of a committee house. At the moment, the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council pay \$500 000 in rent to accommodate Parliament's committee offices. The most desirable site is the current members' car park. Failing that, Hale House, which is currently occupied by the Department of Education and Training, and located immediately across the road, could accommodate at least one set of committee offices, the finance department and probably the overflow from the Leader of the Opposition's office, allowing us to deal with the Summer Palace appropriately.

I have proposed to my fellow Australian Presiding Officers and Commonwealth Parliamentary Association branch presidents a major revamp of the CPA in Australia. My proposal envisages the inauguration of an Australian conference of legislatures under the auspices of the CPA and along the lines of the American National

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Conference of State Legislatures. It would involve an annual conference open to all Australian legislators - federal, state and territory - rather than the current highly restrictive conference and seminar arrangements. At the moment members would, on average, attend perhaps one CPA conference or seminar in their entire parliamentary careers. The coverage is totally inadequate and the quality of conferences could be greatly improved by a more significant annual event.

I thank the Premier for appointing me to chair the state's 175th anniversary committee from 2002-04. I was given the unique opportunity of coordinating celebrations for the state's 175th and Parliament's 100th anniversaries. I thank Betty O'Rourke and the Constitutional Centre, who acted as our secretariat, and Hon Mark McGowan, who as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, implemented the program.

I am pleased that we initiated a program of state heritage icons, with one icon being named each month. A program to preserve and highlight each icon was announced on a monthly basis. The icons included the Swan River, with a comprehensive conservation program; Kings Park, with a range of improvements; Fremantle harbour, with the inauguration of the migrant welcome wall; the Eagles-Dockers derby, with an appropriate football history publication; the Albany dawn service, as indicative of the Anzac spirit, with a war memorial conservation program and Anzac educational program; and Kalgoorlie gold and Broome pearls, which further enhanced our regional perspective. Significant grants were announced with the naming of His Majesty's Theatre as an icon. A new interpretation centre was provided to the Midland railway workshops icon. The Royal Show was named as an icon and recognised for its special role in connecting the country with the city.

Funds were provided in the 175th year for a WA on Show expo, which coincided with the opening of the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre. Funds were also provided to significantly boost the Perth International Arts Festival program and to allow for two country sittings of Parliament. I approached myself as chairman on this matter and received a positive response to the request for funding. The celebrations were augmented with hundreds of local community grants and the issuing of special birth certificates and commemorative medallions for schoolchildren. There was also a 175th anniversary heritage and history conference and the inevitable educational supplement in *The West Australian*. Who can forget - perhaps members can - that *The West Australian* ran a series of 175 defining moments in which the Swan Brewery made it as one of the defining moments but Parliament did not. We will not dwell on that. A significant list of publications were also funded to record the ongoing history of the state.

I look forward to an amendment this year to the preamble to the state's Constitution to recognise prior ownership and traditional custodianship of the land by the Aboriginal people. The amendment was approved by caucus in our 175th year but, unfortunately, its implementation was delayed beyond the 175th year. When I came here 12 years ago, I started out by contemplating the nature of the house and its history. I stated that the Legislative Council did not warrant retention on the basis of its record, but that it was showing signs of improvement. Imagine my surprise that within eight years, both the Leader of the Liberal Party and the Leader of the National Party had come out in favour of its abolition. I have witnessed 12 of the 16 years of this chamber's operation as a finely balanced house elected by proportional representation. Eight of those 16 years have been with a conservative majority, and eight of the 16 with an effective progressive majority. I have seen the passage of a lot of good legislation and some bad. One would have to say that the oft quoted percentages of 85 per cent agreement, 10 per cent agreed subject to significant amendment and perhaps only five per cent disputed legislation would not be far from the truth. However, these are not newsworthy statistics and are not closely followed in the media.

We have seen legislation improved as a result of committee inquiry and amendment on the floor of the chamber. Our committee system has expanded and matured. I have participated in the committee system through service on the Standing Committee on Legislation, the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Joint Standing Committee on the Commission on Government, the Parliamentary Services Committee and the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. There can be no better education. We have produced some good reports, and we altered the parliamentary timetable to allow for the consideration of committee reports. Staff in the committee office do an excellent job and make us all look good.

It is essential that committees travel to consider and examine national and international best practice. I see Hon Bruce Donaldson is nodding in hearty agreement. It is commendable that we also have the imprest system to allow travel and private study. I know I particularly appreciated, for example, being able to visit the eastern states to study the senior college middle school model prior to its introduction in Mandurah. I believe the imprest system should be administered by Parliament. There is no reason that a representative committee could not be established to determine acceptable guidelines prior to a transfer of responsibility for the imprest system from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to Parliament. I myself think that the current guidelines could be made more stringent.

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Members, there needs to be a further streamlining of the Council's procedures. Often the customs and practices of the house are diametrically opposed to standing orders. This, of course, leads to confusion. This situation needs to be rectified. We have made limited progress in that regard. We have not as yet implemented all the recommendations of the Procedure and Privileges Committee report on amending standing orders to conform with the written statutes of the state. Unlimited speaking time has been partially abolished, and it needs to be fully abolished. Procedures are in place that facilitate filibusters and legislation by exhaustion, and this does not enhance the conduct or standing of the house. There should be time limits on debates, such as those regarding the suspension of standing orders. I believe that Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice* is not always applicable in a small, proportional representation chamber.

I support the Constitutional Amendment Bill to give the President a deliberative vote. The President has a deliberative vote in the federal Senate and the South Australian upper house and this will soon be the case in the Victorian Legislative Council. I have noticed no greater or lesser impartiality in presiding officers who have a deliberative vote. The deliberative vote is currently exercised by the Chairman of Committees and all acting Presidents in this chamber. The President's electorate should not be denied a vote in this chamber, nor should the presidency be hawked around to see which member is willing to forgo voting rights in the chamber by becoming President.

There is a place for a different mirror of the public mind, and a proportional representation system provides that through representation of non-geographically concentrated constituencies in this chamber. I believe there is no case for an increase in the size of this house, no case for the creation of a so-called state senate and no case whatsoever for the maintenance of malapportionment in this chamber. I think on balance that the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council should be amalgamated with one chamber of 74 members, consisting of 59 single member constituencies and 15 members elected by statewide proportional representation, but not as a top-up. As this would require a referendum, it is unlikely to happen. Therefore, I believe that this house must distinguish itself from the Legislative Assembly. I am consistently amazed by arguments that this house should revert to what was effectively a system of single member constituencies that operated prior to 1989. If anything, there is a strong argument for differentiating ourselves further from the Legislative Assembly, not merely replicating its single member constituency system with all its faults. There is a tendency for many MLCs to pursue the role of shadow MLAs. I have some sympathy for the views put by the previous Leader of the Opposition, Hon Colin Barnett, that some differentiation should exist between the role and entitlements, but not the pay, of upper house and lower house members.

Members, it has been my great honour to represent the South West Region in Parliament. I have taken a great interest in supporting the educational facilities and schools throughout the region. Of course, I have diligently attended, as have most members, countless speech nights and graduations, not to mention cadet reviews and local youth group programs. I supported the activities of our local development commissions and actively canvassed government in support of funding for a whole host of local projects. Invariably, I have ended up putting the case for constituents who had been bullied by state instrumentalities such as Western Power or have been ridden roughshod over by various planning authorities or have not received the support they are entitled to and have needed from community welfare, disability services or Homeswest. I am very proud of the fact that my office in Mandurah has been involved in running the local emergency relief program for the past 12 years.

I have been clearly associated with the various conservation groups in the Peel region, and in particular have taken an active role in the campaign to save the Creery Wetlands, securing an adequate management plan for the Yalgorup National Park and planning for a comprehensive Peel regional park. I am particularly proud of the success that has been achieved in securing government support for the Mandurah railway - I suppose I should call it the southern suburbs railway - funding for the Peel deviation and the allocation of grants for the Hotham Valley Tourist Railway and the Pinjarra Rail Heritage Centre. Of course, I will not dwell on my other less successful campaigns, such as that to save the Pinjarra courthouse. One overwhelming thing will always remain with me; that is, the great kindness, courtesy and generosity that has been shown to me by all manner of people from one end of the electorate to the other. That has been the enduring reward for having this job.

While I have represented the South West Region in this house, I have also represented the Australian Labor Party and the wider Labor movement. Although it was very gratifying to receive 1 500 below-the-line votes the last time I stood for the South West Region, the overwhelming majority of votes were cast for me as a representative of the ALP. I once had to explain to a constituent that I would not take a conservative stance in Parliament on a particular issue, although a majority of constituents in the south west clearly held that view. I pointed out that I was elected to give voice to the view of 38 000 constituents, the minority in the south west who voted Labor. The majority had, at that time, three Liberal members and one National Party member to put their views. Ninety-five per cent of electors vote for a party ticket in the upper house. The parties provide a coherent program and choice and, in the main, their pledges are honoured. The outcome would be far different if we had

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a whole house full of much-vaunted Independents. There would be so many deals and concessions to get a majority that no-one would have any idea of what legislation would emerge. People forget this. One thing that united all members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Commission on Government was opposition to Campbell Sharman's line that political parties were somehow not a legitimate form of expression and that legislative obstacles such as the removal of the option of block voting and Robson rotation should be put in their way. This sort of bunk has been put from time to time and I am glad that there was unanimous rejection of it.

I am proud to have represented the party of John Scaddan, Phil Collier, John Willcock and John Curtin in this place. I am proud to have worked with successive Labor leaders, both while and after they were leaders, including Frank Wise, Bert Hawke and John Tonkin, and of course Carmen Lawrence and Geoff Gallop in later days, in the interests of Labor in this state, I am proud to have worked with our federal leaders Gough Whitlam, Bill Hayden, whose staff I was on briefly, Bob Hawke and Kim Beazley. I have also been a part of Labor's south west team and it has been my privilege to work with the likes of Wendy Fatin and Jane Gerrick; Margaret Duff and John Hughes; David Templeman, Mick Murray and Tony Dean; Sally Talbot, my successor, and special agent Guise; Dave Hicks, Terri Coughlin and Paddi Creevey; and many others. I must resist the temptation to mention every constituent in my electorate, as was the wont of the late Ted Cunningham. I have recognised on an annual basis the contribution of the staff of this chamber, the staff of Parliament and all our electorate officers and research officers. At this stage I can only reiterate those comments. I made the point to Malcolm Peacock just a few moments ago that I am having a lunch today for the departmental heads and that they should get going and not wait on my continued prattle in this place. Hopefully, they are well under way.

Three people deserve special mention. Laurie Marquet keeps the whole show running. He works unimaginable hours to the degree that it puts a strain on his health. He has come up with many profound rulings. On some of them I have had to say, "Laurie, even I don't understand this; let's sit down and make it comprehensible." When I became President, I said, "Laurie, how many staff do I get?" Of course, in the best Sir Humphrey style, he said, "President, we are all your staff", which explained who was running what. I recently gave Laurie a book about a cardinal by Morris West entitled *Eminence*. I thought it was entirely appropriate. My inscription was "To the only true parliamentary eminence" and I think that is the case. I recognise Lorraine Coogan. Lorraine is exceptionally good at her job. She brings a sense of style to the place and certainly a sense of organisation. If she has one fault it is that she hides things from me and I cannot find them. There are also all the portraits of the Queen that she has accumulated in her office, which I am sure have been snatched from various parts of the building. We all feel a part of her son Joshua's ballroom dancing career. She has even roped the Premier into the cause. I recognise Margaret Duff, my electorate officer. Ours has been a genuine partnership for 12 years in the electorate. She has been a member for a lot of the time, but without the pay and without the prestige. With Margaret I got the whole family, and I am deeply indebted for everything that Max and Rachel have done for me. I must acknowledge my partnership with the Speaker. We have had some disagreements, such as rehanging the portraits of the Premiers, but they have been minor. I count Fred Riebeling as a friend. We have known each other for many years. Our fathers were captured at the battle of El Alamein and served two and a half years in a prisoner of war camp. However, the Assembly is the Assembly. Hon Colin Barnett summarised the situation well on one occasion when we were proceeding down to the front entrance to welcome the Governor. He said, "We ain't classy but we're rich."

Friends and colleagues, I have appreciated serving with you. There are things that remain to be done. Putting Jim Brown's name on the war honour board is one of them. The one name that should not have been left off the war honour board was Jim Brown. Of course, there is the hanging of the portrait of the father of the house in the members' meeting room. I think that Hon Norman Moore is in for some stiff competition as I see that Malcolm Peacock has framed the portraits of all the Clerks and is looking for somewhere to hang them.

Occasionally a member will receive a commendation that makes it all worthwhile, and I want to thank Hon Bill Withers for providing one such commendation in his letter of 6 April this year. It reads -

Thank you for your recent invitation to the opening of the 37th Parliament.

It is only since I left the Kimberley, in September 2002 to reside in Perth, I have been able to observe the dignity that you have upheld in the Presidency of the Legislative Council.

On each occasion I have heard you speak, at a function, you have done so with humour and impartial authority. Your demeanour in the Presidency has been the subject of conversation across the spectrum of party politics so you deserve the Australian superlative; Bloody well done!

I conclude on the theme of going off into the sunset. I used to sit next to Hon Cheryl Davenport in this chamber. When Cheryl retired, we promised her a Zimmer frame. Now I might have to share a frame, if I can track her down in her villa in Tuscany. There does appear to be life after the Legislative Council. Thank you all.

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[Applause.]

HON CHRISTINE SHARP (South West) [12.28 pm]: As members would realise, running for Parliament for the Greens (WA) is a risky business. When I decided in 1996 to go for preselection, I was by no means certain that I would end up with a job. However, not only did I end up with a job, but also very significant changes took place in the Legislative Council in the new Parliament in 1997 and, in particular, the two smaller parties, the Democrats and the Greens, which included my colleagues Jim Scott, Giz Watson and me, had the balance of power. That was quite a shock. Members know that it takes a little while to get used to being in Parliament. It is quite a challenge not only getting used to Parliament but also finding ourselves in the hot seat, as it were. Ever since then, life has been tumultuous, and the pressure has been continuous; however, the achievements have been significant.

I want to begin by mentioning the great privilege I have had in chairing two standing committees of the Legislative Council, the Standing Committee on Ecologically Sustainable Development, and the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs. I believe to my best knowledge that I am the first woman in the Western Australian Parliament to have chaired any standing committee, so that has been a great honour. Those two standing committees have been dedicated primarily to environmental issues. That in itself is indicative of the changes that have taken place since the Greens (WA) have grown in influence in this state Parliament. However, the proposal that there should be a dedicated environment committee came, if I recollect correctly, from outside the Parliament. It was actually activated and facilitated by the Wilderness Society in Western Australia, and I am grateful to the Wilderness Society for that move that it had made before I even arrived in this place. I have found my committee work a wonderful opportunity to do politics the way I like to do politics; that is, with cooperation across the parties, and by being solution-focused. I particularly want to thank those members who worked with me in the recent term of the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs for their cooperation and the massive amount of work that we managed to get through together. For example, last year the committee considered 56 petitions and tabled reports on five inquiries. Our inquiry into the Gene Technology Bill and the Gene Technology Amendment Bill was, I am sure, extremely influential, particularly because it proposed significant amendments that were later adopted in the Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act, which paved the way for the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry to declare the state of Western Australia GM free. That is a status that the Greens and many members of this place have worked towards, and it is an achievement for us all. I commend the minister for taking that step and providing that statutory protection to this state. Also this year the committee tabled the report on a significant three-year inquiry into the Alcoa Wagerup refinery. That was only one of five inquiries that the committee conducted last year. In the first term of the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs we also conducted a considerable number of inquiries, although not quite as many as the committee has been conducting in this term, because that committee did not have the added workload of considering petitions that have been tabled in this place.

The most significant focus of the Standing Committee on Ecologically Sustainable Development was the issue that became at the subsequent state election the prime political issue of the time; namely, the long-term management of our state forests. In fact, as chair of the ESD committee, I held three different inquiries into forest management. The first was into the Regional Forest Agreement, and the second was into the sustainability of current logging practices. The third inquiry was when the committee looked at the amendment bill that proposed to change the Conservation and Land Management Act in order to separate the forestry and conservation practices. I guess - I do not guess; I am sure - that the contribution that I will be remembered for primarily will be the massive change that has occurred in the management of our state forest. It was a great privilege for me to be in this place in December to see the completion of our goal of protecting old-growth forests by the addition of 853 000 hectares to the forest reserve. That is a significant milestone in the protection of Western Australia's biodiversity. I first became involved in that campaign in 1975, and my journey in that campaign has been very much linked with that of my partner, Andrew Thamo, who has at many times since 1975 shared that journey with me. It has been a great honour for me to have been involved in that campaign, and I am sure that my contribution to the issue of forest management will continue when I leave this place.

I have also had the privilege of introducing five private members' bills - or at least that is what I thought it was when I did a quick tally this morning. The first two of those bills were on the decriminalisation of marijuana and the legalisation of hemp. The third, and most important, was the High Conservation Value Forest Protection Bill 1999, which went through this house but was rejected at the second reading stage in the Legislative Assembly, to scenes of great political drama but was, I think, quite influential in the reversal of the Regional Forest Agreement very soon after that. In the more recent term of this government, I introduced a private member's bill to implement a system for regulating land clearing, and within months the government had implemented its own system. I also introduced a private member's bill to amend the Wildlife Conservation Act to provide for better fauna protection in areas of state forest that are open for logging. Again, that private member's bill helped to

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emphasise the need to better protect threatened species. As we all know, many of the smaller mammals and many of the bird species in this state are threatened species. It is critical that a massive effort is made to bring those species back from the brink and assist them to become more plentiful. I have also moved amendments to a heap of bills; I have no idea how many.

One set of amendments that stands out in my recollection was made in the former Parliament during the term of the former coalition government, when three women in this place - Hon Helen Hodgson from the Democrats, Hon Ljiljana Ravlich from the Labor Party and I - put together as a cooperative team more than 200 amendments to the School Education Act, many of which were accepted by the then Minister for Education, Hon Colin Barnett. That was a remarkable example of all the parties in this house of review working effectively for the long-term good of the state. I am particularly proud of the social justice amendments that were inserted into the School Education Act, at my behest. Those amendments, which are found at sections 26 and 92 of the act, ensure that no child at a state school in Western Australia will be disadvantaged by any economic, social, linguistic or geographic difficulty, or any special learning difficulty, that might affect that child's attendance and performance at school.

I also want to touch on the more recent work that I have had great fun in being involved with over the past 18 months, along with other members of the Greens, in particular Hon Dee Margetts. That involved the compilation of a discussion paper on economics for the Greens. I will read a few words from the foreword I wrote to our economic discussion paper, which is called "From global to local, the new wave forming". In August 2004, I said in the foreword -

Greens talking economics?

Some might say that Greens talking economics is a contradiction in terms. Our stance on the environment has led some people to think the Greens are 'anti-jobs' and 'anti-development' because the Greens are opposed to certain types of economic development. This simplification of Green politics misses the real point of our position. We stand for models of economic development that put people and the environment first, rather than maximum profits. Yet maximising profits is the driver of investment in our present system. So, without carefully crafted government instruments through taxes and regulations, we get developments which are short term, environmentally destructive and provide few jobs and regional benefits for the volume of resources used. It is this skewing of real priorities which the Greens fundamentally oppose.

This discussion paper puts up some ideas on economic development which are jobs-rich, environmentally benign and distribute the benefits fairly. Surely they are 'different' from much current practice. In that sense, then, they are radical. We believe that without a profound change in how we make our living on this earth, we will unleash a global environmental upheaval many times more 'radical' than the sensible path proposed here.

The paper then lists some of the main ideas as follows -

Economic development based on improving everyone's quality of life rather than just expanding the quantity of money and possessions.

We advocate the use of indicators of a much broader nature, such as general progress indicators rather than the commonly used GDP. They continue -

Governments that lead the community in developing and implementing sustainable development strategies . . . and supporting communities to respond to the reducing availability of cheap oil, especially for transport.

An Industry Policy to facilitate the localisation in production of many goods and services reducing unnecessary freight.

Rejection of the Australia/US Free Trade Agreement.

Increased spending on services such as health and education rather than tax cuts.

Restructured government finances and taxation in Australia to reduce the role of the Commonwealth in taxation collection in favour of the states and an enhanced role for local government.

A fair redistribution of wealth that doesn't put the tax burden on those who can least afford it and reverses the growing scope for transnational companies to avoid tax . . .

Adoption of a comprehensive suite of eco-taxes to embed environmental and employment incentives across our tax system.

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An overhaul of the welfare and taxation system so that income gained from working is not lost on reduced welfare benefits . . .

The Goods and Services Tax being dismantled and state payroll taxes reduced.

Responsible government investment on services and infrastructure being increased.

Abolition of the National Competition Council.

Energy efficiency and renewable power generation . . . with a mandate of 20% of renewable energy for future generation capacity.

Mineral and mining strategies based on the economic implications of the long-term decline in ore grades.

Adoption of policy mechanisms, incentives and regulations that drive the move towards sustainable agriculture and supporting industries in revitalised rural communities.

I deliberately read those points because I want to bring home to people that some of the bases of the Greens' ideas on economics were considered to be mainstream in many economies only a generation ago. Perhaps until the mid 1970s, it was considered quite normal for our economy to be regulated to ensure that the benefits were fairly distributed and that the disbenefits were prevented. It is only in very recent years that the idea that we use our economic instruments for better social and environmental outcomes has been considered anathema and that the market has come to drive it all.

I will also spend a little time describing one of the important essays in this discussion paper. It describes the notion of our ecological footprint and reads -

The world average ecological footprint is about 2.2 ha per person, which exceeds the sustainable bio-capacity of the earth, which was estimated at 1.9 ha per person . . .

The global average ecological footprint per person is rising as developing countries industrialise. Also, population growth will put pressure on this and the available productive areas per person could be reduced to 1.2 ha by 2050.

The earth may be able to afford 1.2 ha. It continues -

The ecological footprint of an average Australian is approximately 9.4 ha which is very high by world standards.

. . .

Preliminary analysis by Curtin University has found that Western Australia's ecological footprint is between 17 and 31 hectares per person. This is more than double the national average, and at least 8 times greater than the world average. This very high ecological footprint reflects the highly resource-intensive nature of our economy. Vast amounts of energy, water and other resources are used in our primary industries. By global standards, the people of Western Australia are also big resource consumers and produce high levels of waste.

The Greens' aim to reduce our footprint may seem insurmountable. The main reason for such a high footprint is that Australia (Western Australia in particular) is predominantly a high volume primary producer of mineral and agricultural exports, against a background of a very low population density.

In the longer term the Greens would seek to make the ultimate user, rather than the producer of those resources, more accountable, whether at home or overseas. This is the main cause of the present distortion in this measure.

So we can see from those comments what a vast gap there is between a really sustainable future for Western Australia and the kind of sustainability agenda that, at present, is bandied about in the government as commonplace. Although the Gallop government has made progress in a few areas, there has been no new state-of-environment reporting. A version has emerged of a sustainability agenda that is more like "icon politics", rather than something that deals with the deeper challenges we all face. That is true, particularly in the context of energy consumption in Western Australia over the Kyoto period of reporting. Rather than our special allowance of an eight per cent increase in energy over the 1990 period, our state's energy consumption will increase by at least 70 per cent. These figures are astounding, yet we seem to spend so little of our time in this place considering them or actually coming to terms with the massive change in our technologies and lifestyle that must take place. We need to have a massive refit of all our technologies so that they take into account the urgent need for energy conservation and the need for renewable energy.

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I will also mention other issues I have been involved with. I have been involved with the implementation of a clearing permit system with those Environmental Protection Act amendments. I remember many amendments in the name of the Greens and being very frustrated by that system. Here is a government that likes to boast about sustainability, yet it exempted its own government land clearing activities from being regulated. Its land clearing for urban development through the Town Planning and Development Act will be exempt, as will that of Main Roads and a lot of other government instrumentalities. It is a very frustrating position. I was very pleased that some months after the legislation had been passed I was able to assist the Minister for Environment in the drafting of the final regulations for the package of the clearing permit system by helping the stakeholders of the WA Conservation Council, WA Farmers Federation and the Pastoralists and Graziers Association to reach agreement on that package. That was very helpful at that time for the government. Generally speaking, the government totally ignored the position and the input of the Greens on that whole issue. Now I hear much to my concern of an application being received in the Shire of Donnybrook only a matter of a month or so ago for 28 hectares of jarrah forest to be cleared in that shire. Apparently, the reason was to establish a few fruit trees, a home and a farm in an area of high clearance of native forest. The matter has not yet been determined. The response I received from the Minister for the Environment on decisions she will make on that application was the most inscrutable letter I have received from a minister so far, and I fear the worst expression of political will to implement the system. What is the good of us spending days, weeks and months here doing our best to review legislation in order to get the best possible outcome if the government simply does not ensure that it is properly implemented? We have a very poor history. I do not believe that in all the past 10 years a single kilometre or even 100 metres of illegal drainage has resulted in a prosecution, yet it is well understood that those drains are in breach of the Soil and Land Conservation Act.

In addition, I have been involved in many issues in the south west, helping to resolve the problem of the waste water treatment plant at Gnarabup. I am pleased to say that I believe that the problem will be resolved in the very near future and it will be turned into a pumping station for waste to be treated at the main Margaret River plant. I have an ongoing passion about seeing the revival of the south west railway line. I was very interested to have pointed out to me the editorial in today's *The West Australian*, because things are going backwards at the moment. Anyone who has driven down the South Western Highway during the past couple of months will have seen it resemble a continuous road train. The extent of the heavy freight that is being carried on that highway at the moment is scary and dangerous. A fatal accident involving three multi-combination vehicles occurred only a week ago. Thank goodness a school bus or a similar vehicle was not involved. When that accident happened, the highway was blocked for some time with road trains backed up in either direction. I have photographs of them. They were backed up as far as the eye could see. Right next to that highway is a railway line. I acknowledge that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is supporting the construction of an intermodal link at North Greenbushes, but in the meantime I say that the rail should still be used. It should not be seen as something for the blue gum industry in particular. We need a massive transfer of all the heavy freight of a suitable bulk commodity nature back onto the railway. It is absolutely critical. I know that the minister has made real efforts, but her achievements are far less than her efforts. The only blue gum company that is operating under the Albany Hardwood Plantation Agreement Act was linked to the port of Albany by rail under the coalition government. Under the current minister, all we have seen is the blue gum industry putting more and more road trains onto our road system.

Hon Paddy Embry: I agree with what you are saying, but, to be fair, the industry has cranked up. The amount of chips being handled is far greater.

Hon CHRISTINE SHARP: I was not intending to present any critique of the plantation sector; I have done that many times in this place. It is a relatively low value commodity with quite limited regional benefits. Most of the ownership is by people in Perth who have a tax problem. Most real farmers do not have a tax problem. Any plantation industry that is driven by a taxation policy is bound to create the kind of regrettable skewing that occurs in the current plantation sector. This has been a source of great frustration to me. I come to this place as a farm forester. Farm forestry is one of the real good news stories for agriculture, because it is a way for farmers to stabilise their land, prevent salinity, prevent soil erosion, assist in their crop production and also invest in a long-term, sustainable saw log industry. However, we have seen almost nothing of that occur. Instead, we have seen an industry driven by tax enhancement to the benefit of those outside the region and without any serious plans of value adding to the residue product, the woodchip, in a pulp mill in the south west region - not a pulp mill but several. There are enough resources for at least three environmentally friendly "CTMP" pulp mills. Part of what the economic discussion paper is about is that globalisation is not of benefit to the region that I represent in the south west.

We have also had heartbreaks at Mandurah. We had the heartbreak of seeing the development of the largest portion of the Creery Wetlands. The President mentioned that campaign just a little while ago. It is a heartbreak indeed. Many people have still not forgotten it. Every time I drive over the bridge at Mandurah I think about

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what a tragedy it is that we have replaced significant habitat for international migratory birds with canal development. However, I wish to thank the government for its protection of the old coastal wetlands not far away, with some assistance from me, and particularly to thank it for agreeing to name the wetland after that Peel great Len Howard, with whom I had the opportunity to work for several years, which was great fun. I know that Len would be really pleased to know that we have achieved a little bit of the huge agenda that he set for the Peel region.

If the balance of power has given one a lot of opportunities, it has also provided many challenges. Having the balance of power means essentially that one is in a reactive mode in that one is dealing with the government's agenda. Indeed, one has a huge workload, which is to scrutinise what the government wants as its priorities.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm

Hon CHRISTINE SHARP: Before the suspension for lunch, I was told that I had a strict time limit on how long I had left to speak today. That means many things will be left unsaid in summing up the contribution I have made to this Parliament and indeed my contribution - as it may have been - to the protection of the environment of Western Australia. Due to those restrictions I will not touch again on the difficult and divisive issue of electoral reform and the approach I have taken; nor will I speak in any detail about the problems the Greens (WA) have experienced because of the government's decision - despite entreaties to the Premier since March 2001 - to not provide the Greens (WA) with the party status the Greens need to properly perform its role of holding the balance of power.

I live in the country, and it has been particularly difficult for me to juggle the responsibilities of farming, raising a family, servicing an office that is located 300 kilometres away, chairing a committee and holding the balance of power in this place. It has required an enormous effort to bring all that together and to try to work cooperatively with all members and, above all else, my colleagues to approach each issue with integrity. All members - particularly me - have had a workload from hell.

The limited time given to me to speak today as I conclude my term encapsulates some of the frustration that I have experienced while representing the Greens in this place. During all the years I have been a member the Greens have not been provided with administrative assistance, legal advisers or staff, despite our responsibilities. The responsibilities of holding the balance of power could fall on any party. The Greens have held the balance of power recently but perhaps in the next Parliament Hon Murray Criddle could hold the balance of power. If an inadequate number of National Party members were elected to the Legislative Assembly to enable the National Party to qualify for party status, another member could fall due to the enormous responsibilities and challenges of holding the balance of power, which the Greens and I have faced.

I will not speak any more about why I have had to stand down or about the unfinished business of protecting the environment of Western Australia because, in more ways than one, I have run out of time. I will not speak about my future plans, although I assure members that I have lots of them. I live in a beautiful place with a great community and we will continue to work together for a long time to create many beautiful and important projects in the south west.

I will not be discourteous to other members and take up the time of the house any longer. I will finish by thanking some people. I thank the President, who I think has done a great job. I particularly applaud the way in which he has helped celebrate this Parliament and the 100th birthday of the building. He has done that with unparalleled flair. I thank also the Deputy President (Hon George Cash). I appreciate the way in which he has chaired the house.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon George Cash): Chrissy, you will also be entitled to an extension. I have told the member that and I do not want her to cut her comments short. She should take it easy and continue. So now everyone knows the secret!

Hon Giz Watson: Just keep talking about George!

Hon CHRISTINE SHARP: I will keep talking. I seriously mean what I said. Although we just had a little tiff, I have great respect for you. I thank also Hon Kim Chance, who has always been helpful and friendly. He has looked after us and shown true compassion; he has never deviated from that. I thank him for making the house a warm and friendly place. I thank also Hon Norman Moore. I have always loved to hate the Leader of the Opposition in a sense that I do not hate him at all. Norman is a great member of this Parliament and it always fascinates me - I guess he touched on this himself - that we take such divergent positions on issues, yet I know that I am dealing with someone who is thoroughly decent and committed to good process and to the work of this Parliament. It has been a real pleasure working with him.

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I cannot finish without thanking the Clerk. We all have our own relationship with Laurie. He has been a source of extraordinary advice and impartiality, and I guess he, more than anyone, stands for the principles of the Parliament itself and the right of all members to be effective in their role. He has been extraordinary and I count him as one of my close friends.

I would like to thank everybody. With the limited time available, members will be greatly relieved to hear that I will not name any more members in particular, but I feel a friendship with almost every one of them and have really enjoyed working with them. I must also acknowledge the thousands of people in the south west with whom I have worked. Many of them came to Balingup on Saturday night when we had a humdinger of a party, but those 200 people were only a small proportion of the thousands of people I have worked with over these eight years. I thank them for all the information and inspiration that they have provided to me which has enabled me to have the privilege of representing them.

I also thank all the staff in this Parliament. I do not know who picks them, but whoever it is has the special knack of finding some of the most helpful, decent and smartest people in the whole of Perth. The quality of the staff makes our work as parliamentarians just that much easier, because we know that we can absolutely rely on their goodwill and helpfulness on all occasions, even if it is in the middle of the night. That goes for all the staff in the restaurants, the dining room and so on. I thank them very much.

I especially want to thank some of the people in the gallery and in my Balingup office, including Nick Dodson, Wendy Wilkins and Margie Miskimmin. They have been just amazing. From a distance of 300 kilometres, they have managed to support me in the work that I have done in this place. Whilst under a huge workload, they have also borne the brunt of this difficulty of the lack of -

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

Hon CHRISTINE SHARP: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. I will try to speed up, but I want to say that I have worked with a great team. Wendy Wilkins and Margie Miskimmin, in particular, have been with me for eight years. We three women together have somehow pulled together and done extraordinary things - it has been a remarkable effort on behalf of the goddess or whoever - which we know will make us soul mates forever. I thank my dear mum, who has been in hospital several times during the last four years. She has been right at the edge and we have been greatly worried about her, yet she has pulled back from the brink. I am so pleased to see her looking so strong and sitting in the gallery today, and I really look forward to the times we will have in the future, because we will have more time now. I also thank Eleanor Gifford for being such a carer for her.

Lastly, I thank my partner Andrew Thamo. Andrew and I have been together now for 26 years. We have quite a remarkable and creative relationship which has not only created two fantastic children, Lara and Tosh, but also has been very creative in terms of green politics. Andrew, as much as I am, is an absolute icon of the green movement. It has been marvellous to have him at home not only keeping the fires burning, but also with the best political advice in the state. I have been really lucky. I also salute all the tree work that he has done in so many different directions through our work together at the Small Tree Farm. I thank everybody very much for the privilege of doing my work.

[Applause.]

HON BILL STRETCH (South West) [2.16 pm]: Mr Deputy President, I feel a little like Dame Nellie Melba. I am not sure how many farewell speeches I have made, I think this is the second, but I want to add a few other things to what I said in November. I did not expect to be back in this chamber, because I thought that the Liberals would win the last election but, sadly, that was not to be. For a whole range of unfortunate circumstances I am back in this chamber again, but it is a happy circumstance in one way, because I will have another chance to address members and thank them all again. I was particularly touched by the comments made by the Leader of the House, Hon Kim Chance, and Hon Norman Moore earlier today. I really do appreciate that. It was somewhat better than being at one's own funeral and hearing the oration.

Hon Kim Chance: You feel a lot better!

Hon BILL STRETCH: It does give one a chance to hear a few nice remarks, after many years of batting things backwards and forwards across the chamber.

Hon Peter Foss: They never say it while you are here, that is the problem.

Hon BILL STRETCH: No, I cannot say that. I have found this a very pleasant place in which to work. As I said earlier in my speech, and I have said before, this is a house of adversarial nature but it should never become a house of bitterness. Parliaments further down the line should remember that. There is good in everyone and, as I have said before, there is no place for hate or bitterness. A person can win a few, lose a lot, and he can be pretty sore about it, but he should never let it get him down and get bitter. As Hon Christine Sharp just said,

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there are wonderful things out there in life beyond this place and if we get it out of perspective not only does it damage us personally, but also it greatly affects our judgment and the way in which we develop the legislation in this place.

I was reading through my various farewell speeches, and there is really not a lot more I can say about the quality of the staff and the people I serve in my electorate. I checked my maiden speech when I came into this place and a lot of it centred on the town of Collie. If I were ever wont to come back into politics, I would like to stand as the Liberal member for Collie, because Collie is a place of enormous importance to the state. It is a wonderful town with wonderful people; in many ways it is a straitlaced town; it has a strong Cornish and Welsh mining background with people who call a spade a spade and who work with danger all the time. It brings out a certain quality in people which has always endeared Collie to my heart. It may be my Welsh blood, but it is certainly a very special place. In many ways it deserves political representation from the conservative side of politics.

The future of Collie has been built not only on the work force and the high quality of the mining people of that area, but also on heavy investment. Heavy investment does not occur without a lot of encouragement from government. Mostly it is conservative governments that give that encouragement. It is the conservative governments that have built power stations in Collie. I hope they will do so again. For the life of me, I could not understand why Collie did not accept the challenge to back the Liberal Party promise of a new coal-fired power station, because that will ultimately happen. The technology for coal burning is improving so much that it is only commonsense to spread our power needs. The state will not continue to grow without cheap, reliable power. Collie has the opportunity to meet that challenge. In my maiden speech I spoke about the challenge presented by gas. I urged the people of Collie not to see gas as a threat but to see it as an impetus for finding better ways of using coal and to consider the possibility of integrating gas into the power grid in conjunction with the burning of coal. That is going forward. I am pleased that there has been a lot of progress in that field. I am sure that Collie will continue to be a great powerhouse of the state. Power generation will always be augmented by gas. Unless gas is discovered offshore in the southern half of the state, we will always have to depend on the base-load power from the coalfields, certainly in the south of the state. The many risks associated with a reliance on long gas pipelines have been considered and stressed on a number of occasions.

I want to touch on a couple of things. I will not harp on about my overseas trip. I thank the Leader of the House and the President for their generous comments. I hope that reform will take place in that regard. Leaving all that aside, I want to touch on a couple of matters that came out of my trip. One relates to power and Collie. In the province of Saskatchewan I had the opportunity to stay with friends on their farms. Farmers in that province have entered integrated tree planting arrangements with the Saskatchewan power corporation. That province has grasped the opportunity to use the carbon credit and carbon sequestration legislation to develop plantations on all sorts of farmland and reserve lands, and to conduct integrated programs with farmers. The Department of Conservation and Land Management and the Forest Products Commission are doing that with farms in Western Australia. I do not think enough emphasis has been placed on the great benefit of these programs to power stations or that there has been enough recognition of the assistance that they can give to the development of a place such as the Collie coalfields. There is a problem, however, which the British delegation of members of Parliament that I took to Collie mentioned; that is, there is hardly any room around Collie to grow more trees. That is not quite true, but it was enlightening to take this group of British industrialists and members of Parliament to the top of the cooling towers of the new Collie power station. They asked when we had planted all the trees. I said that there was a plantation on Stene's land and there was another plantation. They said that there were trees in every direction, as far as the eye could see, right out to the horizon. I said that that was the native forest of the south west of Western Australia. However, they said that that could not be true. All the information and documentation that they had received in the United Kingdom indicated that Western Australia had been denuded of trees by the avaricious and voracious industrialists and farmers. I told them to look around and to tell me where they would land a light plane if they had to. That visit really impressed them. It goes to show that one cannot trust what one reads in the media. Some people do us a great disservice by spreading propaganda around the world about how bad we have been with our environment. Western Australia now has a bad reputation environmentally overseas, which is mostly undeserved. We should not get too carried away, but we should promote more of the good things that have been done and the potential in the south west to assist industry by improving the absorption of carbon dioxide through sequestration programs and plantations.

The other feature of my visit to Canada was the vertical integration of farming operations in that country. One farmer grew a lot of stud seed and shipped it around the world. The seed was cleaned and processed on the farm, put into containers, moved to Thunder Bay on the lakes and then moved across to Europe in about seven days. From cleaning to being in the ground in Europe took about a fortnight. We have a long way to go! There are lots of good models that need to be picked up. Unfortunately, I did not include that example in my report. I want that to be on the record because it is good to be aware of these things and to be aware of the potential and opportunities for our farmers to grasp some of the technology that is around. We grow some very good products

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in Western Australia and have some very useful pockets of land in which we can grow things out of season. We could look at diversifying some of our products for high-value niche markets.

I also visited the American state of Wisconsin, because I was concerned about the impact of extreme environmentalism and how far it had gone in Western Australia. The Wyoming mountains are the natural habitat of wolves and bears. As the settlers moved into that area and cleared much of the lower land, those animals moved further up the mountains and Wyoming became reasonably free of those pests. The mountains became a Mecca for skiers, tourists, campers and hikers - the whole works. Under extreme environmental pressure, the government and wildlife services reintroduced bears and wolves into the southern areas. While I was visiting that area, the first case was reported of wolves moving back onto the cattle ranches and killing calves. The tourist people in the town of Pinedale told me that people would not now walk in the mountains unarmed. Campers were loath to go back there because of the risk from the re-established colonies of those natural animals. That sort of thing is fine within reason. I think they are great things to see. However, we have to be a little careful about how we balance extreme environmental pressure with other industries. The world has changed. People are looking for different things out of their lives and in their recreation. Governments must keep pace with that and must not get too carried away with the emotive arguments that are put forward, particularly in the media. There is a balance to be struck. I do not think we have gone too far yet in Western Australia. However, great pressure is being placed on us all the time. It is significant that because of the build-up of the population of those predators in the Wyoming mountains, they are starting to also affect the other animals that are natural to that area, such as moose and elk. Those animals are now moving back onto the ranches, because it is safer on the ranches than on the mountains. As the farmers in Wyoming have a little more pull than do the farmers in Western Australia, the ranchers got together and extracted from the government a commitment to pay them to grow extra hay to handfeed the wild moose and elk on their ranches during winter. I think that is getting slightly absurd, to be honest. However, if we are to have extreme environmentalism taking over an economy like ours, we must consider making that public cost not just a cost to farmers. In other words, if a farmer is surrounded by national park and is feeding a thousand kangaroos on his property and the government, environmental extremists or tourists want to maintain that for the sake of the environment, perhaps they should be paying the farmers to feed the kangaroos on their behalf. Why should sectionalised parts of industry pay for this privilege for other people who never go to see it? One of the interesting surveys I saw recently indicated that the majority of tourists never move more than 50 metres from their vehicles. They admire the environment but they do not want to go into it; they want to see it from a distance. They certainly do not want to wander through paddocks looking for kangaroos. We manage a herd of between 25 and 30 kangaroos on our farm, but when they get into the thousands they have to be moved on by some means or other. There are damage permits for people looking after the local environment, but it is important that these more balanced programs are continued and that we do not give way totally to extremists, otherwise we will end up killing the goose that lays the golden egg of rural export production.

Another matter I looked at was health care in small rural towns. Most country populations suffer from the same difficulties that small rural towns in Western Australia face: a shortage of doctors and a high cost for medical treatment. My experience with Boyup Brook having the first - or one of the first - multipurpose health services in the country convinced me that it was probably the most sensible way to go for small country towns. I am sorry that this government has turned its back on MPS policy and appears to be going for more centralised programs. For instance, Boyup Brook health service had to get its services from Bunbury for bulk purchasing and other reasons. There could be a minor saving there, but the tragedy is that if the hospital has to purchase in bulk, where does that leave the local chemists and storekeepers who have in the past supplied the necessities for keeping the local health service going?

These were the main points I wanted to put on the record from that report. I have touched on the general education problem for the country. I noted earlier in my speech on the Address-in-Reply that the emphasis from overseas people was that we should, for goodness sake, keep the land-based component of our agricultural colleges because if we let that go, we will never buy it back. It is very valuable for giving hands-on experience to students so that they can turn out virtually work-ready for occupations in the agricultural and primary industries.

I saw a couple of glaring gaps when I looked through my last farewell speech. I have always thought that the party secretary's job was the worst job in the world. The party secretary must sit through every party meeting and minute, within reason, all the discussions. I have a very enlightened attitude to minutes; that is, their main attribute is to ensure that the party secretary never ends up in court for recording things that are best left unsaid. In my very early days in the Liberal Party one leader said to me that he had not been at a meeting but he had read my minutes and had not the faintest idea about what went on. I told him that the minutes contained the bare bones of what had been said and if in future he wanted to know what happened in a meeting perhaps he should attend the next one. Funnily enough, I continued on as secretary uninterrupted. I thought that having to sit

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through all those meetings was purgatory itself, but I enjoyed them and I thank my colleagues for their forbearance. However, I discovered that there was a worse job and I had not acknowledged it; that is, the job of party Whip. I have mentioned Fred McKenzie of the Labor Party. I have also mentioned Margaret McAleer of the Liberal Party, who was an outstanding Whip and a person of great wisdom and counsel to members. She was followed by Hon Muriel Patterson, who served as a Whip with great distinction. She became a great friend to all of us in this place and made friends right across the Parliament. Her house in Albany is still open to members of all parties. She was, of course, followed by the indomitable Hon Bruce Donaldson. I realise that in my last speech I had omitted to thank them for their support to me over the years. Bruce, particularly in my dotage, has looked after me extremely well and accommodated my needs when they have arisen, as he has also done for all our other members with great equanimity and calm. We have always been very happy to fill in for him on the rare occasion he was absent on a short jaunt overseas and so on. However, select committees never sat while the house was sitting, so it was never a problem. Like Hon Bruce Donaldson, I am a great believer in the need for backbenchers to travel.

Several members interjected.

Hon Kim Chance: They're really picking on you, aren't they?

Hon BILL STRETCH: If ever a man had a reputation!

I was very encouraged by the President's comments this morning in which he virtually exhorted members to spread out wherever they can and enlarge their knowledge of the parliamentary process. I was a bit concerned to think that he wanted to bring them all in here! It is equally or more important in a small and isolated state such as Western Australia that our backbenchers get out and see things too. It is not enough to use the Internet to try to see it all that way. There are always photographs of the good bits but we do not always see the bad bits. Members really need to walk around and talk to people on the ground to get the benefit of it all.

In closing, I pay tribute to my family and thank them for their support. I pay tribute to Moya and Bronwyn, my electorate officers in Boyup Brook, and the various people there who have relieved them over the years. They have been absolute stalwarts. We will have a wonderful farewell dinner on Saturday night that the people of Boyup Brook are kindly putting on for us. I will be saying more about them then. However, as has been mentioned, the electorate staff are very special people; they are the eyes and ears of the electorate. If we as members do not listen to them as our mentors and advisers on things local, we will head for a reasonably short political career. They are very special people who always give their services beyond the call of duty, as do all the people I have been associated with in my time in Parliament. I will not repeat what I have said about all the wonderful people in this building. It has been an absolute pleasure and honour to work with them and I thank them all for their service. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the chamber for their forbearance and friendship and the tremendous contribution that they have made to this state. We never agree on everything but neither do we disagree on everything. As I said, the adversarial nature of the house is a good thing for democracy but it must not give way to extremes of feeling. When that occurs, the real needs of the people in the wider parts of the state whom we represent are ignored. We must keep our feelings in this chamber in perspective so that we can hear carefully the messages that come to us from our electorates. It is a great responsibility and a great honour to be the representative of those people. It is a burden that I have gladly accepted and gladly borne. I do not believe that any member ever moves away from politics entirely. As I have said before, politics with a small "p" starts in the kindergarten playground. A group of children playing, at a very early age, develops differences of opinion and different interests, and that is politics. The tragedy, if anything, is that politics has become a capital "P" profession, when the fact is it should be a small "p" profession of representing the interests of groups of people and doing one's best to resolve differences through a debating process. It has been a tremendous learning experience, and one that I will treasure forever. To various Presiding Officers down the years, thank you for your guidance and protection. When I first came to this place I went to see the then President, Hon Clive Griffiths, and told him I did not know much about standing orders. He said I should not let that worry me. I should say what I wanted to say, and if I got it wrong, he would correct me. He said I should not feel that I was on my own, because most of the other members in the house do not know the standing orders either, and if they did, they did their best to ignore them!

It has been a great learning experience and a great privilege to work with members of this house, and I thank them for that. I also thank the electors who put me here for 22 years.

[Applause.]

HON KEVIN LEAHY (Mining and Pastoral) [2.41 pm]: Like other members here today, I thank the staff of this house and the whole Parliament for their help in both my stints, here and in the other place. I also thank the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition for their kind words, about not only me but also other members. We appreciate those words, and we appreciate their help over the time we have been here. My time

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here has been particularly short; I have been here for only eight or nine months. The first time I saw Hon Kim Chance the words I had said a number of years ago came back to haunt me. I cannot remember them, but he seems to have them indelibly printed in his memory. The words were along the lines of this chamber being a quiet retirement house for old gentlemen. I never thought that at this stage of my career I would be sitting here for nine months of my life. I have learned in that nine months to appreciate this chamber to a far greater extent than I did before. It would be good training for most members of the other place to have a six-month probationary period in this house to tone them down a little bit on occasions. In that respect my time here has been a salutary lesson. Unfortunately, I cannot carry this lesson through because I will not be back when Parliament is recalled.

I will remain, as Hon Bill Stretch said, involved in politics. I do not think we will get that out of our blood; once we have been in politics, we are always in politics. I also agree with Hon Bill Stretch that small "p" politics is the way. Out in the community, there is cross-party support on most issues, and when the issue is really a big one for the community, some consensus is always reached. Unfortunately, with the adversarial situation in Parliament, we do not always get that. However, it is great to see that in this house, and also in the other place, there is usually a resolution. Unfortunately the media only want to publish about the times we are at each other's throats, and they do not want to publish about the times all members sit down together and work something out for the betterment of Western Australia. It is a shame that that is not sensational news, and unfortunately it does not get printed. I commend all members who are leaving on their service to Parliament and to the people of Western Australia.

People outside this house do not always recognise what families miss out on when members take on political careers. Just as much time is spent in the city as in the country, representing electorates and attending meetings, and that is not to mention the amount of time spent travelling. I place on record that my partner, Claire Dwyer, and my children are the ones who have missed out over the years with all the travel that is involved. They have always stood behind me, so I thank them and the other people involved with helping me get elected to Parliament. It is always a very difficult task to win a marginal seat and to hold onto it, as I did in the other place. I was about to say that it is not so difficult in the upper house, but obtaining preselection is pretty difficult, as Hon Alan Cadby can attest. There are different tasks. A lower house member gets greater recognition, and can establish a following that can lead to him being re-elected a number of times. We have seen a number of members who had difficulty securing preselection for a lower house seat win those seats as Independents. It is a far more difficult task in the upper house; we rarely see people who have been elected as members of a political party go on and retain their seats as Independents. I congratulate all those who have served in this place while I have been here. I thank them all very much for the friendships formed. It is always great to have a cup of tea and a chat with people afterwards and to hear views that are quite contrary to one's own - it is enlightening and broadens one's knowledge. I thank everybody here for that.

The first of two subjects I wish to quickly touch on is the disappointment about today's advice on funding for racing in Western Australia. Country racing in Western Australia has missed out horribly. It is one issue I would take up with Hon Barry House, who was not very complimentary about the government's decision to tie \$20 million to infrastructure in country areas. If that had not been done, country racing would have got nothing. I have seen the proposals, and I hope that they are modified, but it seems that the places farthest away from the metropolitan area, where it is most expensive to race horses - the north west - get an increase of 16 per cent, while city racing gets 26 per cent on top of what it has now. City racing already has the lion's share, and now it will get more. As I said at the meeting, if the board wanted to kill off racing in the bush, it should have done it humanely - it should tell people in the bush that they cannot race rather than starve them to death, which is what is happening. Any member who represents country areas will realise that racing is the social fabric of a lot of towns. Often the town is not big enough to support football, cricket or other sports, but once a year the townspeople can get together for a race meeting. The race meeting is very important to small places like Gascoyne Junction, Mt Magnet, Meekatharra, Wyndham and many other places; I could go on. The race meeting is the focal point; an occasion on which people can help each other out.

Today's announcement is difficult and disappointing, and I hope the board will reconsider the plan and create a structure that provides some balance between country and city. As recently as 1998, the prize money for regional racing was about as much as for midweek racing at about \$7 000. With the recent injection of funds, the prize money for midweek racing will go to \$20 000 for a Wednesday meeting, while for provincial meetings it will stay at about \$8 000. Nobody will take horses to the country, and no jockeys will go there. Country racing will shrivel up and die on the vine.

I hope that the situation is reassessed and that proper recognition is given to country racing, which provides many of the people who are now leading figures in the racing industry. The leading city trainer for the past six years started riding in the bush and training in Broome. The leading jockey, Paul Harvey, did most of his

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apprenticeship in the bush. His father drove him everywhere to get rides, and he is now one of the most accomplished jockeys in Australia. The leading apprentice at the moment, Willy Pike, travelled around the north west for two years learning the ropes without riding a horse in a race. The three highest achieving people in the industry at the moment all got their chances in the bush. I am not saying they would not have succeeded if they had stayed in the city, but they certainly would not have got where they are as quickly as they did. There is opportunity in the country, as there is in all areas of life, and I hope that the situation is reassessed and a far better balance is created.

The last subject I wish to touch on is the banana industry in Carnarvon, which was dying. A cooperative and central packing shed has been set up, and I have had the privilege of chairing that group, the Sweeter Banana Co-op. Our products, which used to be considered the worst of the lot - when Queensland product was top of the shelf - now receive a far better price than bananas from anywhere else in Australia. Carnarvon has the highest returns of any banana region in Australia. For the first time in a long while, bananas are being planted again in Carnarvon. The number of plantations decreased from 172 to 68, but is now on the rise again, with people buying plantations and replanting bananas. It is all through the efforts of a group of people who were around for a long time before I became involved, obviously. I have been in that industry for only the past four or five years. However, a group of people got together and said, "What are we doing? We are throwing away the smaller bananas - the medium-size bananas. They don't fetch a price in Perth. They don't match the Queensland ones. We must have bigger and bigger bananas." Somebody said, "Why don't we put them in bags, call them lunch box bananas, and target them at the kids." That is now the premium banana; it is the one that everyone wants. We cannot supply enough of them. We cannot supply Coles and Woolies. We can just get by with Foodland. As I said, the demand is growing and growing, and people are planting Carnarvon bananas again. It is a great feeling. I went into the industry five years ago saying, "There is no future for bananas. We are growing bananas in the desert. How the bloody hell can you do that and make a quid?" It has been only through the efforts of those people - there are only about half a dozen of them - 10 or 12 years ago, who gritted their teeth and said that they would make sure there was a future, that the industry has been turned around. It is an easier time for us now. As I said, I came in when they had the recognition. Now we only have to make the shed itself a viable concern. That has been reasonably difficult for many reasons. However, we are getting there now. We have created employment for 31 people. That number is down a little now, because we are making it viable. However, it is an instance of value adding and of allowing people to finish work at five or six o'clock on a plantation, rather than sitting in the shed packing bananas until 11 or 12 o'clock, and they do a far better job looking after their patches of bananas. That is an achievement.

I will not mention the people, because, as members know, as soon as we try to thank and recognise the people in a particular industry, we leave out the most important ones. All I will say is congratulations to all those people who turned the industry around. They have made sure that the industry in Carnarvon will continue. It is an industry for which Carnarvon has always been recognised. It is not just the horticultural side of it that is important. It is an important industry in the history of the town and on the tourism side. People think of Carnarvon as the banana capital, and they go there and want to see a banana plantation and the like. That small group that was involved in the banana cooperative early on should be congratulated for their efforts.

It has been a wonderful time for me in Parliament, both in the other house and in this place. As everybody knows, it is a great honour to represent the people of Western Australia, and particularly the people in our own electorates. They are great people. Many of those who came from the city, as I did, went to the regions, looking at it as being an opportunity to get promotion within their given fields. If people remain there for any time, they do not want to leave. That is what happened to me. I went to Kalgoorlie in 1974. When people ask me when I am going back to Perth, I say that I am home now. That is what happens. Unfortunately, there are not now the incentives for people to go to the bush. There are fly in, fly out arrangements, and the size of farms is declining. All that means that more and more people are going to the south west corner of the state. Unfortunately, in the south west corner, we are all relying on the same water sources, and we just bring the problems with us. Until we solve those problems and make sure that the biggest geographical state in Australia is decentralised, the problems that we have now will continue. We need to take the people to the water, not try to bring the water down from the north to the people.

With those words of advice, I thank everyone for their patience with me as a new chum to this place and a person who was blooded in the other house. I thank everyone for their friendship, and I look forward to keeping in contact with everyone over the years. Thank you very much.

Members: Hear, hear!

HON PADDY EMBRY (South West) [2.53 pm]: It seems only a short time ago that I made my first speech in Parliament. I suppose when we consider Hon Norman Moore and his time in Parliament, it really was only a

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short time ago. I probably covered most of what I wanted to say over the past couple of weeks. I asked whether it was customary to have valedictory speeches, and I did not seem to get an answer. People were not sure. I understand why they were not sure. Therefore, I have nibbled away at it a little over the past month.

However, I would like to say that first impressions in life are very important. The grounds at Parliament House are so well cared for that it is a pleasure to arrive here for work. It is a privilege to work here. As people drive in, they see the gardens. I want to make particular mention of the gardening staff who, when we arrive, seem to be blowing the leaves to make the place look tidy. It is great that they do it, and I admire how conscientiously they do it; but what a mind-blowing exercise it is when they know that there will be even more leaves there the next morning! It is a tremendous credit to them. It is very important that this building and its surrounds look as good as they do. Probably one of the parts that I admire most is that wonderful gum tree at the northern end of the main steps of Parliament House. In particular, when it is lit at night, it is a very special tree. I do not think that the new minister, Mark McGowan, would have quite the same feelings about that tree as do I at the moment. However, I am sure that in time that will pass.

Hon Kim Chance: It did wait for him to get out of the car.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Stupid tree!

Hon PADDY EMBRY: The thoughtful tree. It is always dangerous to name people, so I will not name any staff. I guess the person who I was told was God was Mr Laurie Marquet, so I will certainly name God as a person who has been particularly helpful. Of course, all his staff have been helpful. All the staff in every department in this place - in the whole building - are, I believe, very friendly, correct, helpful and 100 per cent neutral. That is a remarkable achievement, and I thank them all for that. My shape probably shows that my favourite department operates in the bowels of this building, and it brings its wares up to the first level.

I had considerable trepidation at becoming a member of Parliament. It was not a lifelong ambition. In fact, my involvement with One Nation really happened by accident. However, for me, what a wonderful accident it was. I have really enjoyed my time in this place. It has been a privilege to be here. At risk, I will mention some members who have been particularly helpful to me. I must add that as I was elected under the One Nation banner, part of my trepidation was as a result of the stories that were perpetrated by the media and some of the leading politicians in this country, which were, I would say, 100 per cent untruthful. A person would not be human if he did not have some misgivings about the sort of reception he would receive. I had no background in politics. The very first member I met was Hon George Cash. That was a great start, and I thank you, George, for your initial help and the help that has always been available. I guess because I sit on the conservative side - there is no doubt I am a conservative - I can say that every member on the conservative side in this place has been helpful. However, there is no doubt that Hon George Cash and Hon Norman Moore have been extremely helpful. Perhaps Hon Peter Foss has not always been helpful, which is interesting. I guess because we have been friends for more than 30 years, I have been reluctant to go to Peter because I value the friendship more, and I would not put that at risk. In later times, Hon Barbara Scott has been a good friend. The first time I heard Hon Derrick Tomlinson give a speech he produced the book *Mein Kampf*. I am pleased that he has lifted his game and has improved also. Hon Adele Farina has been on both committees on which I have served. Indeed, she was the chairman of one of them. She has been very free with her advice and a good friend; she is a hardworking member. I know the distances she covers in the south west, because I too cover great distances. We always seem to be bumping into each other. When I entered Parliament, I did not know whether the Leader of the House, Hon Kim Chance, would be helpful to me, but he has been. I pay a compliment to Hon Kim Chance, which applies to almost every member. We can be almost as aggressive as we want to be in the chamber. On one occasion I got under the skin of the Leader of the House and he was white with fury when the bells rang for a suspension. He was almost out of the chamber when I asked him whether I could have the benefit of his advice. He wheeled around and there was a split-second pause before he smiled at me and said, "Of course, come and have a cup of coffee". I believe in the great fellowship we experience here. With very few exceptions, we seem to be able to share our differences of opinion, which we enjoy, but also remain civilised people outside the chamber.

I thank Hansard staff for making my often fairly bumbling speeches into something that generally does not look too bad in the written word. I single out Hansard because I have found it to be absolutely fantastic. Sometimes we are at risk of forgetting the council staff who work in the Hay Street committee rooms because most of the time they are located away from Parliament House. They have been most understanding in helping me, as one with no political background, and have steered me on the right course.

Another trepidation I had upon entering Parliament was the need to make speeches. As a child I suffered very badly from stuttering. Occasionally it rears its head but I have been lucky that it has not been too bad in the chamber. I had some trepidation about working at a place in which I was required to give speeches. I felt like

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resigning when Hon George Cash told me that my inaugural speech needed to be at least 20 minutes long. The reception given to new members of Parliament from people in the gallery and the swearing-in ceremony also added to my trepidation. I am certainly not a coward. Trepidation is different from cowardice, but one did wonder.

I thank all members for putting up with me. I guess they did not have a lot of choice, but they have put up with me. I thank my electorate staff, whom I do not need to name. They know who they are. I thank my family. They were probably pleased that I was elected because it meant I was further away from them! I thank the people of the south west who voted for me. I thank in particular the people who worked very hard for three years to get the representative whom they wanted elected to this place.

I was interested to hear members speak about preferences. Hon Barry House touched on it earlier. I think there is a problem with the preference system in the upper house. Even the small portion of the public that has an interest in politics has absolutely no idea where the preferences flow. They may know where the second preferences flow, but they do not have much of an idea about the rest of the preferences. The development of a more obvious system would be a big improvement. Printing the preferences in fine print over four or five pages in Saturday's paper three weeks before the election does not get the message across. We have seen - this is no slur on the Greens (WA) - that the National Party, which some would call the farmers' party, helped elect a member of the Greens with its second preferences. Some of the Greens lifestyle policies are not compatible with what most farmers want. I am not being personal; I am talking about the result. The National Party supporters have not elected a member who suits the party's policies. It is not their fault or the fault of the Greens; it is the fault of the system - it is really the National Party's fault; I will be blunt about it.

I will miss some aspects of working here but I look forward to leaving others, although not many. Leaving Parliament is probably similar to having a blood transfusion, although it is not a total transfusion for those members who have been here for only a short time. Hon Norman Moore will probably need five or six transfusions when his time comes. It has been a wonderful privilege to work here. It is a privilege that one does not understand until one gets involved and realises the responsibilities and trust that people put in members. It is daunting to learn of people's expectations. They approach members with problems that are almost impossible to solve, but they trust that members will solve them. Sometimes members can and sometimes they cannot. It is quite humbling.

Some very debatable legislation has been passed. Hopefully that legislation can be amended as time goes on. I hope that some of the legislative changes will be amended. I refer to not only electoral changes, although that is one of them, but also social changes. I hope that in future both houses keep abreast of how the tide changes. I am not a total right-to-lifer but I am more of a right-to-lifer than many people. I urge members in the future to consider the rights of the unborn child. I will leave it at that.

I thank members very much for putting up with me. I have enjoyed my time here and I will come back from time to time, not to haunt members but to enjoy their company.

[Applause.]

HON DEE MARGETTS (Agricultural) [3.10 pm]: This the second time I have made a valedictory speech in Parliament, but the other one was in another place. Hon Norman Moore said today that he thought that perhaps I was better suited to that other place.

Hon Norman Moore: I meant no disrespect.

Hon DEE MARGETTS: I did not take any disrespect - not entirely - but, as I have said before, I did not see this as a consolation prize. I actually wanted to be in state Parliament, because I thought it was very important to participate, to contribute and to bring to the state legislature, if I could, some sense of where we all fit into the national and international sphere. I have really appreciated that opportunity and I have had a ball working in the Agricultural Region of Western Australia.

I want to talk a bit about what I think are the really special aspects of agriculture in WA. That is epitomised by what a former office manager of mine called rural women with grunt. I can think of a range of women in agriculture WA who have made a difference in their areas. If I name them it does not suggest that they are Greens (WA) members or Greens supporters, or even that they voted for me; I do not know, in many cases. What I can say is that in many cases these people are leading the charge of looking towards the future and where employment, sustainability, social, economic and environmental aspects can be merged. For instance, Jackie Healy, was in the mid-west working with the Mid West Development Commission, but at the same time she worked with the community promoting employment and regional development at a community level. She is now working in the Solomon Islands because she was looking for another challenge, but she is a fantastic example. I now refer to Jane Wardlaw from the Western Wise Network. She had extraordinary vision in the

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way she went about looking at value adding, employment creation and new ideas, instead of just focusing on how to produce more and more primary produce which ends up trending down to a lower and lower price on the international stage. How do we help create communities and employment? How do each of those new innovative ideas get shared around? That is absolutely exciting.

The next person I mention is Pauline Roberts. Many people would know the Roberts family from Dandaragan. I met Pauline before I took my seat, because the local land care district committee was having some difficulty with issues of drainage through land. I offered advice and eventually met up with Pauline and her husband Andrew. She is an extraordinary person in terms of the courage, knowledge, commitment and passion that she brings to her neck of the woods. Like many of the people I have mentioned, she gets involved with many aspects of the community, not only the community's own self-interest projects but also looking at the future of the area. If more sustainable agriculture is radical, what about unsustainable agriculture? There are extraordinary people working in and around the Agricultural Region who should be the future of the region. I remember going to one meeting dealing with the issue of water and listening to Pauline, who was extraordinarily well informed on many of the issues to do with water allocation and impact. She came out of the meeting feeling devastated, saying that the people at the meeting did not listen. Both Andrew and I told her that she did not understand: the people at the meeting would not necessarily change their minds the first time, but because she was providing the information, acting with integrity and enabling them to see a different viewpoint, over time they would listen and start changing. I believe that is happening.

There are other people who are supporting the region, such as John Longman, who I will talk about a little later. Anne Snow from Lancelin is an extraordinarily courageous woman who is not only working on issues of environmental integrity but also community impacts on the defence training area and peace and disarmament. Wendy Newman works with the Wheatbelt Development Commission, she organises field days and is a leader within that community. She looks at networking, the linking of people and doing things a little differently. I will also mention extraordinary people like Kylie Whitehead from Quairading, who ran a series of workshops on what she called putting eggs in other baskets. She thinks outside the square and does not do things in the same way all the time. She thinks about innovative ways of creating employment, not only for blokes aged 25 to 45, which unfortunately many of the development proposals tend to be aimed at, but also for young men and women and those otherwise marginalised in regional and agricultural communities.

I also refer to Mary Nenke. Many people in agriculture WA know Mary Nenke. She is probably not widely known outside agriculture WA, but she is an extraordinary powerhouse of energy and commitment, and not just for her own business; she also works with Australian Women in Agriculture and the networks to find new and innovative ways for people to provide employment into the future and to support their local communities. Julie Newman is perhaps one of the most courageous people on this list. She stands up for the interests of the majority of farmers in Western Australia in relation to genetically modified crops. She provides passion, science, consistency, energy and extraordinary commitment. The rural community of Western Australia owes people like Julie Newman enormous amounts in terms of the impact that she has had so far and will have in the future. She is becoming the voice of probably the majority of people in the community. Many people would still look at Julie and say she is radical and out there, and she is probably not popular within her community, but she is enormously courageous. For a sheila to speak out in agriculture WA takes a lot, and especially on an issue like this. A lot of people just stay silent, which means that governments sometimes get the impression that silence is consent. I take my hat off to her again and again. Nellie Seema in Esperance has been a consistent voice in her community on so many issues. These are just some of the people, but they have helped to give me energy over the past four years.

I mentioned John Longman. I was asked to get involved with people around the Gillingarra area and the west Koojan-Gillingarra LCDC, and I also became involved with people involved in the west midlands hydrogeology project. I could not help but come across John Longman who, in his older years, is full of commonsense, down to earth and an extraordinary person who just keeps finding ways to advance land care and agricultural viability, but also protecting the ground water, the surface water and the sustainability of the region, as well as respecting the remnant bushland in the area. There are amazing people within the region. I wish those people were the majority and I wish those views were the majority, but they are not yet. However, those people are doing a fantastic job - they are absolutely vital.

Some statements have been made about national preferences leading up to the election. I have met many people from the National Party over time, especially over the past four years, and in many areas of national policy and actions on a whole range of issues there are similarities between the Greens' policies and the National Party policies - not necessary on social issues, but in terms of some regional sustainability issues. A courageous front of new views within the National Party is moving further in that direction. That does not mean to say that we will agree with the National Party on all issues. I am extremely pleased that Greens' preferences helped to elect

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Grant Woodhams in the Greenough region. At the same time, Greens' preferences helped to elect Shane Hill, a Labor Party member, in Geraldton. Greens' preferences in the Agricultural Region played a positive role in the last election.

When I left the Senate I made a statement that I felt I had failed in many of my prime goals. I feel a lot more sanguine at the end of my four years in the Legislative Council. As I have already said, I absolutely loved the regional work. I am particularly thrilled that some issues that were considered by many people to be totally lost and unwinnable have been tackled, including the successful fight against the expansion of the Lancelin defence training area. Although other members of the chamber were involved in that action in some ways, it was the most extraordinary thing for me to be asked to attend community meetings with a range of people and for them to ask how they could become more of an activist. These were landholders, fishermen, shopkeepers, real estate sales people - all sorts of people across the community. They asked other people and me how they could become more active. It was an extraordinary thing in a conservative community for the Greens to be asked to play that role. Politically, that was extremely gratifying.

Another issue that I will not say we have won but it is one in which we have perhaps played a very important role is the debate and dialogue on agricultural deep drainage. For that I must give a lot of thanks to Senator-elect Rachel Siewert, who worked on that project with me. Agricultural deep drainage is an issue on which people have stood in the corners for far too long. Through the process of dialogue and workshops, we have helped to get people out of those corners to communicate with each other. We helped set up a scoping process through which government departments, proponents, environmentalists and other interested people in the community can start to work. That will hopefully help to get some backbone into whatever legislation is in place. It will also work to find out what advice can be given to people on the future economic, social and community viability of some of those issues, and will provide a watch list of what people need to take into consideration.

I am hugely gratified that in conjunction with my colleagues, especially Hon Jim Scott and my terrific colleague Hon Chrissy Sharp, we have helped to provide the backbone to enable the moratorium on genetically modified organisms. I refer to the enormous work that both Chrissy Sharp and my former colleague, Jim Scott, put into a committee on this matter. Jim Scott read everything that was ever published on the Internet about genetically modified crops. The enormous depth of their commitment supported what I believe was the majority view of the community on that issue. The small parties provided in that instance, as in many other cases, the service to the community that, politically, nobody else seemed able to provide. That is enormously gratifying. The war has not yet been won, because the global life science companies will not stop yet. However, it was an enormous achievement. I have immense admiration for Hon Chrissy Sharp and Hon Jim Scott. It has been an absolutely amazing achievement so far in what many people thought was a totally unwinnable debate. They have put an enormous amount of work on the table.

The other unwinnable debate was, of course, the referendum on retail trading hours. Even the small businesses thought it was unwinnable as they were up against the corporate supermarkets. I have my amazing staff, the small business groups, individuals in small business and people in the community to thank for helping pull the argument together. People may have had political views on that issue. Sometimes we did not know what those views were. That was probably one of the most satisfying exercises in empowering the community and providing it with further and more accurate information. I do not think it is the end of the debate at all. It was the start of a new era of community awareness of the real public interest. That is certainly one area to which I will jump when I leave this place.

I hope that in the time I have been here I have brought some grounded sense to the WA water debate. That debate is not just about how to get more water or the thinning of trees. The thinning of trees in water catchments will not add to the water supply; instead, it will reduce the level of rainfall and impact on the quality of our water. I hope that I have added to the debate on the commonsense and economic imperatives of water conservation efficiency, and also on the equity of proper pricing and the necessity for us to look after the quality of our water.

The environment of the agricultural areas of Western Australia is often spoken about. However, when people talk about the agricultural environment, they often relate it to farm productivity. When people talk about environmental funding, it is not always environmental funding that they are seeking. Unfortunately, some of the people who have created the most environmental damage in agricultural areas over the years and decades are the ones who have continually asked for the most legal concessions, the most money and the most resources, and have demanded the most in terms of exemptions. However, many other wonderful people are looking in other directions. We should better reward the people who are doing the right thing in agriculture in Western Australia. We should also place greater focus on providing management support to the people who provide ecological services on behalf of us all.

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The biodiversity of the agricultural region of Western Australian is probably less sexy than the biodiversity of the tall forests, but it is enormous. I have learnt a lot, especially from my scientist partner, about the megadiversity of the region that I have grown to love over the past four years as a member of this place, and before that as a senator. That area has extraordinary diversity in its soil types and plant and animal varieties, rather than in its climate. However, that diversity is not generally appreciated. Often when people talk about the environment they think of the tall forests. However, we have extraordinary megadiversity within the banksia woodlands and proteaceous heath, which still needs a lot of work to be done and which will be put under extreme stress from further climate change.

I do not want to go too much further before thanking the people whom I should really thank. Robin and I shared an office. We had a shared office manager to start with, Rebecca. She was an enormous strength. She has returned to the eastern states. Ann Hunter was my first research officer. She helped me to get over my jitters in changing to a new legislature. Of my current staff, Bridget has done amazing work, not just as a research officer but also in terms of my passion, some would say my obsession, of integrating the issue of economic globalisation at the state level. Bridget has been fantastic in running and driving the globalisation roundtables, which have involved many people from many sectors in Western Australia. We thought we would hold one or two globalisation roundtables, but we are still having them and people want them to continue after more than three years. I thank Bridget. She had an absolutely vital role to play in the retail trading hours debate as well. There is only one Elize in the world. Elize has brought a lot of brightness to our office and has undertaken a huge amount of work with dedication. Thank you so much for everything you have done. Our office, as I said, is a shared office. We have also had amazing volunteers work for us. Anne Marie has worked for us for a long time and with such dedication to keep our resources together. I thank Judy very much for everything she has done in her own time. I also thank Marie for the work she has done in her own time; she is a fantastic lady who has given of herself. I thank everybody who has helped in volunteering. When we share an office, we inevitably share each other's staff from time to time. I therefore thank Scott and Nuala very much for their patience and assistance over time.

I thank my parliamentary colleagues. Many people have acknowledged Lynn's talent. Her contribution to the chamber will be missed. There will continue to be opportunities in the future for Lynn to make a contribution and I thank her for working for us over the time that she has.

Jim Scott gave an extraordinary commitment to detail and put in an enormous effort to learning and finding out everything he could about the issues he was totally passionate about. There is no doubt about the passion and absolute dedication that Jim brought to this chamber.

I have had enormous admiration for Giz for a long time. I do not know anybody who is quite as organised as she is in the circumstances of this chamber. The work that Giz has done and the admiration that other members of the chamber have shown for her committee work on legislation has been immense. We are very happy that she is still a member of this place carrying the flag for us.

Chrissy is amazing and I have been gobstruck by the absolute sheer work that she has done and the pressure that she has come through, especially as Chair of the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs. I do not know of anyone else in this chamber who could have gone through those pressures, particularly in the debate on gene modification, and brought on the committee and the community in the way she did. In so many other issues, including the forest debate, I take my hat off to her and thank her very much for everything she has done.

I thank Robin, of course. Robin does not sleep much at all; that would be hardly surprising to members if they could see the volume of work he does. Among other things, we call him the green ferret, and for very good reason. I thank him very much -

Several members interjected.

Hon DEE MARGETTS: No, nothing like that; no ferret jokes.

I thank Robin very much for sharing his office, his time and his good humour with us. I very much thank all the parliamentary house staff, the chamber staff, the committee staff, the bar staff and the dining room staff. I especially thank the Clerks very much for everything they have done, and I thank the Hansard and Parliamentary Services staff; we could not do without them.

I want to finish by thanking my partner, Nick, for his good humour, his scientific groundness at all times and his great support now and in the future. Before I finish I want to mention, just for something different, that I intend to do a PhD in national competition policy. I am sure that at some stage, hopefully, something will be published in the future and that my words - not necessarily me - will come back to haunt members. I thank Kim for his

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kind words. I thank Norman for his kind words. I am glad that, after all my probably boring speeches, I managed to win Norman over; I am just sad that it happened on the last day! Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [3.34 pm]: Life for me has been a fairly incredible journey. It has been a series of really rather remarkable events. Being in this chamber has been simply one of the many events. It has been a very interesting time for me. I looked in the dictionary for the word “valedictory”, as I wanted to know exactly what I was supposed to do. It turns out that the word “valedictory” comes from the Latin word “valedicere”, which basically means “bid well to say”. Therefore, it is to bid farewell. I will not talk too much about what I may or may not have achieved; others over time will be able to judge that. I will talk a bit about those things that I feel I have not achieved in entirety and that I would urge the government to keep looking at.

I do wish to talk about one achievement though of which this house would not be aware. A number of years ago a colleague of mine and I, while trying to track down a crocodile, stumbled across a rock art formation, which latterly we named as Kariyarra Island. The island contained in our estimate some 200 000 carvings. On one of my first road trips into the electorate with my electorate secretary, Scott Ludlam, I determined to take Scott to the site and show him the rock art. When we got there we found that, unfortunately, somebody had pegged the whole area for a limestone mine. For approximately three years Scott, on my behalf, and I have been in the Warden’s Court fighting to save and protect that rock art. It is not in the annals of the media or anywhere else, but after three and a half years we achieved it. The mining corporation itself determined that we were right and it was wrong, and it voluntarily withdrew its tenements over that area without any legal pressure. Currently the rock art, which I consider to be some of the most amazing rock art in existence in Western Australia, is now free from the activities of the mining corporation. The rock art at the site contains carvings of crocodiles, dugongs, initiation rituals and women’s sites, but also interestingly enough it is one of the few places where I have seen carvings of hoofprints and shoes. There are actually early descriptions of shoes by indigenous people. The indigenous people had obviously gone out from the site, seen somebody’s footprints, come back and carved them on the rock. It therefore reflects a real interaction and coming together of societies as Dampier moved up the coast. That was, therefore, one of my personal achievements.

There are many people I wish to thank but I will move on to those issues in which I feel I have not had complete success. The first one is most probably the issue of the Derby herbicide workers. We have been able to progress the debate on those workers. At last we have received some recognition from the government that there was a problem and that a compensation package is needed for them. I feel that my parting from this place will leave those workers without a champion and that the government’s package for them is less than satisfactory. I wish the Derby herbicide workers well and I sincerely encourage the government to continue to be heavily involved in the welfare of those 90-odd souls who inadvertently handled chemicals in an inappropriate manner and which has led to a range of medical problems.

Another issue about which I am concerned and which still has not come to fruition is Barrow Island. It is the most significant biodiverse area in Western Australia. The original WAPET agreement on the island was to be finite. The moment WAPET had finished on the island, the island was to be rehabilitated and returned to the pristine state that existed prior to the oil company going there. Unfortunately, this government has seen fit to allow the establishment of a gas processing plant and attendant facilities on the island. I am still hopeful that the corporations involved in the Gorgon project, with the advent of cheaper piping and better accounting procedures, will see fit to bring that plant onto the mainland, as BHP Billiton has done. BHP Billiton had the option to place its gas processing plant on the islands or on the Burrup Peninsula but chose, in the end, to go to Onslow, because it was economically viable and a good social outcome. I urge Gorgon to reconsider.

As I mentioned in my adjournment speech last night, I have also become concerned once more about uranium mining in Western Australia. Not only was I research officer for Hon Giz Watson, but also I was the coordinator of the Anti-Nuclear Alliance of Western Australia, which dealt with the whole issue of Pangea coming to Australia. By the time ANAWA had finished that campaign, we had seen 300 tenements for uranium mines in this state dwindle to three, and we felt we had done an effective job. The government was elected in 2001 on a platform of bringing in legislation to oppose uranium mining. It was re-elected in 2005 on that same platform. What is of concern, and what will probably take up a great deal of my time into the future, is the fact that, as of yesterday, we have established that 17 of those leases that were covered before I took my seat in 2001 have been reallocated to the uranium industry. It looks as though, in the future, I will have my work cut out for me in that regard.

I will take some time to thank the President; Hon Norman Moore, the Leader of the Opposition; and Hon Kim Chance, the Leader of the House. I wish that we had been able to hold more business management meetings

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Hon Kim Chance; Hon Norman Moore; Hon Peter Foss; President; Hon Dr Chrissy Sharp; Deputy President;
Hon Bill Stretch; Hon Kevin Leahy; ; Hon Paddy Embry; Hon Dee Margetts; Hon Robin Chapple

because the place might have run a tad more smoothly had we done so. I extend my thanks to the Leader of the House for his involvement with the Greens in the parliamentary process, but I urge him and the Leader of the Opposition to facilitate more business management meetings, which would help the progress of legislation through this chamber. I also thank those Greens candidates for the various lower house seats in the Mining and Pastoral Region, who assisted my campaign in the last election. They were Kelly Howlett in Central Kimberley-Pilbara; the inimitable Pat Lowe in Kimberley; Peter Burger in Kalgoorlie; Scott Ludlam, who also sometimes doubles as my research officer, in Murchison-Eyre; and Peter Shaw in North West Coastal.

I will go on to thank some other people at a personal level, but, first, I tried to think of some words that I can say about this place. Knowing that there is a member in this house who likes clichés, I thought that I might proffer some. This is not the end, it is a new beginning. I will cherish these days. We came into this place as strangers and we leave as friends. I look back and say that these years were the best of my life. We will all go our separate ways. This is a new chapter in my life. To me, however, this is just another milestone in what has to date been an exceptionally exciting life. I have been very privileged to do everything from working on a pirate radio station to spending some time with Jimi Hendrix and doing all kinds of odd things in my life.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 1963.]

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.00 pm