



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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(HANSARD)

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 13 August 1998

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mr Strickland) took the Chair at 10.00 am, and read prayers.

CANNABIS USE

Statement by Minister for Family and Children's Services

MRS PARKER (Ballajura - Minister for Family and Children's Services) [10.04 am]: Cannabis is the most widely used illicit drug in Western Australia and other States. It causes physical harm - containing more tar than tobacco - cognitive damage including impairment to short-term memory, concentration, coordination, logical thinking and motivation. It isolates users socially and 9 to 10 per cent of cannabis users will become dependent on the drug. It has been linked to mental illness such as psychosis and schizophrenia, and is generally the precursor for those who move to use other drugs. National surveys indicate that some 16 per cent of Western Australians over the age of 14 years will have used cannabis in the past 12 months.

A fresh and concerted effort is required to prevent and reduce cannabis use in Western Australia. Therefore, the Government will be trialling a new cannabis law enforcement approach which includes a new public education campaign on the dangers of cannabis use and a formal cautioning system for first-time offenders. This will be linked to a mandatory educational intervention session.

This Government is maintaining its strong opposition to drug abuse. The formal cautioning and education system is designed to net more cannabis users and deal with them more effectively. Only one opportunity for a caution will be available and subsequent offences will be dealt with by the courts. This system gives first-time adult users caught with up to 50 grams of cannabis one chance of receiving a caution, conditional upon their attending an educational intervention session designed to motivate behavioural change. Failure to attend a session within two weeks will result in a summons being issued. The education will be provided by the community drug service teams, which were established as part of the overall strategy against drug abuse. The court system will be aware of a caution having been issued for the earlier offence and it can be taken into account when sentencing in the event of a subsequent offence. The formal cautioning system is being introduced on a 12-month trial basis in two police districts, Mirrabooka and Bunbury, beginning on 1 October this year with a review after six months.

There has not previously been, either in Western Australia or nationally, a concerted and continuing education and prevention strategy to counteract the myth that cannabis is not harmful. As a national first, the public education campaign aims to prevent young people from using cannabis, encourage dependent users to quit and supports parents in dealing with the issue with their children. Cannabis is a harmful, sinister drug. The Government will continue its opposition to drug abuse. This new effort against cannabis is a part of that fight.

STANDING ORDER No 164

Motion

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [10.07 am]: I move -

That Standing Order 164 be amended as follows -

- (a) by deleting from the section headed IN THE HOUSE, the time limits for the second reading of OTHER BILLS, and substituting -

"SECOND READING - Mover	60 minutes
Leader of Government or one member deputed by him	60 minutes
Leader of Opposition or one member deputed by him	60 minutes
Any other member	*20 minutes
Mover in reply	45 minutes

* If the member speaking so requests during or immediately upon the expiry of a speech, the time for the speech shall be extended by a further 10 minutes. This does not preclude a further extension under the proviso to this Standing Order;" and

- (b) by deleting from the section headed IN COMMITTEE, the time limits for OTHER BILLS, and substituting -

"All Members - unlimited periods not exceeding 5 minutes each."

MR RIPPER (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.08 am]: The Opposition supports this motion. It moves into the standing orders what has previously been in the sessional orders. It reflects a recommendation of the Select Committee on Procedure. The Opposition hopes we will soon see further government responses to the recommendations of the Select Committee on Procedure and the recommendations of the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee.

Question put and passed.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

Motion

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [10.09 am]: I move -

That the following Standing Orders be adopted -

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

" **415A.** At the commencement of every Parliament, a Joint Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council on the Anti-Corruption Commission be appointed. The Committee's power to act shall continue until the Assembly is next dissolved or expires by effluxion of time, notwithstanding any prorogation which may occur prior to dissolution or expiry of the Assembly.

415B. The functions of the Committee shall be -

- (a) to monitor and review the performance of the functions of the Anti-Corruption Commission established under the Anti-Corruption Commission Act 1988;
- (b) to consider and report to Parliament on issues affecting the prevention and detection of "corrupt conduct", "criminal conduct", "criminal involvement" and "serious improper conduct" as defined in section 3 of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act 1988. Conduct of any of these kinds is referred to in this resolution as "official corruption";
- (c) to monitor the effectiveness or otherwise of official corruption prevention programs;
- (d) to examine such annual and other reports as the Joint Standing Committee thinks fit of the Anti-Corruption Commission and all public sector offices, agencies and authorities for any matter which appears in, or arises out of, any such report and is relevant to the terms of reference of the Joint Standing Committee;
- (e) in connection with the activities of the Anti-Corruption Commission and the official corruption prevention programs of all public sector offices, agencies and authorities, to consider and report to Parliament on means by which duplication of effort may be avoided and mutually beneficial co-operation between the Anti-Corruption Commission and those agencies and authorities may be encouraged;
- (f) to assess the framework for public sector accountability from time to time in order to make recommendations to Parliament for the improvement of that framework for the purpose of reducing the likelihood of official corruption; and
- (g) to report to Parliament as to whether any changes should be made to relevant legislation.

415C. The Joint Standing Committee shall not -

- (a) investigate a matter relating to particular information received by the Anti-Corruption Commission or particular conduct or involvement considered by the Anti-Corruption Commission;
- (b) reconsider a decision made or action taken by the Anti-Corruption Commission in the performance of its functions in relation to particular information received or particular conduct or involvement considered by the Anti-Corruption Commission; or

- (c) have access to detailed operational information or become involved in operational matters.

415D. The Joint Standing Committee consist of 8 members, of whom -

- (a) 4 shall be members of the Legislative Assembly; and
 (b) 4 shall be members of the Legislative Council.

415E. No Minister of the Crown or Parliamentary Secretary to a Minister of the Crown be eligible to be a member of the Joint Standing Committee.

415F. A quorum for a meeting of the Joint Standing Committee be 5 members, each House of Parliament being represented by at least one member.

415G. The Joint Standing Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to adjourn from time to time and from place to place, and, except as hereinafter provided, to sit on any day and at any time and to report from time to time.

415H. The Joint Standing Committee not sit while either House of Parliament is actually sitting unless leave is granted by that House.

415I. A report of the Joint Standing Committee be presented to each House of Parliament by a member of the Joint Standing Committee nominated by it for that purpose.

415J. In respect of matters not provided for in this resolution, the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly relating to Select Committees be followed as far as they can be applied."

The Joint Standing Committee on Official Corruption, as the committee was previously known, has been operating for a couple of years by way of a sessional order. This motion is a mechanism to establish the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission as a permanent process under standing orders in the same way as the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee is established. This reflects the importance of the role of the Anti-Corruption Commission standing committee.

MR RIPPER (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.10 am]: I note the comment of the Leader of the House that this motion will establish a Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission permanently in the standing orders of this House. I reiterate my comments about the need for the Government to respond to the recommendation of the Select Committee on Procedure for the establishment of a portfolio-based standing committee system in this House. So far the Government has not responded to that recommendation, but it continues to establish select committees on an ad hoc basis.

Mr Barnett: We have re-established them; do you want us to wind them up?

Mr RIPPER: No, I do not want them to be wound up because that would be a waste of resources, as most are halfway through their inquiries. However, every time a select committee is established, people and financial resources are used which could be devoted to a rational system of standing committees. This House has reached the stage at which it needs those standing committees, and they should be established at the conclusion of this round of select committees before another set is established.

Mr Barnett: Perhaps we might establish them to come into effect from the beginning of the next calendar year.

Mr RIPPER: I appreciate that commitment by the Leader of the House.

Mr Barnett: It is a suggestion.

Mr RIPPER: I appreciate that suggestion and look forward to its becoming a commitment, and to that commitment being honoured by the Government's giving notice of motion to implement those recommendations of the committee.

Question put and passed.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON CRIME PREVENTION

Reappointment

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [10.11 am]: I move -

- (1) That this House reappoints the select committee to inquire into and report on programs, practices and community action which have proven effective in -

- (a) reducing or preventing crime and antisocial behaviour at the community level;
 - (b) addressing community and social factors which contribute to crime and antisocial behaviour in the community; and
 - (c) addressing community and antisocial behaviour after it has occurred.
- (2) That the committee also report on methods by which such information may best be accessed by the community.
 - (3) That the committee have the power to send for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to move from place to place, to report from time to time, and to confer with any committee of the Legislative Assembly as it thinks appropriate.
 - (4) That the committee finally report on 30 November 1998.

I note that the committee may seek an extension of time for presentation of its final report, which currently is scheduled for 30 November this year.

Question put and passed.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE HUMAN REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT 1991

Reappointment

On motion by Mr Barnett (Leader of the House), resolved -

- (1) That this House reappoints the select committee to inquire into and report on the adequacy of the Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991 (the Act) in fulfilling its stated objectives, in controlling the practice of, the procedures used in, and the ethics governing, human reproductive technology, and in regulating the use of reproductive technology in artificially assisted human conception and in research, and in particular, the committee is to consider -
 - (a) the matters specified for review under section 61 of the Act, namely -
 - (i) the effectiveness of the operations of the Western Australian Reproductive Technology Council (the Council) and the committees of the council; and
 - (ii) the need for the continuation of the functions conferred on the council and on the Commissioner of Health respectively by the Act;
 - (b) rights of access to procedures, with particular regard to impacts of the Commonwealth Sexual Discrimination Act 1984;
 - (c) research and experimentation on gametes, eggs in the process of fertilisation and embryos;
 - (d) pre-implantation diagnosis and genetic testing of embryos;
 - (e) rights to stored gametes and embryos, including -
 - (i) rights upon the separation or divorce of donors, the death of one or both donors or the physical or mental incapacity of one or both donors; and
 - (ii) rights of third parties such as subsequent spouses, both heterosexual and of the same sex, and the rights of other relatives;
 - (f) the storage of gametes, eggs in the process of fertilisation and embryos (including the duration of storage and procedures for extension of storage periods);
 - (g) the appropriateness and effectiveness of the council's obligation to compile a code of practice, the Commissioner of Health's power to issue directions, and the power to make regulations, and the scope and effect of existing directions and regulations under the Act;
 - (h) the effectiveness of powers of enforcement and disciplinary provisions under the Act, and the adequacy of offences and penalties;
 - (i) the impact on the Act of relevant Commonwealth and State legislation, and aspects of legislation of other jurisdictions which could be incorporated into the Act;

- (j) the effectiveness of the current licensing regime, including fee structure, reporting requirements, powers of inspection and powers of obtaining information;
 - (k) management of information registers including -
 - (i) confidentiality of information;
 - (ii) use of data research;
 - (iii) use of data for purposes of national data collection;
 - (l) access to information about genetic parentage;
 - (m) consider the current status and incidence of surrogacy arrangements in Western Australia with particular reference to human reproductive technology; and
 - (n) what legislation, if any, is required.
- (2) That the committee have power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to move from place to place and to report from time to time.
 - (3) That the committee finally report on 17 December 1998.

SELECT COMMITTEE INTO THE MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT 1981

Reappointment

On motion by Mr Barnett (Leader of the House), resolved -

- (1) That this House reappoints the select committee to inquire into and report upon -
 - (a) the adequacy of the provisions of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1981, and associated state and federal legislation (and their interrelationships), in achieving the objective of the detection, investigation, prosecution and sentencing of illicit drug dealers or traffickers in Western Australia and in particular, without derogating from the above, the committee is to enquire into and report upon the efficacy of enacting or amending legislation so as to assist in attaining this objective; and
 - (b) the provision of health, educational and community support services to deal with the consumption of illicit drugs, particularly heroin.
- (2) That the committee have power to send for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to move from place to place and to report from time to time.
- (3) That the committee finally report on 20 August 1998.

FORMER CHILD MIGRANTS

Suspension of Sessional Orders

On motion by Mr Barnett (Leader of the House), resolved with an absolute majority -

That so much of the sessional orders be suspended as would enable consideration forthwith of private members' business motion No 1 in relation to former child migrants.

Motion

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park - Leader of the Opposition) [10.15 am]: I seek leave to move the motion in an amended form.

Leave granted.

Dr GALLOP: I move -

That this House apologise to the former child migrants on behalf of all Western Australians for the past policies that led to their forced migration and the subsequent maltreatment so many experienced, and express deep regret at the hurt and distress that this caused.

In moving this apology, I begin by referring to some of the submissions made to the British House of Commons committee in its investigation into the welfare of former British child migrants. One former child migrant wrote that

people invariably want to know whether they are better off. That was the main reason given for deporting the children. The migrant regards it as a selfish, loaded, insulting and unanswerable question.

Another former child migrant, Mr Norman Johnston, told the committee that he deemed himself to be one of the successful people but he would forgo the total success he has had for another 10 minutes with his mother. Yet another child migrant said that their crime for the most part was that they were the children of broken relationships. Their average age was eight years and nine months. In this one act they were stripped of their parents and their brothers and sisters. They were stripped of their grandparents and extended families. They were stripped of nationality, culture and birthright. The child migrant said also many were stripped of their family name and even their birth date. They were stripped of their personhood, human rights and their dignity.

That is the core of what this apology motion seeks to do; that is, to recognise that the effect of the forced migration of these children and the subsequent maltreatment many of them experienced did not simply end when they became adults. Stripping children of their human rights and their dignity does not simply fade away over the years to a bad or hazy memory. Rather, these children have had to carry the heavy burden of their past for their entire lives. For some children the experiences of mental, physical and sexual abuse have been so painful that the memories are with them every day. Yet for others, their pain lies in their role as parents, seeing their own children grow up but being unable to give them their own family history or identity.

The United Kingdom's child migration schemes have a long history originating in the seventeenth century, and were designed to migrate children to various parts of the empire. From the earliest days of the Swan River colony, it appears that some form of child migration was occurring. However, from around 1860 Canada was the main destination for the child migrants. After the Second World War Australia became the primary recipient of children, until the schemes ceased in 1967. It is estimated that during that time, between 7 000 and 10 000 children were sent to Australia. The children came from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Malta. There were even a few from continental Europe and one from Russia.

The typical child migrant was "an institutional kid" in the care of one of the major charities. Often they were labelled "orphans" even though their parents were still alive and some were supposed to be in only temporary care. It was assumed that such children were somehow fallen or disturbed, and these views legitimised the denial of their rights.

The migration schemes took many forms and involved different individuals and organisations, including church bodies, charities, and Governments as well as philanthropists. For some of these groups the primary motivation was economic - providing actual or potential cheap labour in Australia, and alleviating the financial burden of care in Britain - whereas others were more well-intentioned. However, the simple fact remains: It was a policy founded on a mistaken understanding of human identity.

Members will no doubt recall that on 28 May last year this House offered an apology to Aboriginal people for the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families - the Stolen Generation. In that debate I said that all political parties should acknowledge families as the cornerstone of our society. We have laws and policies specifically intended to strengthen the family unit and keep families together as much as possible. No doubt the laws and policies of Britain have the same underlying purpose. However, as was recognised in this Parliament's apology to the Stolen Generation, the very authorities that should have protected the children and their families deliberately tore them apart. The same can be said for the child migrants. In fact, these two histories have a chilling overlap: On the one hand, we were removing indigenous children from their families and hoping to destroy their Aboriginality; on the other hand, British children were forcibly being sent to Australia as the country evidently needed more "white stock".

In both cases, the children and their families did not count. Indeed, clear evidence exists that children and parents were lied to by the receiving and sending agencies. Adding to the trauma of the forced migration and of being taken away from their families was the appalling maltreatment that many of these children suffered once they were in Western Australia. The House of Commons report and other investigations make it clear that maltreatment ranged from harsh living conditions and neglect to mental, physical and sexual abuse of criminal proportions. In his book, *Orphans of the Empire* - and I suggest to all members of the House that if they want to read a very comprehensive view of this whole issue from a historical point of view and from the point of view of all the issues we have raised from time to time in this Parliament, this book is essential reading - Alan Gill concludes that many of the children who came to Australia faced a life of loneliness, backbreaking hardship and systematic cruelty.

We must recognise for today's motion the involvement and responsibility of state government authorities in the scheme. It appears that from 1912, the State Government shifted from having an active interest in child migration to actual promotion of the scheme. This was given impetus with the UK Empire Settlement Act 1922 which gave authority for the British Government to cooperate with dominion governments and private organisations to operate such schemes. The UK Children Act 1948 provided for immigration subject to certain conditions. Over the years,

legislation which sanctioned and endorsed these schemes passed through our Australian Parliament. The federal Minister's powers in relation to the child migrants, or at least most of those powers, were delegated to the States in which case the state Minister or departmental head responsible for child welfare became their legal guardian.

We need to put ourselves in the shoes of these children who were sent away. We need to imagine what we would feel like if we were sent away as a young child - the majority were aged between five and 13 years, but some were even younger - to the other side of the world away from our families. What would it feel like to arrive in a strange country and be separated from our siblings, to be lied to and told that we were an orphan, to be placed in large and often isolated and brutal institutions and living conditions? What would it feel like to be treated virtually as cheap slave labour, to be subject to the most appalling and criminal, physical and sexual abuse; to suffer all of this and to have no-one to turn to?

This is a terrible history for any person to bear and our apology today is in recognition of the collective burden the child migrants had to experience. Of course, it is also true that some children did not suffer abuse or maltreatment. Some have positive memories of this time. They do not carry the trauma of their childhood experiences into the adult world. However, it is clear that a large number of children do not fall within this category and indeed many of the sending and receiving agencies now recognise this themselves. We must also avoid falling into the trap of treating prosperity and success in adulthood as an excuse or justification for neglect, maltreatment or abuse of any child. For many of the migrant children, their personal histories and loss of self-esteem have had serious repercussions. For example, difficulties in forming relationships, serious psychiatric disorders, alcoholism, and suicide attempts have all resulted. We should not be at all surprised at these consequences. For these reasons I am very pleased that this House is able to come together today to offer this apology to the migrant children. At the very least, it recognises our acknowledgment of the pain these people suffered and continue to suffer, and I feel it brings us to a deeper understanding of the histories of a very special group of Western Australians.

I conclude with the words of one of the child migrants, a Mr Reg Simmons, a resident of the Salvation Army Box Hill Boys Home in Victoria from 1928 to 1932. I believe it is important to read the words of the people themselves to get some feeling for how they have tried to come to grips with their own personal life histories. I will read Mr Simmons' poem, *Suffer the Little Children*, which is on the last pages of Mr Alan Gill's book *Orphans of the Empire*.

SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN

They took us from our loved ones
 And placed us in a home,
 Where all was strange to what we knew,
 What had we ever done?
 We raised our voice in loud protest
 And asked the reason why,
 We be taken from our families
 And told us not to cry.
 They stole our childhood from us
 And gave us in return,
 A life of fear and abuse
 With a lesson still to learn.
 Our boots and socks they took away
 And made us walk bare foot
 Upon the ground so rough and cold,
 Then said t'was for our good.
 Our food was scarce we hungered oft
 And raised our voice for more,
 When all our plates were empty
 While they had food galore.
 And if we spoke at table
 The strap was then brought out,
 For silence was the order
 And the rules we dare not flout.
 We cowered from their tyranny
 That led us to despair,
 Of ever being free again
 T'was all too much to bear.
 We raised a plea to God above
 To ease the pains we felt,
 As we cried aloud in agony
 Each time they used the belt.
 Yet the voice was not of Him we heard
 Who dwelt above the clouds,
 But of those who stood and bullied us
 With their voice so strong and loud.
 At school we faced the teacher

With chalk and cane in hand,
 Who seldom failed to use it
 Should we misunderstand.
 How oft we wept in silence
 When our voices went unheard,
 Had God above forgotten us
 Or gone back on his word?
 To suffer the little children
 And draw them to His side,
 To wipe the tears and comfort them
 That, in Him they may abide.
 The pain at last is over
 And the scars are all that's left
 In the memory of our nightmare
 When we as children wept.
 I'm sure that God has written down
 The names of those who bled us,
 To bring before the final judge
 Who will toll the bell of justice.
 We've shed the ties that bound us, as
 They lie now in the dust,
 Of those who once oppressed us
 And filled us with disgust.
 But now that home is empty
 And all the boys [and girls] have left
 Still we'll remember those darker days
 Their names we'll not forget.

MR BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington - Parliamentary Secretary) [10.27 am]: Having served on the Select Committee into Child Migration two or three years ago, I am aware of what has taken place in Australia and other countries throughout the world with young people being sent from England, Ireland and Malta. It was a time of tragedy and it was wrong. It is easy to look back in retrospect and say what should and should not have happened, but we must realise that at that stage, England and other places in the world were suffering hard economic times and a lot of families had discarded their children unfortunately and put them into orphanages and homes. Those homes and orphanages also had problems with trying to get sufficient funds to make ends meet. Somebody therefore came up with a grand plan to help populate countries such as Australia, Canada and South Africa, and these young people were sent there. It is wrong that there was a lot of deception in those days. People were told that their families were dead or they did not have mothers or fathers. All those horrible things which were completely untrue. Terrible lies were told at the time and were perpetuated over many years. Often young siblings who came to places such as Perth or Fremantle were split up; two or three brothers were sent in different directions and often did not catch up with each other for a long time, if ever. Again, it is wrong to treat children in that way and it should never be tolerated.

One of the select committee's recommendations was to continue with another inquiry. I have given that recommendation much thought but I do not believe that it is the right way to go. We need action to make sure that people who feel aggrieved or who have problems are looked after in a proper and fitting manner. Certainly, in the past 10 years or so things have turned around. Initially, when many people tried to find their records they were denied access to them, which is totally disgraceful and wrong. People should be admonished for doing such a dastardly deed by not allowing them to find their records.

One reason I served on the committee was to try to work out ways to reunite families who have been split. In many cases, it will probably be too late to find some people's parents. However, they might have other brothers and sisters throughout the world whom they could find. One point that became apparent is that many records are either inappropriate or non-existent, and that makes matters very difficult. The organisations involved are forthcoming and they try to provide information to people who are seeking information about their backgrounds and families. Records were either not kept very well or, in some cases, changed or falsified at the time, so that makes the situation totally impossible.

Matters have been put in place. The Child Migrants Trust has been working towards reuniting families and trying to find information for people. Also, there are funds for some people to go back to England and Ireland. I know a couple of people who went back but unfortunately were unable to find any trace of their relatives, which was very sad for them.

In the case of the men and women who went through those institutions, we found people who spoke out quite strongly about how badly treated they were - for example, sexually or physically assaulted. It was hard to serve on the committee because the issues were very emotional and one could not help but feel sorry for those people. As much as I felt sorry for them, many things have happened in the past, and unfortunately those people must try to live with the things that they experienced over the years. Counselling and help have been put in place. It does not matter how

much help we give them, they will always have those experiences in their backgrounds or in their minds and they will never be able to forget them. Rape is probably one of the most despicable things that can happen to a young boy or a young girl. I am sure that females were treated just as badly when they were sent to some of the homes during the school holidays. It was a bad time.

I must say that things have not changed; such things did not happen only to child migrants. Unfortunately, last year we had active paedophiles in my electorate and there have been serious consequences for some young people who were affected by them. In fact a couple of weeks ago in my electorate there was an overdose victim. I believe that that fellow was affected by his experience with paedophiles in the early 1980s. The feeling was that he went off the rails because of that bad experience. Fortunately, the alleged perpetrator has been charged - until he is convicted one cannot say that he did those things - so perhaps some justice will come out of it. As I have said, I do not think that we need to hold more inquiries.

People came to the select committee to say that they had great experiences growing up in those institutions, so it was not all on the downside. I can never accept in my mind that the sexual abuse of children was as widespread as is played up all the time. Some say that their times at Tardun, Fairbridge and Clontarf were happy and that the experiences that they can remember are held in a good light. Therefore, if somebody were sexually assaulted, knowledge of it would have spread like wildfire throughout those institutions and all those young ones would have had a record of it. I quote from the submission from a person - I will not name that person - who said -

I spent from the 23rd of September 1947 to the 16th of October 1952 at St Mary's. Those 5 years and 1 month that I spent at the school -

That is Tardun, by the way -

will always be on my mind as fond memories. I loved all the Christian Bros. I think the brothers have received rough justice from money hungry old boys, as they are prepared to see the brothers destroyed.

It was very interesting to see people making contacts. When we went on our tour of those places, we met some of the ex-students. Also, most if not all such institutions have reunions. I should have thought that if the experiences were so bad, one would not want to go near those places again.

Mr Marlborough: All that the member is telling me is about sexual abuse that could take place in any family. He should go down to Bunbury Regional Prison, as I did two weeks ago. He will see that it is full of sex offenders - only one child in the family was sexually assaulted; the rest did not know that it was going on. They thought that they were living in a loving household, but they were not. That is all that the member is telling me. It is nonsense to use as an example the fact that people have some good memories and other people have bad memories and that therefore we should not take much notice of it.

Mr BRADSHAW: I will use another example which gives the other side of it.

Mr Marlborough: No, but the member is saying that there should be no further inquiry through a committee process because it is not worth it.

Mr BRADSHAW: No. I will explain why there should not be a further inquiry. I quote another person who went to Clontarf. Again, I do not have permission to use his name, so I will not do so. His letter states -

Clontarf for me became a place of hell. I was a young small 9 year old boy who had been brought up in the country with a lot of freedom and now I was locked up in Clontarf with no love or compassion, treated like hell by men of no understanding. To us it was a tragedy - no one to tuck us in at nights, just pulled and bullied like little prisoners.

There were other incidents of sexual assault and all the nasty things that certainly went on at those institutions. We should not have an inquiry because if those people go to the police, prosecutions can proceed. Some people have already been prosecuted. It is important for people to lay charges. One problem, of course, is that many of the Christian Brothers and people in those institutions have died or disappeared off the face of the earth. Because it happened so long ago, it is very difficult, obviously, to continue in that line.

Mr Marlborough: I am glad that the Jews do not have the same view. On the basis of that, there would not be any inquiry into what happened in the Second World War.

Mr BRADSHAW: Similarly with the Jews, of course, people are dying and things are passing on.

An article appeared in *The Western Mail* when the former member for Rockingham, Mike Barnett, was Speaker. Apparently, there had been some articles in *The Western Mail* criticising Fairbridge. Unfortunately, I cannot give the House the date of the article which I shall quote, but it quotes Mike Barnett. It states -

"The Fairbridge Farm I knew was nothing like portrayed in those articles," he wrote.

"I was not given the courtesy of a phone conversation with your reporter. Can that be because he didn't want the facts to mess up a good story?"

"Your articles have degraded Fairbridge and all the good work done at the farm without a great deal of attention to the real facts."

Mike Barnett, on his own admission to *The Western Mail*, said that to him Fairbridge was a great place. I could quote further.

Ms MacTiernan: Are you supporting the apology or are you putting a caveat on it? Your speech does not seem to be consistent.

Mr BRADSHAW: I certainly support the apology.

Ms MacTiernan: But you want to keep your fingers crossed.

Mr BRADSHAW: No. I do feel sorry for those people. I listened during the committee hearings to the people who had experienced that horror and now have to relive that experience. Many of the people who had a bad experience in those institutions have managed to pull themselves together and put that in the past. They have settled down and had their own families and are working hard to provide for their families and be worthwhile members of the community. However, the problem is that every time we expose this matter through the media and call for an inquiry, it brings back those bad memories and stirs up those people who have tried to put their past behind them and get on with their lives. That is sad.

It is very important that we give those people as much help as possible by providing counselling, by trying to find out where they come from, whether they have any brothers or sisters, and whether their mothers and fathers are still alive, and by helping to reunite them with their families. With regard to those people who feel aggrieved because they were sexually assaulted or abused, we should give them a push in the right direction by telling them where they can receive help, and by assisting them to have the perpetrators brought to justice, because that is very important.

I support this apology. It is probably the case that many apologies need to be given in our society, because many wrongdoings have been perpetrated in our community over the years. Wars are not something on which we can look back proudly, but they are a fact of life, and people go to war and come back and get on with their lives. The sooner that these people try to settle down, with our help, the better off they will be. I am pleased to support this apology motion.

MR PENDAL (South Perth) [10.42 am]: I support the motion, and as a Catholic layman I will address myself essentially to the only part of the motion that I believe is relevant; namely, the reference to the maltreatment that occurred in Western Australia. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Wellington made very good speeches. One of the things that I admire about the Leader of the Opposition is that he is a good historian. However, he has let himself down a bit today, because I cannot see how it is possible for this House to apologise for the policies of the British Government which allegedly led to this so-called forced migration. I do not want to get bogged down on this point, because I have said already that I will address myself essentially to that part of the Leader of the Opposition's motion that touches on the subsequent maltreatment. However, I am not terribly interested in criticising the policies of the then British Government, the policies of the then Australian Government which encouraged that migration, or the policies of the then Western Australian Government whose task it was to resettle those children.

It is tempting in cases such as this to rewrite history. It is tempting also in cases such as this, and in cases such as the administration of Aboriginal policies earlier this century, to place our contemporary values on what was regarded at the time as appropriate behaviour. I am referring here to everything other than physical or sexual abuse. Many of these children, the mean average age of which is now 58, were not orphans. An orphan in the orthodox sense of that word is a person who has no living mother or father. Most of these children had a living mother and father, but most of them were illegitimate or the product of a broken family, and for those or other reasons were then handed over willingly, not forcibly, by their mothers, and in some cases by their fathers, to the British authorities. That caused the number of children in the orphanages to swell, and that created a ready reservoir of children for transport to Australia, which made no apology for the fact that it needed fresh, young Anglo-Saxon blood for the nation's farms.

If we want to talk about the dumping of product, this is perhaps the most ignoble example, at least in the way we reflect on it now. However, the policies at that time foresaw the good that would result from taking children out of an environment which offered them little hope and little prospect. A huge number of those children, as the member for Murray-Wellington has said, benefited from their migration to Australia. Although some of those children suffered physical abuse, that term has been rewritten with the rewriting of history. I put physical abuse where a child

is beaten in the same category as the criminal molestation of a child. However, many people today define physical abuse as putting 10, 12 and 14-year-old kids onto a building site at Bindoon and making them mix concrete. I do not regard that in today's context as physical abuse. Some of the children who did that hard physical work experienced the greatest level of satisfaction they had ever experienced, because they were doing important work and leaving behind physical monuments that otherwise would never have been built.

I am simply asking members not to fall into the trap of rewriting history and redefining terminology so that it becomes dishonest. That is why I said that the real depth of the motion, and the reason that the Leader of the Opposition should be congratulated, lies in its reference to maltreatment; and I assume that the Leader of the Opposition means by that word any physical beating, criminal molestation or sexual abuse. When we put the matter in that context, those who suffered that sexual abuse were few in number, and so were the perpetrators. However, I hasten to add that that is no excuse.

I happen to be the product of the Christian Brothers system, and for that matter also the Marist Brothers system. Some of my detractors may say, "That shows!" However, I tell members that I am very proud of that association. I guess I am as proud of that because of the nature of it, as some people are angry and disillusioned because of their experience, and I can understand that as well. I attended a Marist Brothers college in Bunbury and a Christian Brothers school in East Victoria Park, which later got a bit flash and was called a college. I also spent many periods at Clontarf in my early teenage years because we happened to live close by, and Clontarf had the only large swimming pool in captivity. That was a great enticement to young people in the area. As well, many of the so-called real orphans from Clontarf and elsewhere stayed in my home; they were billeted out at holidays to get a more homelike environment.

I must say that I never saw in all of those associations at those three establishments any sign of the criminal behaviour that is now alleged. That is not to say that I am closing my mind to the fact that it did happen. We now know beyond dispute that it did. My own best estimates are that anything up to 15 of those lay brothers, over 30 years, were what we could regard as perverted individuals. I feel sad and angry for the victims, but I also feel sad and angry for the probably upwards of 300 good, decent brothers whose lives were practically, vocationally and spiritually dedicated to the wellbeing of young people. I have seen not only the disastrous effects of this controversy on the young people involved, but also the adverse effects, the hurt and the disillusionment on the part of many of those 300 or so Christian Brothers who served a state faithfully and well and who cannot escape that anger and are treated and regarded in the same way as those 15 or so if not evil, certainly sick, men.

I make it clear that I support the apology that is implicit in the motion of Leader of the Opposition. I know there may be another occasion when we will talk about an inquiry, and I will express my views about that at that time. Although I am in two minds about whether it will achieve much, I would support an inquiry. In many cases we are talking about occurrences of over 25 years ago, and some of over 30 or even 40 years ago.

Members might recall that some years ago the Director of Public Prosecutions declined to prosecute because of the reasons he stated professionally at the time. I find it interesting that a number of people acting on a human rights level have disputed his correctness in that procedure. I am one of the few who has remained consistent in that. The same Director of Public Prosecutions only recently made a decision to withdraw the charges of abortion against the two Rivervale doctors. It was assumed by a few people in the media that I would condemn the withdrawal of those charges. I said, and it was correctly reported, that I was disappointed, but that I respected the probity of that decision by Mr McKechnie. He discharges the professional obligation Parliament gave him seven or eight years ago when we passed that Statute. If it was good enough to accept the word of the Director of Public Prosecutions three or four years ago, that it was not in the public interest to prosecute some of those errant ex-brothers, by consistency we must accept that Mr McKechnie was acting correctly in not proceeding in the charges against the doctors. I think he acted correctly on both occasions, totally in accordance with the Statute that we in this Parliament gave him. People cannot have it both ways; they cannot applaud him for having withdrawn the abortion charges and then attack him for not having proceeded against the errant ex-brothers at the time.

Today's apology is a good start. I remind members that this apology will, in fact, add to that which has already been expressed in a formal sense by the Christian Brothers congregation in 1993, a very difficult thing for them to do. They had to come to the realisation that what was being alleged did happen. No pun intended, but they were no orphans to the process in our society of 20, 30 and 40 years ago of people shutting their minds to these sorts of things. The state Education Department followed the same practice, as did society, particularly in respect to allegations of homosexual conduct and unwanted homosexual advances. People did not want to know about it because they did not want to believe. I know that because I was one - let me clarify that statement by adding a few words - who did not believe that sort of thing happened.

Of course, the next stage people go through is this: When we see evidence of it, we hope like Hades it will just go away because it is too humiliating and disillusioning even to consider. Those in the Education Department would

do that as well. Someone would be caught. It was going on up until 10 years ago. I can cite a case in my electorate. People said, "Move the person on to the next school; get him out of the way; don't tell us about it; and certainly don't remind us about it; we can barely believe that sort of thing happens. We know it does, but move him on."

I think the brothers were wrong in treating the problem like that. I can understand why they did it. Nonetheless, the administrators were wrong from where I stand, because I expected greater and better conduct from a person who parades as a Christian Brother than from someone who did not express any of those values. When people expressed those values and not did not live by them, it meant they were living a lie. I am simply making the point that it was the way in which society as a whole sought to internalise those things which it found difficult to believe even occurred.

I have a real sense of hurt and anger, particularly for those students - girls and boys - who were criminally molested. I will make other views known should another debate come along on an inquiry. I support the motion not just to try to make amends to those children, now adults, who were criminally molested, but also to show some respect and support for the many hundreds of brothers who served those organisations well.

I have no difficulty in saying that I support the motion to show some respect for the likes of Brother Hugh Sharpe, Brother Millar, Brother Mohen, and Brother Grant at St Francis; Brother Tony Shannahan at Manning; Brother Kevin Paull at Aquinas; Brother Doyle at East Victoria Park; Brother Kelly at Kalgoorlie; Brother Edmonds and Brother McGee also at St Francis; and Brother O'Doherty at Trinity; Brother Kevin Ryan at Clontarf, and Brother Clery at St Francis. The list goes on, because those men served their society, their congregation and the wider society well. They are now paying a huge penalty for the criminal misbehaviour of those who should have been hunted out, removed and dismissed before now. Most of all, I support the motion out of respect for those who were criminally and sexually maltreated, because whatever hue one puts on that, it should never have occurred.

MR MINSON (Greenough) [11.02 am]: I support the motion and will vote for it. However, like a couple of speakers before me I will add a note of caution. My view of this matter is probably from a different perspective to that of the member for South Perth. I am not a Roman Catholic and I did not go through one of the institutions run by the brothers. However, I do come from a part of the world in which there is an institution run by the Christian Brothers. Most people do not know about St Mary's Christian Brothers school at Tardun. It too was one of those institutions to which young men were sent in the early 1940s.

I was at the Tardun Christian Brothers Agriculture School on Saturday for its open day. It had a wonderful selection of photographs showing how staff and students went out there by horse and cart - I think there was one old truck - and they lived in tents on a holding which was in excess of 100 000 acres between Mullewa and Morawa. Today, that huge farm juts out into the pastoral areas of the lower Murchison. They were tough times but some of the comments written by past students read something like, "and we lived like kings."

I want to add this note of caution. I do not want the Leader of the Opposition to be upset, but members should not forget that many of those children who came out here were orphans; they were not taken from their parents. They were orphaned at a time when people were dreadfully mistreated as a matter of course in England. We are talking of times not that far removed from when children, particularly orphans, were sent to work in coalmines at the ages of eight and nine years, simply because they were small enough to go down the shafts. To take those children and send them to a climate like Western Australia was seen as an enlightened and merciful action.

Mr Marlborough: They were not sent for that reason. This report shows they were sent as cheap labour.

Mr MINSON: The member for Peel should not get excited. I understand what he is saying - some were, and some were not. I am sounding a note of caution. In no way can one excuse the Governments involved in the deception, the agencies - if they were involved, because I have not read the report; I have just glanced at it - and certainly not the church hierarchy. However, when they got here there were many people acting in good faith who thought they were receiving orphans and they tried to do their best for them. It is significant that most people have not heard about CBAS Tardun because, as far as anyone knows, the dreadful things that occurred elsewhere did not occur there.

Ms Anwyl: It is named in the report.

Dr Gallop: With respect, I suggest that the member read a book by Mr Ivor Knight published by the Fremantle Arts Centre Press.

Mr MINSON: I have seen the book; I have not read it but I have spoken to Ivor Knight. I know many of the people who went to the Christian Brothers Agriculture School at Tardun. It might interest members to know that some of the orphans, and some who were the victims of deception, who were brought here, were helped by the orphanage when they left it. The orphanage made available to them thousands of acres of land, lent them machinery and expertise from the school, and helped to clear land and put in their first crop. Some of those people today are

successful and wealthy farmers. Although nobody can forgive the deceit that took place, members should not let the good get buried and remember only the evil that undoubtedly took place at the time.

Knowing many of these people as I do, I find it amazing that so many of them turned out to be so successful. However, I know some who, to this day, have bad stutters and cannot form proper relationships; some who have passed away because they were alcoholics and their bodies succumbed a long time ago; and several who could not form relationships with the opposite sex or who lived as virtual hermits. All those things are to be regretted.

In supporting this motion I sound a note of caution that what happened in those times must be considered in the context of the times. It was a terrible time in Europe. In 1940 and 1941 when Christian Brothers Tardun was established for the purpose of receiving these migrants, it would have been thought that these children would very likely become slaves of Hitler's Germany, so it was a good thing to get these people out of the country. Nevertheless, we cannot forgive those people who were involved in duplicity and in the many sordid and sometimes cruel practices that were perpetrated against them. Members should support this motion, but with a little caution.

MRS PARKER (Ballajura - Minister for Family and Children's Services) [11.10 am]: It is my pleasure to join with other members of this House to support the motion that the House apologise to former child migrants on behalf of Western Australians for the past policies that led to their forced migration and the subsequent maltreatment that many experienced. We express deep regret at the hurt and distress that this caused.

At the outset it is important for us to acknowledge the value of childhood. It is interesting and important for us to consider the history and the circumstances of this scheme. However, in the bipartisan spirit of this debate I would like to make a statement about the value and importance of a childhood. If one considers the circumstances of child migrants, although we can put it in the context of the times that it happened - and it was not that long ago, only a matter of decades - and we can talk about economic periods and a whole range of other circumstances, it is important for us to consider that we are talking about the childhood and lives of very young children and that these were difficult circumstances for them.

Added to being removed from their place of birth and their parents - whether or not they were orphans - and transported to the other side of the world, a number of the children experienced maltreatment, as has been indicated by the reports and which we acknowledge today; life was certainly very difficult for them. As we have heard, some of those people have not successfully coped with that experience, and we understand that.

Our acknowledgment today is to give respect for those people in the way they have struggled to survive that experience and gone on to establish their adult lives. We acknowledge the horror of those migration schemes in which several thousand unaccompanied children were sent from Britain to Australia. We acknowledge also the findings in the reports that many of the children were subjected to cruel abuse by those who were charged with their care.

I refer to the recommendations of the report from the House of Commons and reflect how we in Western Australia have responded to the plight of and difficulties experienced by former child migrants. It is interesting that these responses occurred over a period of some 13 years since the official responses were put in place, and over a period of Governments. Therefore, it is important to me to participate in this response in a bipartisan way.

Family and Children's Services has acknowledged and provided direct assistance to former child migrants in a number of ways. It was pleasing for me to have the opportunity, as did the Leader of the Opposition, in a social way to meet the members of the committee and then, in a more formal way, to take part in their inquiry with officers from the department to discuss the issue and to provide information to assist the committee's inquiries while it was in Western Australia a short time ago. It was important for us to see in the report an acknowledgment of the response of the appropriate department in Western Australia to the circumstances of the former child migrants. It was acknowledged that we are one jurisdiction that has in place the sort of services that are being recommended to the British Government to consider.

As I said yesterday on the record, I hope the British Government embraces the 17 recommendations of this report. My information is that the British Government has said it will treat the matter with priority and urgency. It was indicated to us that the British Government would respond around October. That is a fairly prompt response and we look forward to receiving it.

Family and Children's Services has been providing services in response to a number of recommendations to the British Government on access to information. A number of comments and points of view were expressed and reported on in the House of Commons committee report, and they were not always unanimously held. Some of the child migrants thought the issue of an apology was very important but for others it was not such an important matter. However, the matter on which there was a unanimous view was the access to information and records and the establishment of an effective and easily accessible database.

Some people make allowance for the times in which the child migration scheme operated; they apply some qualifying perspective to what occurred. I do not embrace that view because the life of a child should always be precious; it does not matter in which century or what times one lives, the life of a child should always be valued highly.

After the migration scheme finished, one of the disturbing aspects of the response of the authorities was their unwillingness to provide people with data to enable them to trace their heritage. Western Australia did not adopt that view. Since 1985 the department has delegated an officer to deal with inquiries from either the child migrants or the people representing them. That officer's responsibility is to respond to those inquiries and to ensure that the records are searched and that we provide whatever we can to support the inquiries. That has not been the case in other jurisdictions.

One of the recommendations to the British Government is that a central database be provided. I hope that recommendation is accepted and that the central database is set up in the United Kingdom. It would make our job easier in Western Australia when we received inquiries to contact a central place within a designated agency for that information. Information would be more easily transferred and it would facilitate our inquiries and those of former child migrants who live in Western Australia. Western Australia has provided access to counselling, and not in a limited or protective way. We have been open and keen, and that is absolutely important. All of those who commented in the report were unequivocal that the most important thing to do to address the wrongs of the past was to ensure that that support was in place.

Another important matter that was embraced throughout the report was the need for support services for people having trouble dealing with the trauma of their past or for those who were going through the tracing process and had difficulty dealing with the lack of information available and the frustration caused in that process. The report recommends that counselling be provided. Again, in Western Australia that counselling is provided through Family and Children's Services; or if the person has difficulty with the agency with which they are associated in the scheme, we provide independent counselling or professional support for them. Those therapeutic services have been available from Family and Children's Services for some years now.

In response to the report, I have directed the department to formally establish a close liaison with its British counterparts regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the report. We must wait until the British Government publishes its response; however, I am confident that it will establish at least that central database.

I have directed the department also to fully cooperate with the British authorities in the coordinated provision of services to deal with the trauma experienced by these people who are now adults. It is important to ensure that, whatever support is available from one side of the globe to the other, where children were sent, there is far better coordination than that which has applied to date; it has been dreadfully lacking. I have also directed the department to liaise with the Commonwealth Government, because some of the recommendations in the report were directed at that level, and with other organisations involved in the support and family tracing programs - for example, the Catholic Church and the Child Migrant Trust - to ensure cooperation and coordination of services.

The things that happened when the children came out to these institutions raise again the need for us to examine continually the way we care for our children, whether they are living at home with one or both parents - the great majority do - or whether they are in care either for a short period or have been relinquished permanently. It is important that we continually look at how we provide protection to the children of this State.

As Minister for Family and Children's Services I am willing and keen to support this motion today. I am also committed to ensuring that the services and supports that have been in place for a number of years in Western Australia are enhanced by coordination and cooperation with the anticipated response from other authorities. I also make a commitment to ensure that the Government and the department in this State in 1998 and beyond continue to value highly the childhood phase of development and that we examine and improve the protection of our children so their childhood is a time that they cherish.

I support this motion. I deeply regret what happened and acknowledge the hurt and distress that so many of those child migrants felt because of abuse. The pain of many others was caused by their being torn away from their roots and places of birth and never knowing their mothers and fathers, and the vacuum that has been left in their lives. Many have gone on to become fine and successful citizens of Western Australia. Our parents are an important part of our lives and ignorance of our history and heritage leaves a great gap. We will continue to support child migrants. I trust that this apology motion brings to them some sense of courage and that it provides strength in knowing that other people acknowledge the burden, sorrow and loss that they have experienced.

MS ANWYL (Kalgoorlie) [11.24 am]: I support the motion. I have listened with interest to the contributions. I am very pleased to be part of a bipartisan effort to make this apology. I was also pleased to look at my own notes while listening to the Minister for Family and Children's Services. There are critics in the community about making

an apology. My notes include the following phrase in support of it: "As a sign of respect and an acknowledgment of matters in the past". I note that the Minister used those words.

Mrs Parker: Do we agree on something?

Ms ANWYL: We do, which is unusual.

It is very important that there be a bipartisan effort to acknowledge the experiences of child migrants. Before I explore that topic I wish to make a considerable concession to those people who have been left out of this process. It is ironic that we are dealing with this issue because of the results of the House of Commons report. We are focusing on British child migrants, but there was also a large number of Maltese child migrants. The fact that we are doing that also ignores to some extent the plight of those many Western Australian orphans and wards of the State who were resident in the very institutions to which most speakers have referred this morning. That very important concession must be made at the outset. I do not see that it in any way derogates from the value of an apology to those migrant children. However, it is important that we note that there were many other residents of those institutions. I will return to that issue later in the Address-in-Reply debate.

I said it was ironic that the recent release of the House of Commons report appears to have been the catalyst for this process. Many efforts have been made in this State prior to that. The Select Committee into Child Migration - known as the Barnett select committee into child migration - interim report was presented in November 1996. The House of Commons committee met with over 200 child migrants, albeit in a short space of time. The Barnett inquiry was a much more thorough investigation of the issues. I commend the member for Murray-Wellington as a member of that select committee because clearly it attempted to undertake an historical analysis of the reasons for the scheme and the children participating in it. It is very telling that within the body of the select committee report members were not able to come to a finite conclusion about the number of children brought to Western Australia under a variety of schemes. It is important to note that there is not some central record to which one can refer to establish the number of children brought here.

There will be some critics of this proposed apology. I have already referred to the fact that we are leaving out a significant number of children who were housed in these institutions. Other critics will ask what is the point of making an apology all these years later. It is very important that there be some recognition of this State's role in what occurred. Clearly, the correspondence generated at that time between the Western Australian Government, the Australian Government, the United Kingdom Government and the institutions, includes themes that describe the motivation of those involved.

Some members who have contributed to this debate have said that we should be very cautious about making an apology because they were different times. We do not need to be cautious at all; we are making an apology for those aspects of the scheme that were wrong. We are not making an apology for the positive aspects of the scheme - we all recognise that some people did have positive experiences as a result of the process.

According to the colonial treasurer in Perth in 1905, the migrants were brought here because they were physically and morally desirable. We are talking about children of six to eight years of age being morally desirable! The director of Rugged Schools of Australia said that she had set herself the ideal of a white Australia and if that were to be realised she had to get more white people. It appears that the aim was population of the country. The Fairbridge scheme was designed to provide individual children to Western Australia who were earmarked for particular trades or jobs. Notably in the case of young men or boys, that trade was farm labouring, and in the case of women or girls it was domestic servitude.

By 1912, the Western Australian Government was promoting child migration. Available documents indicate that the Western Australian Government by then was providing £6 as passage money for each child received. Certain conditions were built into the arrangement between the sending institution and the Western Australian Government, one of which was that the Western Australian Government would provide education for those children. The Barnett and the House of Commons inquiries indicate that in many cases that education did not eventuate.

Also, available documents outline that Western Australia was to be satisfied about the conditions under which care was provided for these children. The basic flaw in the Western Australian Government's decision was that despite its statutory role at the time to be satisfied about the welfare of these children, and indeed all children in Western Australia, it did not meet that responsibility. The institutions in which children were housed were supposed to be inspected regularly by the child welfare authority. It appears that sometimes inspections were carried out, but rarely did they have a satisfactory outcome.

Therefore, it is appropriate to talk about past policies and to apologise on behalf of the Western Australian people as elected members of Parliament of this State. Two issues are involved: First, the motivation for bringing the children out, and second, whether the State upheld its responsibility to look after the welfare of these children. The

answer must be no. That is not to say that every child was abused, whether by being emotionally deprived, physically abused or, as we have heard regarding some cases, subjected to gross sexual molestation which amounted to criminal acts. However, the motion is recognition that a significant percentage of these children suffered in that way. The House of Commons report outlines an estimate provided by the Christian Brothers Ex-Residents Services association of about 30 per cent of children suffering severe abuse. Percentages are never clear. It may be that many more, or far fewer, children were severely abused. Nevertheless, 30 per cent is an extremely high number. Also, it is probably not indicative of the number of children who were abused in some other fashion, whether it be a lack of information provided about families and existing siblings or the provision of improper information, such as incorrectly telling the children - this appears to have been quite common - that they were orphans. A range of matters could have been covered in the motion.

I said earlier that I expected there to be critics of an apology from Parliament. As much as I am pleased that it would be acting in a bipartisan fashion, expressing regret for something which took place in the past does not mean that one is taking personal responsibility for those acts. That misunderstanding often results in many members of the public ignoring the fact that the gesture of an apology involves goodwill.

I have mentioned those people left out of the apology. However, we refer to the types of abuse which occurred. The Minister yesterday spoke about the recognition of physical, emotional and sexual abuse; ipso facto, the motion relates also to people at the institution who were not child migrants.

Finally, probably some critics of the apology will say it is hollow, and will ask: What else will come with it? I agree very much with the Minister about the need for a central database. I implore the State Government to take up that proposal and to be proactive with the British Government to embrace the recommendations of the House of Commons report. Also, if the British Government drags its heels, the Court Government should adopt active methods to facilitate the establishment of the central database, given the large number of child migrants who came to this State. That will be a test of Parliament's seriousness on the issue.

I will comment in the Address-in-Reply on what else needs to happen in this process. It is necessary for Parliament to continue with the work done by the select committee of 1996.

MS MacTIERNAN (Armadale) [11.36 am]: I wish to be formally part of this process, with which I have been involved for five or six years. It is very important that as representatives of the State, we recognise that the State has been culpable in discharging its duty to child migrants. It is appropriate that we recognise the State's role in the drama and trauma endured by many young children who came out to Australia, particularly to Western Australian, under this scheme.

I have no difficulty with the overall concept of the scheme; from the perspective of the time, it was seen as a good opportunity for the children and for Australia. It is not the motivation of the scheme that I find difficult when viewed from the perspective of the time. Undoubtedly, the State was absolutely negligent, and in many instances it was worse than negligent; that is, it was absolutely involved in covering up abuses which were occurring in many of these institutions. Reports were prepared by departmental officers from a variety of government institutions - be they government agencies, the Education Department or the precursor of Family and Children's Services - on the ill-treatment which many children endured. However, these reports were systematically suppressed at a higher level, and the children were left to endure the misery which no doubt many of them suffered. As was pointed out today, that suffering did not end when these people finally left the institution. Many found themselves emotionally and psychologically crippled by the experiences of those years, a burden which they have carried with them for the rest of their lives.

It was not only during the period of the administration of the child migration scheme that there was demonstrated culpability on the part of the State - it went beyond that. I am not being partisan, and my criticism does not apply only to Governments from one side of politics. Governments have been reluctant to face up to the problem. In part, this reluctance resulted from concerns about offending the Catholic Church and its members, and concern over the possible payment of compensation to these former child victims. None of the excuses which were used for many years to deny a proper investigation into these matters is satisfactory.

If compensation is to be made, we must accept the decision. We accept that compensation is made in many other instances. I note that the Minister for Primary Industries has recognised that he needs to compensate milk vendors for the economic loss suffered as a result of government policy. How much more do we need to compensate these people whose lives, to a large extent, have been destroyed by the refusal of the State to face up to what was taking place in many of these institutions? It is most unfortunate - I will certainly deal with this more in the Address-in-Reply - that we have steadfastly refused to provide amendments to the Statute of limitations which have been provided elsewhere in the common law world which would enable these people to take their cases before the civil courts.

I refer to a couple of comments that were made by some of the members. It was suggested by one that it could not have been all that bad because these institutions have held reunions and former students have persistently attended those reunions. It is a bit like having a dysfunctional family; people still stick with their families because they are the only ones they have. I know a number of men who attend those reunions because they want to meet their fellow students who were, at the time, effectively the only family they had in this world. I do not think that can be used to discredit the strength of their claim. The Minister and the member for Kalgoorlie have gone into much of the full range of the abuse. It is important to recognise, as those speakers did, that it is not just a case of criminal molestation or sexual abuse; it is also about the emotional abuse and the emotional deprivation that many of those children suffered that has had the biggest long term effect upon their lives and their capacity to form relationships since leaving the institution. That has had the most severe impact on their lives.

I am pleased to see that both sides of this place have moved forward on this issue and that we are prepared to acknowledge the mistakes made by the State, and to accept our culpability in that regard. I hope that we are prepared to come forward in the next couple of months with some real actions, not just words, that show that these words are not hollow words, but are words that we really mean.

MR BROWN (Bassendean) [11.42 am]: I will take a couple of minutes to support this motion. I do so because there are some people in my electorate who have been very adversely affected by the way they were treated as children in those institutions. These people could not understand the rationale of the Director of Public Prosecutions to not pursue this matter with significant zeal. These people's lives have been affected by the way they were mistreated by people who should have been doing everything possible to ensure that they were nurtured as children rather than mistreated in the way that a number of them were. It is true that some people who were in different places have reported different experiences. The member for Murray-Wellington is correct in saying that some people report different experiences. However, unfortunately the fact is that we all know what occurred. Those children who were not abused in some way were most fortunate. However, many people were abused and that abuse has left deep scars which cannot be easily, if ever, erased.

I hope that the passing of this motion today on behalf of the people of Western Australia will be one small step towards recognising the mistreatment that occurred many years ago. However, it is quite another thing for us to take some firm action. I join with the comments made by my colleague, the member for Armadale, who said that while we must take that step today, we must also take further, more important steps. I will take the opportunity of speaking about those steps later in the day when those other matters come before Parliament.

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 12 August.

MR GRAHAM (Pilbara) [11.45 am]: In the first half of my speech I will continue with some of the law and order issues that were raised because they are controversial and a lot of discussion has taken place in the Chambers about law and order generally. I made the point in my previous speech that when a Government sets out to design a law and order package, the package must have some key elements. The first of those elements is a clear, concise and comprehensive plan on what it is that one wants to do before anything is set up in this field. The international experience reveals that the ultimate result that one wants to achieve must be determined.

The second key element is that the police must be involved in the organisations that are set up to deal with law and order issues. However, the international experience is that when the police have control of it, those programs are not as successful as similar programs that are set up with other agencies, individuals or organisations. The third element is that the budget that is allocated to an organisation must match the size of the problem and they are directly related. If it is not funded adequately, it will not work. It costs money to prevent crime and Governments must understand that. None of those key elements is in place in the program that the Government announced on the opening day of Parliament.

Members opposite generally throw up three issues when the law and order debate arises. I shall deal with them very quickly because I want the main thrust of my speech to relate to a matter in my electorate. The first concerns Singaporean laws. People ask why we do not introduce into Australia laws from Singapore. There are many answers to that. However, one simple answer is that this is Australia and not Singapore. Laws that work in one country do not necessarily work in another. The second is the size of Singapore. Singapore is a tiny place that is isolated both physically and culturally and has been a strategic location for hundreds of years. I say this, as I said the other evening, as someone who at one stage in my life was part of the peacekeeping forces in Singapore and watched Lee Kuan Yew take power.

The third element in Singapore is that its system of government depends entirely on the subjugation of the people by the Government. I do not accept that and the people of Australia will not and should not accept that. This is a country of freedom and choice; not a country in which the Government dictates how people will live their lives. That should not and will never be accepted in this country.

The second issue usually raised in these law and order debates by conservatives is corporal punishment. I am stunned and amazed that it continues to be raised. There is nothing in the law and order debate internationally and in this country that has been examined and studied as long and as hard as corporal punishment. It is a proven and demonstrable failure.

Every community in which the state has instituted violence as part of its criminal justice system has experienced an increase in violence in the community. There is no point pretending that is not the case, or arguing about it; it has been proved. An exception is where corporal punishment is used as a means of punishment and as a form of retribution to make the victim feel better; and it is debateable whether that does work, but for some societies in the world that is acceptable. However, it is not acceptable for us.

Mr Johnson: Ask the general public; it will not agree with you.

Mr GRAHAM: I will get on to that. Just because the public agrees with something does not make it right. The role of government -

Mr Johnson: Is to represent the people.

Mr GRAHAM: No. The role of government is to do what is for the greater good of the community, and not just what the public wants now. If the Government were to spend its political life doing what the public wanted now, it would be a strong advocate of capital punishment. However, it would also be a strong advocate against it, because when it is illegal, the fringes want the Government to introduce capital and corporal punishment, but when it is introduced, the mainstream want the Government to remove it. The role of government is to bear in mind experience, have some morals and ethics, and apply itself diligently to the job - not just do what the public wants when it wants it.

Mr Thomas: Provide leadership.

Mr Johnson: We are here to represent the people and their views.

Mr GRAHAM: And their interests and the interests of the State.

Mr Johnson: Are you saying you know better than that?

Mr GRAHAM: No. I am saying that the only outcome of introducing violence into the law and order system and the criminal justice system is an increase in violence. That is not in the interests of our constituents. I could take the member for Hillarys to every place in the world where that system has been introduced. I sat down 18 months ago with the Governor of Alabama, who is a fundamentalist on law and order issues. He has reintroduced chain gangs and floggings, and has fast-tracked the death penalty. He is an intelligent man. However, he cannot understand why, when he has introduced all these things in his State to bring about law and order, the level of violence is increasing. He is finding that as the penalties are becoming harsher and more violent, society is downgrading those penalties, and violence is becoming an acceptable part of daily life. Law and order systems that are based on the use of violence do not work, for the same reason that the sun does not rise on the other side of the world at the same time that it rises on this side of the world: Things just do not happen that way.

The other buzz word that we have heard is "zero tolerance". In an interchange last night while the member for Nollamara was speaking, the member for Geraldton had a shot and said that he had just been to New York, where zero tolerance is in place, and we need zero tolerance here because that is what the Premier has said. I want to give some encouragement to those members who believe in zero tolerance as it was introduced in New York in 1993 by Mayor Giuliani and Commissioner William Bratton. That system was based on zero tolerance from the police, so that a person who was seen spitting in the street was charged, and a person who was seen driving at 36 miles an hour in a 35 mile an hour zone was charged. It was based on the premise that if those minor crimes were sorted out, people would have a sense of wellbeing and would become more law abiding; but if those minor crimes were ignored, people would have a sense of lawlessness that would encourage them to commit more serious crimes.

That process is not new. Its immediate short-term effect is a reduction in crime, particularly crimes of violence, and it can be argued that that is an indicator of the effectiveness of zero tolerance. New York used to be known as the murder capital of the world. As an aside, it is ironic that the only crime in Western Australia that is reducing in incidence is murder. The spat between Commissioner Bratton and the Mayor of New York arose because the mayor wanted to move on from a policy of zero tolerance and policing to the letter of the law with rigidity; so he sat down with the task force and defined the quality of life issues that affect the daily lives of New Yorkers.

Although the words "zero tolerance" are still used in New York, the use of that policy as the sole means of fighting crime disappeared at the end of 1996. When I said that last night, people told me that I was wrong, because they had just been to New York and they knew they were right. Therefore, last night I again got on the Internet and visited the New York Police Department web site to look at the mayor's speeches. It is a fact that an increased police presence and adherence to the law is part and parcel of what the mayor is on about, but that is no longer the sole law and order initiative in New York. They have pulled that into the mainstream and are now dealing with the very issues that cause crime.

New York will be successful in the long-term. So long as they maintain that comprehensive approach to fighting crime and to dealing with law and order matters, they will be successful. There may be a change of mayor - I do not know whether he is a Republican or a Democrat - or of philosophy, but the other side has also committed itself to the quality of life program, so it seems to have taken political hold. However, if New Yorkers jettison that program and return to policing as the major part of the law and order campaign and as the sole enforcer of the law, they will fail and their crime rate will increase again.

One of the reasons that so many books have been written about zero tolerance and that it has been so controversial is that it began as one thing in New York and was adapted to another thing in New York. What the advocates on the conservative side of politics are advocating when they are talking about zero tolerance is the early stages of zero tolerance. Those of us who are talking about comprehensive law and order packages and policies are talking about the end results of zero tolerance. I want to make that quite clear to people, because we tend in politics to focus on a catch phrase and not look behind that catch phrase to see what it means.

Some classic examples can be found in Western Australia. One example is the revolving door syndrome. The Premier was asked many times what that meant, and we never found out what the revolving door was, but he fixed it in two years. The Bankcard mentality was another catch phrase that he used; and he fixed that as well. We still do not know what it was. We tend to focus on those catch words.

Another catch phrase that is used is truth in sentencing. Our law and order system depends upon the police gathering the information and finding the culprit, and in some areas they do that very well. Generally speaking, their record in solving murder cases in Western Australia - with the exception of the Claremont serial killer, who is still at large - is extraordinarily good.

Their crime solving methods on break and enters are extraordinarily bad by any yardstick. However, the police gather the evidence, find the perpetrator and then, after some discussion with the Director of Public Prosecution's officers, decide to charge the perpetrator, lay the charge and the matter goes into the court system. In the court system people are generally tried by a jury which decides if they are guilty or innocent. The judge determines the penalty. I recommend that members read the Sentencing Act because it is not a widely read document. The Sentencing Act dictates what the judge will take into account in determining a sentence. The judge has heard the entire case, including the decision of the jury and any mitigating factors. He does not have to agree with those mitigating factors, but he must take them into account and he may dismiss them. He hears the victim, the witnesses, the defendant and the legal argument. He or she is the best person to decide the penalty. The Parliament sets a range of penalties. No other system can allow for a fair and reasonable trial. Mandatory sentencing is a nonsense.

Mr Baker: It already exists.

Mr GRAHAM: It does, and it is a nonsense. The member for Joondalup is a lawyer and he will find in the next 10 years that a series of court cases will challenge the individual effects of alcohol on human beings. That will lead to the demise of mandatory sentencing for drink driving. It is a nonsense because the specific and unique circumstances have to be taken into account in each case. Having said that, once the judge sets the sentence and the person is incarcerated, the matter leaves the court system and other people in the parole system can review that judge's decision. That is not acceptable. They review the decision in isolation and take into account only the behaviour of the person who committed the crime. They do not take into account the case, the victim impact statements or all the other matters the judge had to take into account when sentencing the perpetrator. I do not agree with that. There must be truth in sentencing. The debate on truth in sentencing legislation is about whether we should take into account 50 per cent of what was put forward by the good judge in his report or whether we should take into account 90 or 100 per cent of what he said. The parole system under which people serve only a minor part of their sentences will not last the test of time in Western Australia, nor should it. The argument that this will lead to lack of control in prisons is nonsense.

Much is said about those of us who believe in strong penalties. We are often accused of being rednecks or wanting to put everyone in gaol and to build more gaols. I dispense with all of that. Personally I find it offensive always to be labelled no matter what I say. It is always said, "Oh, you just want to lock them up and throw away the key" and nonsense of that nature. I believe members of the public are saying that they do not want everybody put away. There

is a great deal of compassion in the community for young offenders. People want them to be helped and looked after. The Government has a responsibility to establish the systems which will enable it to discriminate between offenders so that it is able to find the young offenders who are worth saving and save them; the others should be put away. The public is saying loudly and clearly - people who do not listen to them and do not have their ears washed out do so at their peril - that the crime of breaking and entering - home invasion as it is now called - is not acceptable. It is not an acceptable crime. They are also saying that crimes of violence are not acceptable, particularly crimes of violence against defenceless people and the elderly.

Mr Baker: What do they say about corporal punishment?

Mr GRAHAM: The member for Joondalup can read about that. I have dealt with that matter. In any civilised society the views put forward by the public are the correct views. It is not acceptable to have someone bash old people in their homes. I agree with the public on that matter to this extent. While I understand people's drug addictions, their backgrounds and the problems that may have lead them to do these things, it is still not acceptable behaviour. Those of us who believe in extended penalties for these crimes are saying that we do not particularly care about those individuals. We are not arguing in their defence; we do not care what the effect on them is. We simply want those people taken out of society so that we are protected from them. It is that simple. If those people can be rehabilitated, that is good. The Government can, and should, try to rehabilitate those people, but if it cannot do so, then they should not be put back into society. No-one wants his mum bashed in the suburbs of Perth by some lunatic who decides he wants money. It is not acceptable behaviour. It is not the sort of behaviour that should be accepted in a civilised society.

I turn now to the problems in Port Hedland in relation to the gross rental values of properties. I raised this issue in this place when the Local Government Amendment Bill was considered in November 1997. I said this would be a consequence of the land shortage caused by this Government's failure to release land for sale to coincide with the development of Port Hedland.

Mr Baker: What about native title?

Mr GRAHAM: No, the member for Joondalup cannot throw in native title.

Mr Baker: What do the people of Port Hedland say?

Mr GRAHAM: The Government has tried that, but it cannot throw in native title because the Minister for Planning said there was no problem with releasing land in Port Hedland. If the member for Joondalup is telling the truth, the Minister is not. The Minister for Planning made that statement 18 months after we sought to have land released in Port Hedland. That land has still not been released in major areas. As was predicted, the effect of that is land and housing rentals have increased dramatically in Port Hedland. I said last November that it is not unheard of for people to pay \$500 or \$600 a week in rent for three and four-bedroom houses and that is still the case. I asked the Minister to delay the Valuer General going to Port Hedland this year to do the triennial or quadrennial assessments for rating. The Government chose not to do that.

Mr Kierath: Who did you ask to do that?

Mr GRAHAM: The Minister.

Mr Kierath: Which Minister?

Mr GRAHAM: Whichever Minister has control over the Valuer General. I think it is the Minister for Finance. What was predicted has happened. The town is confronted with extraordinary rate increases. The irony of the situation is that those rent increases, or those increase in land prices, will not be there next year. Land and house prices in Port Hedland were level until Western Australia's biggest resource development came along. Now there is a shortage of land because of Government inaction. Over the past year or two the prices have gone through the roof. The Valuer General came in at the peak of that trend and assessed the land and the gross rental values. Consequently, people are faced with increases in rates. It is easy to say that the council can then reduce the amount in dollars paid by the ratepayers, but the effect of that is the higher priced and more sought after areas in the town then get the increase.

These are people who have done nothing wrong. They have not set out to defraud, rip off or anything of that nature. These are people who live and work in a country town. They work in the biggest industry in Western Australia which produces billions of dollars. However, they will be subjected to a 40 to 60 per cent shire rate increase as a consequence of the inaction of the Government.

Mr Baker: They could rate BHP land.

Mr GRAHAM: The council cannot rate BHP land because in the 1960s the Liberal Government passed an agreement

Act which stops it doing that. If the member for Joondalup will second it, I will move a private member's Bill to allow it to happen. I have been on about this issue for the entire time I have been in Parliament. Even if the council reduces the rate in the dollar, the differential - because of the sought after and not sought after areas in the town - means that this suburb will pay infinitely more than that suburb. It may be said that differential rating can be used, but it cannot because the council has to produce a budget by the end of August. It does not have differential rating, therefore the council cannot introduce it. It may be able to next year, however, it cannot this year. That is something the Government has not understood about resource development. When it happens - and the member for Geraldton should listen - it happens quickly.

Mr Bloffwitch: Our council has the opportunity now to differentially rate. The member for Pilbara's council may not but my council has the opportunity under the new Bill which has been passed.

Mr GRAHAM: However, it must be in place by the end of August. There has never been differential rating and the budget must be passed by the end of August.

Mr Baker: They have to have time.

Mr GRAHAM: They may need to have time, but they did not have it. The point I am trying to make for the good of the member for Geraldton is that when resource developments happen in a country town, they happen quickly and they have a huge impact. I wrote to the Minister for Water Resources and I shall send the member a copy of this letter, because it illustrates the ultimate irony in all of this. It indicates that a constituent of mine - who was the first to come to me and is now one of many - has had the sewerage charge for his three-bedroom house increased from \$866 last year - which is high by metropolitan or Western Australian standards - to \$1 140 this year.

Mr Bloffwitch: How big is the block of land?

Mr GRAHAM: It is just a normal house and block of land.

Mr Bloffwitch: A quarter of an acre?

Mr GRAHAM: I will put it into perspective for the member for Geraldton. It is land for which in the metropolitan area one would pay \$150 to \$180. In Geraldton one would probably pay \$200.

Mr Bloffwitch: There are no rates of \$150 in Geraldton. The cheapest rates are about \$550.

Mr GRAHAM: That represents a 32 per cent increase in water rates. The irony of this is that the Minister was the Minister for Housing who administers the Homeswest land, who created the land shortage, and now, with his other hat on as the Minister for Water Resources, is profiteering from that increase. I shall write to him also to get him to remove the Water Corporation's windfall profit and repay it to the people of Port Hedland who are being ripped off by the Department of Resources Development.

Mr Bloffwitch: I wish you luck.

Mr GRAHAM: That is the cause of the problem. The people in the town are suffering.

Amendment to Motion

Mr GRAHAM: I move -

but regrets to inform His Excellency that the Government has failed to reconvene the 1996 Select Committee into Child Migration and calls on the Parliament to establish a select committee and that the terms of reference be as follows -

- (a) to determine the number, origins and destinations of children removed or sent to Western Australia from the United Kingdom or Malta;
- (b) to identify what effort was made during the operation of the schemes or since by the Western Australian Government, the Australian Government, the United Kingdom Government, church bodies and any other non-government bodies which were then responsible for child migration to -
 - (i) inform the children of the existence and whereabouts of their parents or siblings;
 - (ii) reunite or assist in the reunification of the child migrants with any of their relatives;
 - (iii) provide counselling or any other services which were neutral and independent enough to be acceptable to former child migrants and were or are designed to reduce or limit the trauma caused by the removal of these children from the United Kingdom and Malta to Western Australia; and

- (c) to determine the action which has been taken on complaints by child migrants in relation to their migration and subsequent care in institutions and complaints by other children sent to these institutions particularly but not limited to their inability to access personal information; and determine whether any action taken in (b) or (c) is or was adequate, and if not, to recommend to the Western Australian Government an appropriate course of action to take.

MS WARNOCK (Perth) [12.15 pm]: I was pleased this morning to support the earlier motion that the House apologise to those same former child migrants on behalf of all Western Australians.

I further support this amendment because I have a personal interest in it. One of my constituents wrote to me about this matter and I have been pursuing it on his behalf for some time. I am also pleased to note that a senior Liberal member of the other House, Hon Derrick Tomlinson, supported my opposition colleagues, in particular the member for Kalgoorlie, on the suggestion contained in this amendment that we must have a wide-ranging inquiry into the child migration scheme to investigate allegations of abuse at Western Australian orphanages and institutions and, further, that we should continue the inquiry which was begun by a group of parliamentarians before the previous election in 1996.

Like me, Hon Derrick Tomlinson sees the great parallels between the issue we are discussing at the moment and the stolen generation of Aboriginal children. I admit that many people have come out and explained that they were not badly treated by the institutions that they were in and that they have had successful lives subsequently. However, it is true that many suffered terribly from the experience - suffering that has continued even into the next generation and affected their children.

In both cases of the stolen generation of Aboriginal children and the generation of child migrants, I believe that the policy was not only wrong but appallingly insensitively executed. Although some may say it was for the children's own good, which I have certainly heard said, I am inclined to doubt the motives now that so much evidence has been produced about the issues. I do not do that simply from my own reading about the events that occurred. I do it because a constituent came to me early on about this matter and drew my attention to his own circumstances. However, many were terribly badly damaged by those experiences and it is certainly time to make amends, which is why I supported the apology this morning in common with all members of the House and it is why I believe that we should pursue a further inquiry in Western Australia.

The Government should not have allowed the other committee to lapse. It should have carried on its work and finished the investigation. There is no doubt whatsoever that some assistance is due to the people who were dealt with so harshly by life and by the authorities at the time - many people, I am sure, will remember the drama that was made about the story *The Leaving of Liverpool* - even if it is only the very quick assistance that is needed to try to find their families. I say "quick" because many of them are very mature people now and if they have any family members they need to find them very quickly; and I hope they are able to do so.

I first became aware of this issue a long time ago as a journalist when a man rang me and asked me to help him to find his family in the United Kingdom. I advised him to contact either the Red Cross or the Salvation Army - I do not remember which - the official finders of lost people at the time. However, at the time it puzzled me that the man described himself as an orphan yet he was looking for his mother, as I recall. He was already a mature man. After I, as a journalist, had received his call, I thought that he would be extraordinarily lucky if he did manage to find his mother at that late stage. Of course, I now know so much more than I did then. Those so-called orphans were lied to about their families and were the victims of someone else's moralising about women who had children out of wedlock - to use that quaint old phrase - and who spent their lives paying for the cruel moral views of others. Women even in my own generation were the victims of this moralising. Friends of mine had their babies taken away from them and did not see them again in some cases, and in other cases only after 30 years - after the laws were changed and organisations like Adoption Jigsaw did so much work to ease the pain those people suffered. It is hard to imagine the appalling difficulties of people trying to find their families, not here in Western Australia as were my friends, but on the other side of the world. That would have been much more difficult and would have caused much more suffering.

Whatever the motives of those who sent young children across the seas to the colonies alone and undefended, the result was very often appalling. For that reason we cannot let the matter rest; we must do much more on their behalf, and we should do it quickly. These people are now mature and they need assistance to make contact with any remaining family before it is too late.

The people who should have looked after them often exploited them as cheap labour. Others were not only physically exploited but also sexually assaulted, and that is now notorious. Their confusion and loneliness can only be imagined by those of us who were fortunate enough not to have anything like that happen in our lives. We, the British and the Australian authorities, should admit that we were wrong. In a sense we have done that today with this apology

motion. Anyone from these groups who is still out of contact with his or her family must be put in touch with them as soon as possible.

I wrote to the Premier in June last year about this matter on behalf of the constituent whom I mentioned earlier. He was one of the many so-called orphans sent to this country at a very young age. I will not mention his name because I do not have his permission to do so. The letter, dated 11 June 1997, states -

Dear Premier

I write to you on behalf of my constituent, . . . regarding the current status of the Select Committee into Child Migration which produced only an interim report in November 1996.

I believe that the issues raised by this particular Select Committee have yet to be completely assessed and resolved. For those people who were removed from their families and country there can be no sense of resolution until the inquiry of this Select Committee is completed, including the further 45 lines of inquiry identified in the Interim Report, and the recommendations made available for public comment.

On behalf of those people who were transported out to Australia without the consent or knowledge of their families I urge you to act on the recommendations contained within the Interim Report. To this end I believe that the Honorary Royal Commission must be set up as soon as possible.

As with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Report into the 'Stolen Generation' this is not a matter of apportioning guilt, but simply a responsibility to truth and ultimately the justice inherent in official recognition of that truth. I certainly believe that this issue deserves bipartisan support and I seek your assistance in bringing this issue to a satisfactory conclusion.

I received a polite response from the Premier saying he saw no reason for the inquiry to be reopened.

When I think of the effort that I put into seeking out my grandfather's grave on the Somme and the residual anger I still feel all of these decades later at the fact that circumstances of war deprived me of him and how important it was to find some evidence of his existence - even if it was only a stone in someone else's country - I cannot comprehend how much more appalling it must be to be unable to find any evidence of one's family or to discover anything about one's identity or origins. How much worse it would be to discover that someone had lied about that background. We owe these people our compassion and the satisfaction of ongoing help in their quest.

MS ANWYL (Kalgoorlie) [12.25 pm]: I support the motion. This debate is long overdue. I take the unusual step of accepting some culpability for that tardiness. An interim report was presented to this Parliament in November 1996. I am not sure whether a response to recommendations in the report was tabled as is the usual procedure. No doubt the Minister will let me know whether that occurred because I have not been able to access a document containing that information. It is usual practice that three months after the tabling of a select committee report the Government provides an official response.

I know that there will be some dissent about the establishment of another select committee. The most important question to deal with in this debate is why we should finish the work so ably commenced by the Select Committee into Child Migration. I will refer to that committee as the "Barnett committee". I mean no disrespect to the other members of the committee; it is simply a convenience.

Mr Bradshaw: We normally refer to committees using the chairman's name.

Ms ANWYL: As I said earlier, I acknowledge the work done by other members of the committee. The member for Murray-Wellington has the dubious honour of being the only remaining member of that committee in this place.

Several members interjected.

Ms ANWYL: Perhaps they were the ones with the brains.

That committee undertook an historical study to determine the numbers of child migrants brought to Western Australia and to get a perspective on the motivation for bringing them here in the first place.

One important amendment has been made to the motion as put today. Paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) are largely a repetition of the Barnett committee recommendation about the establishment of further terms of reference. However, paragraph (c) has been changed to allow the committee to investigate the complaints of other affected children, not only the child migrants. Clearly, many young children were in institutions such as Fairbridge, the Christian Brothers homes and others. However, the vast majority were not child migrants; they were children of Western Australian origin, whether they were orphans, wards of the State and so on. It is commonsense to acknowledge that those children would have been subjected to the same type of treatment and conditions as the child migrants.

It is probably unfortunate that in the context of the broader debate there has been a focus on British child migrants. That is largely because the House of Commons Select Committee on Health report was prepared for the British Parliament. That is what that inquiry was looking at.

Clearly, as a State, we need an inquiry into what occurred in those institutions. That is the reason for the inclusion of the words "complaints by other children" in paragraph (c). There is a long history of these matters being brought to the Parliament of Western Australia. I have been told that the former member for Kenwick, Dr Judyth Watson, presented to Parliament a petition with some 24 000-odd signatures. That in itself is a large indication of the way in which the Western Australian people view the importance of this issue. I have been informed - I must apologise because I have not researched this issue particularly well beyond the two reports to which I have referred - that early parliamentary inquiries were made into these matters. However, it appears that the results of those may have been suppressed somewhat.

It is important to explain the rationale for having this inquiry because many people will be opposed to it. It is important to have not only a proper historical understanding, but also a precise number of the children who were involved in child migration and a picture of the number of children who were housed in the various institutions. The historical perspective of the scheme was initially to provide population. Later - I am referring to Fairbridge after 1912 - it developed into the concept of bringing children to this country who were earmarked for particular types of employment; notably farm labouring for boys and domestic servants for girls. Western Australia attached some conditions to that passage but it did not then fulfil its obligations of monitoring the welfare of those children once they were here.

The Government has always had a statutory responsibility to protect children in this State. That has been the reason for so much discontent about whether that obligation was fulfilled. However, the institutions also had obligations to the children residing in them. There were a variety of institutions. A lot of emphasis has been placed on those that were Christian Brothers organisations, but allegations of maltreatment occurred in others as well. Looking at the history of the Catholic Church involvement, in the early 1920s, according to the Barnett committee, a branch of the Knights of the Southern Cross was formed in Perth in 1922. The director of Clontarf, Brother Keaney, made many representations, as did others. It is not known precisely how many children were housed in those main Christian Brothers institutions of Clontarf, Tardyn, Bindoon and Castledare. What is known is that there were around 700 to 850 child migrants, but there were about 4 000 other residents in those institutions. As a matter of social justice, we cannot pursue the child migrant line of inquiry and neglect the issues surrounding the other residents of those institutions.

A couple of themes emerged from the Barnett committee inquiry into how children were treated. One of those was that children believed that they were orphans when in some cases they were not; that is, the records and documents relating to the identity of those children were suppressed to the extent that some adults still do not know their dates of birth. I ask members to reflect on how difficult it must be to form an identity without basic information of that kind. If we look at what is occurring in adoption law reform in the State, the bulk of which the current Minister has presided over, there is a clear recognition that people are entitled, as a matter of basic human rights, to have identifying information of parentage and to have access to the records that exist to enable them to make that initial contact. That is clearly recognised.

Mrs Parker: How would this help in any way?

Ms ANWYL: The select committee made inquiries along this line and one of the terms of reference of that committee was to -

determine the action which has been taken on complaints by child migrants in relation to their migration . . . particularly, but not limited to, their inability to access personal information.

One of the comments made in both the House of Commons and Barnett reports is that some institutions are still not cooperating fully. The Parliament should bring what weight it can to bear upon those institutions to cooperate fully. One way of doing that might be to summon those institutions before it. There is a need to define the number of children who were so affected as a part of that resolution process. It seems odd that we cannot obtain precise figures of the number of children who were involved.

I would not wish any former residents, whether they be child migrants or not, to feel that they must participate in the process. We all know that many of those past residents have already told their stories in distressing circumstances. For some, that has occurred at least two or three times previously, and some litigation occurred in New South Wales regarding civil remedies. I am not suggesting that we should force people to participate in an evidence-gathering scenario. However, as a lawyer in active practice for 10 years before entering this place, I recognise that for some people an empowerment accompanies the truth and having a fair hearing of issues. From my experiences of

representing many widows in mining accidents, I have found that people want to be a part of that process, however distressing it may be to sit through a coroner's inquest. It is quite common, but not universal, that people feel that they will somehow come to deal with grief and feelings of loss or anger as a result of that process. I make that point because nobody should feel obliged to take part in such an investigation. However, some members of the community feel that that is a necessary part of dealing with this issue. Given that child protection is such an important issue in this State -

Mrs Parker: Or anywhere.

Ms ANWYL: I am making that comment specifically to the Minister, but I take her point. I think the Minister made the comment earlier that child protection was important "at any time, anywhere". Lessons may be learnt for current generations of Western Australians from the manner in which institutional abuse of a nature and extent such as this was able to be perpetrated. It is fair to say that the Barnett inquiry did not make findings that would lend themselves to the lessons that could be learnt. I refer to the positions of other Governments: Certainly the Federal Government is the subject of a specific recommendation from the House of Commons inquiry, but I understand that the Government will not conduct an inquiry at this stage. I contrast that with the Beattie Government in Queensland which has just announced a \$2.8m, six-month inquiry into the issue of institutional abuse as it has occurred in that State. I commend the Beattie Government, because clearly there is one way to once and for all deal with these issues. That is why it would be valuable to hold an inquiry with the terms of reference identified in this motion.

Mrs Parker: They had a dramatically different number of child migrants in Queensland from the number that came to Western Australia. I understand it was about 100.

Ms ANWYL: Queensland had many fewer child migrants.

Mrs Parker: Yes, it is a broader issue and not specifically for child migrants.

Ms ANWYL: I used the words "institutional abuse". While the report on the House of Commons inquiry was one catalyst for that investigation, I am also aware of allegations of abuse of a much more recent nature extending to some of the juvenile detention institutions. However, calls have been made for an inquiry in this State for a long time, and certainly long before the Minister for Family and Children's Services and I became members in this place. At some stage, as members of Parliament, we must recognise that this issue will not go away, a question of social justice is involved and it is now appropriate for us to deal with these issues and confront them head on.

The other issue is the age of those involved. There is a need for urgent reunification of those child migrants with their remaining family members. Their average age is approaching 60 years. That is not to say that some younger people have not also been in those institutions, but clearly the time for action is now. I do not want to be in this place in 20 years' time, but I certainly hope this issue is not still being debated in the community too far into the future. Action must be taken right now and not in a couple of decades.

I urge members to consider the motion. I ask the Minister in her response to this debate to advise whether she intends to table the comprehensive response she said in question time that she had prepared to the British report. Will she make that response available? I also ask whether a formal response was made to the recommendations of the Barnett committee. In closing, I again stress the findings of the Barnett committee and the issues people are still dealing with. Again, I am generalising and not everybody has had these difficulties. The Barnett committee focused on the problems faced by former child migrants in their adult lives. The report stated that although it is too early to make generalisations, there appears to be a trend developing in their emotional and physical wellbeing. For example, all too often the committee heard the following: Difficulties in forming or maintaining loving relationships with the opposite sex, marriage breakdowns, parenting problems, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, an inability to hold down a job for any length of time, a history of illness, a lack of identity even to the point of not knowing their date of birth, and illiteracy. Those very serious matters have been raised, and it is appropriate that all children who were systematically abused in institutions in this State be granted an opportunity by this Parliament to tell their stories. That should lead to firming up the Government's position to make sure this type of institutional abuse cannot occur again.

MS McHALE (Thornlie) [12.45 pm]: This is not an area in which I have been extensively involved, although I have been approached by a number of child migrants who have told me their stories. I have been struck, as have many other members of Parliament, by the tragedy of those stories. Clearly, those are the stories of people who have suffered pain and hurt. They are principally the people who have lobbied members of Parliament for change and investigation, and they are the stories that ring in our minds and hearts.

I must say that at the outset I was not convinced that the appropriate way to proceed was to reconvene or establish a select committee. Obviously, I am now on my feet because I believe it is the way to go. I questioned whether it was the right way to proceed initially because there has been a degree of publicity and debate about this issue over

the past 10 years, since the late 1980s when *Lost Children of the Empire* was published. The question arose again in 1993 in connection with action involving the Christian Brothers, although they did not accept total liability. A very emotional documentary, *The Leaving of Liverpool*, also raised the profile of this erstwhile silent issue of our past, and then a select committee was established in this Parliament and a report was made to the House of Commons. With all those matters, one might think another select committee is not the way to go because this group in our society needs some definitive action and a concerted effort to assist them collectively with the reconciliation process and the process of resolution. However, having read the interim report of the Barnett select committee and the report to the House of Commons, I am now of the opinion that it would be beneficial for a select committee to finish off the work started and to reaffirm that Parliament wishes to have control of this issue. It should not merely be handed to a government department - the department which in its former manifestations was part of the problem.

Therefore, I thoroughly support the recommendation that a select committee of this Parliament, in a bipartisan way with members from both sides, should finish off the work started and not leave it to a department. That comment should not be seen as a negative reflection on the department, but it is important that there be some distance between the department and the inquiry. Work remains to be done with child migrants who are in their fifties and sixties, and they should be at some distance from the department and have direct contact with this Parliament.

There is no doubt that the hurt has been felt and that the pain and grief, of which many of us cannot conceive, is still there.

The question we must ask ourselves is this: If we support or reject this recommendation, will it help the resolution in a genuine way? For a number of reasons, yes, it will. Parliament wants to finalise, in cooperation with the child migrants, ways to bring about resolution. That may reaffirm the pain and grief, but the group of child migrants who have already been through the pain would be prepared to bring the process to a resolution.

It is interesting that Parliament set up a select committee which tabled an interim report in 1996 but it has not had the opportunity to finalise its work. Apart from anything else or other reasons which are more significant to child migrants, it is important that the parliamentary process actually be concluded and that we have a select committee which meets its original terms of reference and finishes the job with the interests of child migrants firmly at the centre of that process.

It is heart-rending to read the House of Commons committee report and to note that one difficulty is that the exact number of child migrants who came to Australia and New Zealand is not known. That may be for a range of reasons, one critical one being that insufficient records were kept and also the sense of anonymity and invisibility of the children when they came to a new country. The House of Commons committee report states that during the period in which the migration policy operated - in our recent history it was from post-war 1947 to as late as 1967 - between 7 000 and 10 000 children were sent to Australia. Again, exact figures on how many came to Western Australia are not known, but I sense that a significant number of children arrived in Western Australia as the first port and were dropped off here, and consequently several institutions were then established. We know that the children were placed in isolated institutions. According to material that has been collected by the House of Commons and others, most of them were subjected to, at best, harsh conditions and, at worst, institutional brutality and criminal conditions. We have not yet finished the work of that select committee, and that is why I support the amendment to include a call for the re-establishment of the select committee.

Child migration took place within the framework of legislation in the United Kingdom - there is no doubt about that. It is not something over which the British Government can say it had no control - although it has tried to say that - because explicit legislation was set up to deal with the process of removing children from the United Kingdom to the "colonies" such as Canada, New Zealand and Australia. The reasons for doing so were also explicit. Although the member for South Perth has a particular view on reconstructing history - he is very keen to exhort us not to reconstruct history - I do not think that we are doing that when we say that the reasons for child migration were economic. The welfare system in the United Kingdom was not established or funded by the British Government in the early 20th century. Major post-war social reforms introduced welfare legislation in 1948.

Prior to that, the care of children was philanthropic. From history, we know that care was often brutal and very much the workhouse framework right up until the 1930s and 1940s. The cost of institutional care was significant and generally borne by the voluntary agencies that saw sending the children away - basically getting rid of them - as a way of reducing costs. It also provided cheap labour. It is well-documented that children went to work on very isolated farms in Canada and were not paid. Although they went under the guise of being members of families, they were nothing more than labourers at very early ages. The same situation applied in this country. An element of racism was also involved. White stock was being brought to this country and also to Rhodesia to increase the relatively small white population at that stage.

Child migrants must wonder what that did for their self-esteem. It would hardly have a positive effect to know that

these people were being got rid of from their country of origin, that they would be trained as farm labourers or domestic servants, or that it was expected that girls would become farmers' wives. In the process, these child migrants were also subjected to brutality and, in some instances, criminal behaviour. We hear a lot about what happened to the boys. From the available figures, it seems that the majority of migrants were boys; however, there were many girl migrants. I do not think their story is as prominent in our minds as that of the boy migrants. We must ensure we have the full picture of what happened to members of our society who were child migrants.

Based on those comments, I believe we must have a select committee, a mechanism to do more than the current Government is offering; that is, to liaise with the House of Commons and British organisations. We need something that will deliver what the child migrants seek. I believe a select committee would not be a waste of time. It would report in a relatively short time and provide a positive outcome to this situation.

MR CARPENTER (Willagee) [12.58 pm]: One or two members of the Parliament from time to time have unfortunate demeanours; the Leader of the House is one of those. I do not know what his personality problem is, but let us not see it expressed in this Chamber, especially in a debate like this. He is a humourless, little man.

Before I came into the Parliament I was a journalist with ABC Television for "The 7.30 Report" and I did a lot of work on the story of the child migrants who came from the United Kingdom to Australia. It is a very moving story and an important story to be told, not only for the people of Western Australia, but also for the former child migrants. There are very heart-rending stories about their removal from their home country in England, and their treatment when transported to Australia. The story that associates itself with this child migration program is not complete. That is the essence of this debate. I take issue with one of the comments of a previous speaker who said that we must not rewrite history. I disagree - if the written history is wrong, it must be rewritten so that it is right. We are in the process of providing the truthful history not only of the people of Western Australia but also of the child migrants.

[Leave granted for speech to be continued.]

Debate thus adjourned.

[Continued on next page.]

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm

[Questions without notice taken.]

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Appointment

On motion by Mr Barnett (Leader of the House), resolved -

Pursuant to the resolutions of the House today agreeing to new standing orders regarding the appointment of the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the reappointment of the Select Committees on Crime Prevention, the Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991 and the Misuse of Drugs Act 1981, the following members be appointed to these committees -

(a) The Select Committee on Crime Prevention -

The member for Belmont, the member for Mandurah, the member for Midland, the member for Mitchell and the member for Swan Hills.

(b) The Select Committee on the Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991 -

The member for Carine, the member for Greenough, the member for Joondalup, the member for Kalgoorlie and the member for Thornlie.

(c) The Select Committee on the Misuse of Drugs Act 1981 -

The member for Carine, the member for Fremantle, the member for Joondalup, the member for Kalgoorlie and the member for Mitchell; and

that the Legislative Council be acquainted of the adoption of the new standing orders regarding the appointment of the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission, and that it be invited to concur in the appointment of the committee and requested to appoint four members of the Legislative Council accordingly.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Amendment to Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR CARPENTER (Willagee) [2.38 pm]: Before the luncheon suspension I was reflecting on the possible benefit in passing the amendment to rewrite the history of Western Australia so it reflects reality. I referred to the comments of an earlier speaker that we should be careful not to rewrite history. Where the recorded history of any time is demonstrated to be inaccurate, it should be corrected.

This is a continuing process. There is no fixed view of history. If information comes to light that shows us truths where we otherwise did not know such truths existed, that information should become part of official history. It has already happened in a couple of areas of social intercourse in the State - noticeably in Aboriginal affairs and in matters involving adoption and so on.

Growing up in Albany in Western Australia, I lived in a suburb in which an Aboriginal family lived on virtually every block. I grew up with the children of those families, went to school with them and knew them into my after-school life for many years. It was not until I was about 35 years old when I attended a Back to Mogumber day, which was a reunion of former Aboriginal clientele of the old Moore River Aboriginal settlement at Mogumber, that I realised that I did not appreciate a significant component of Western Australian history involving the stolen children generation. When I was a child, going to school with Aboriginal children, there were no such phrases as the "stolen children generation". In Mogumber for the Back to Mogumber day, I was startled to find myself surrounded by the families of the Aboriginal children with whom I went to school, and indeed those same children who are now adults of my age. I realised that day that their families had been part and parcel of the separation of the Aboriginal families policy conducted in Western Australia over a long period. Until that time, I was unaware of the significant impact on those families in the way in which they were able to conduct their lives.

It is a major development that the people of Western Australia have acknowledged the truth about the separation of families and the stolen generation saga and can see the history of this State in a different light. It is a common practice in all States of Australia for much of the convict history to be suppressed. It is only recently that the truth of what happened in many of those convict settlements and the truth of the convict labour operations has been revealed. That is an important component of our knowledge of the history of this State and of the people who make up the State.

I also had quite a lot to do with another group of Aboriginal people who lived in Albany and they were the children who attended the Pallottine Mission in Albany. They were not the local Noongar children; they originated from Broome and Derby and places like that, including the very prominent Mr Peter Yu, who even then stood out as a remarkable person of many talents. What I did not appreciate at that time was why those children were in Albany, so far from their homes, and what events had led them to be so far from the Kimberley and in a Catholic boarding college in Albany. To be quite truthful, I do not believe that the full extent of the history of the Pallottine Mission and the way it dealt with the Aboriginal children from the north-west of the State has been told. It is important that that history be told and the stories are beginning to emerge, and that process has been ongoing for several years in Western Australia.

Another social issue with which I was involved as a journalist was the relinquishing mothers episode in Western Australian history and the moves to face up to that period of our history, what it meant to both the relinquishing mothers and the children they relinquished and the significant social impact that that period of social policy has had on the people of Western Australia. I put into that same category of issues this issue of the child migration schemes. Having revealed part of the story of the child migrants scheme and child migrant era, we cannot let it sit without getting to the bottom of it. For that reason, reconstituting the select committee would provide us with a very valuable social tool. This is something that should be done and we should not be content to let history lie as it is - inaccurate, misleading and denying the personal history of many individuals and the families of those individuals in Western Australia.

Another point raised in the context of this debate by the member for Kalgoorlie was the fate, or the social circumstances, that befell the other children who were at those institutions along with the child migrants from the United Kingdom, Malta and Ireland. Many Australian-born children were placed in those same institutions. Now that we have discovered the truth as it pertained to many of the child migrants, it is important for us to keep our study and investigation going and find out the fate of the other children who attended those institutions. If a story is to be told, it should be told. It is important that all these facets of our State's history are recorded as the fact of our history and that we do not settle for a history that is incomplete, misleading and, in many cases, very hurtful to many individuals and families in Western Australia.

I congratulate the people from the child migrant community who had the courage in those early days to come forward and tell their story. The information began to trickle out in the 1980s. I referred to a couple of groups of people in the local Aboriginal families in Albany with whom I had some contact as a child and how they were affected by the separation of families policy and the Pallottine Mission Aboriginal children who came down from the Kimberley and how they were affected by that policy. I discovered early in the 1990s that there was a family who lived around the corner whose father was one of the child migrants. Now I know more about the institution that that person attended. He was one of the early people to tell his story. In fact, I think he published an early book on the circumstances.

Ms MacTiernan: What was his name?

Mr CARPENTER: Welsh. His story was serialised in the *Sunday Times* in what was a ground breaking story. I am now able to put in context the life of that family in Albany when I was a child and to see it more clearly and understand the stress that might have been placed on that family. I congratulate the people of the child migrant community who had the courage to come out, remembering that they were up against the power of the Catholic Church and of the resistance of the Catholic Church which, for the reasons alluded to by other speakers, was not keen on the truth of the story emerging because it unfairly branded many of the other Christian Brothers involved in those institutions in a way that they quite rightly preferred not to be categorised.

I accept what the member for South Perth said that the majority of Christian Brothers in those institutions were very good and decent men who did a fine job to the best of their ability. Obviously, as we now know, there was a significant number of people whose standards were somewhat below those required and who, in fact, made life miserable for many of the young children in their care. Against the power and might of the Catholic Church, those people who had suffered greatly, both as children and into their adult lives, had the courage to come forward and speak out, to describe the life they had known and challenge the orthodox history of Western Australia and that of these institutions. They have done a great service by allowing us to see the truth of our social history and not to accept a history that is less than true. They deserve our support in ensuring that the story is told completely, that the investigation that has been undertaken in part is completed and that all the assistance that is required by those people and others who may come forward in the future is provided.

MRS PARKER (Ballajura - Minister for Family and Children's Services) [2.49 pm]: The Government will not support the amendment, for very sound reasons. I have read the amendment quite thoroughly and I have thoroughly read the House of Commons Select Committee on Health report and I was quite struck by the contrast between the two.

Ms MacTiernan: Why is the Minister speaking before our arguments have been completed?

Mrs PARKER: It is important to put the Government's position on the record. Members of the House of Commons committee would be able to say why we would be wasting our time with something like this. All of the amendment looks back. The House of Commons committee recommendations look forward. The report says that there is a paucity of data, and that before we lose them altogether we must coordinate and commit to a central database so that we can find out all that we can to help those people. There was unanimity among the people who were consulted through the House of Commons committee process.

Mr Marlborough: You have not read the committee report.

Mrs PARKER: I have. There was unanimity that there must be some very practical work on what is needed to be done to make sure that we had all possible information.

The amendment refers to determining the number of child migrants involved. It is not possible to determine that number. I spoke briefly with the member for Murray-Wellington about the matter and there is just not enough information available to determine how many children were involved. There is also reference to identifying the effort that was made during the schemes. We know what effort was made. It is the effort that was not made that is important. We look back now and we know that a very poor effort was made. Great secrecy surrounded the information about the existence of parents and siblings. There was appalling secrecy in the provision of information. In fact, the report noted that the department in Western Australia had been willing to provide that information.

We know also that little effort has been made to reunite or to assist in reunification. The House of Commons committee report gives some practical suggestions and recommendations to the British Government on what should be done to address that issue. Assistance to trace family heritage is absolutely imperative. There is reference also to providing counselling or other services. We believe that there is enough information for us to know about the tragedies and the traumas that were suffered and about the circumstances of many of the children. We know that few details and records were kept in the United Kingdom and here in Western Australia. It is time to look not at what was not done but at what action we can take now. In my ministerial statement yesterday, I outlined a commitment by the Government to embrace the recommendations at state level. As I have mentioned, for several years the

department has dedicated an officer to deal with such inquiries. We have had more than 600 inquiries over about 10 years from child migrants or people who represent them. That appointment of an officer was a recommendation of the United Kingdom report. We hope that other States and certainly the British authorities embrace those recommendations and provide support.

There is reference to providing counselling and other services. We know that there has been an appalling paucity of counselling and other services for people who either dealt with the tragedy and the trauma of their past or found that the search for information was frustrating and, upon finding it, found that it was distressing. In Western Australia, through Family and Children's Services, we have been able to provide the service to people who have needed it. Again, we fully support the recommendations. It is not a matter of looking back and saying how little it was. It was so little that it was unacceptable.

Ms Anwyl: Do you support the recommendation for a national inquiry?

Mrs PARKER: I support the recommendations of the committee.

Ms Anwyl: What about recommendation 110?

Mrs PARKER: I have a summary from which I have been working. I support the recommendations. There were 17 recommendations and we have supported 16 of them. The seventeenth recommendation involved the Statute of limitations, and on that we took the Crown Solicitor's advice. The energies of this Parliament and Western Australian taxpayers' dollars should not be directed at looking back at what were the wrongs.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs PARKER: We cannot right the wrongs of the past but we can provide the services that were recommended in the report. Also, I have directed my department to establish links in the United Kingdom and links with the institutions that were involved - all the agencies in Britain, Malta and Australia, and particularly in Western Australia, where we have responsibility. It is time we had some coordination between those authorities so that for the first time we can coordinate well and efficiently and make it easier and simpler for child migrants, first and foremost, to address the matter that they prioritised - tracing their family roots - and, secondly, to provide them with support.

We do not support the amendment. We believe that there is enough information now, particularly as the House of Commons committee recommends that action be taken. Certainly, we in Western Australia had a priority on action for several years with the services that I outlined in the House and we are committed to continuing them. It is time for action and support. Today's acknowledgment has been important for child migrants. I had a telephone call from a gentleman, a child migrant, last night and we discussed the issue of acknowledgment. That is an important point and I have commented on it.

The Government does not believe that the amendment calling for the reestablishment of a select committee will in any way provide the action and services that the House of Commons committee recommended, and for that reason we do not support the amendment.

MS MacTIERNAN (Armadale) [2.58 pm]: Words are cheap and, unfortunately, there are no cheaper words than those that have been spoken here today by the Minister. I must say that when there was an indication yesterday that the Minister would support the Opposition's motion, I thought that perhaps at last, after many years, we were actually getting somewhere in providing a just resolution.

Mr Bloffwitch: Whatever made you think that?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I said that I thought that we might be getting to a just resolution of this tragic affair, but from the Minister's comments today in response to the motion, which has been supported by many members, including the member for Kalgoorlie, it is quite clear that we are getting from the Minister the same set of empty words that have been flashed around by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church for many years - "We shouldn't look back; those things happened in the past; it is unfortunate; it would only reopen wounds; let's talk about counselling and re-establishing contacts."

One thing that has been persistently demanded by the victims of these various institutions - they are not confined to Christian Brothers' institutions - is the opportunity to have their day in court. Of course, that does not suit a lot of people. It does not suit those who ran the institutions or the organs of state. As I said earlier today, it is quite clear from the evidence that the State is heavily involved in this process, firstly, from its sheer neglect of its fiduciary duty; that is, to ensure the standard of care, of education and protection from physical and moral danger were in place. It failed in its duty in that regard. Even more frightening was what in many instances appears to be, on the evidence

available to us today, a deliberate cover-up. Officers from the Education Department, from the equivalent of Family and Children's Services, and from a range of other agencies would inspect these facilities and be very concerned about what they saw. They filed reports which simply were not acted upon or in some instances it appears were deliberately concealed.

I note the member for Willagee made reference to a Mr Welsh who in 1990 wrote *Bindoon File* in which quite a bit of that information is set out. In all this nonsense today, members opposite have asked us to put it all behind us and go on and just do the nice bits. They have asked us to deny these people their day in court. In one recommendation, the House of Commons' Select Committee on Health which investigated the welfare of British child migrants, makes it very clear that some amendment to the Statute of limitations is required. That is an important part of its findings. It goes on to say that, having examined the Statute of limitations in Western Australia, it would like to see some suspension of the limitation periods in respect of child migrants.

I will go into this issue - we are seeking to educate the Minister on some of these points, so I will wait until she has had her little chat with the member for Geraldton; I am making a presumption that the Minister has some interest in these matters -

Mr Bloffwitch: The Minister has finished her speech; you are quite entitled to carry on with yours.

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is right. Surely if the Minister has the concerns of the child migrants at heart, she should be interested in the debate. I will deal specifically in my contribution with this issue of the Statute of limitations. This matter has been under consideration for quite some time. It was pointed out in this report that the fact that Western Australia has a six-year limitation period with no discretion in it whatsoever forced the victims of the various institutions to seek legal recourse in New South Wales. Like every other mainland State of Australia and every other common law jurisdiction, New South Wales has a provision that allows for an extension of the limitation period in certain circumstances where a plaintiff was not in a position to take action within the standard limitation period. It is not an extension by right, but must be sought. The victims of these institutions sought to take their action to New South Wales where they could access that discretion. They sought to do it by saying that the principal office of, in this case, the Christian Brothers, was in New South Wales; hence, they had a course of action in that State against the Christian Brothers. That was a very uncertain piece of legal manoeuvring. Because of the grave uncertainty of that and because, as it says in the House of Commons' committee report, the Christian Brothers used every trick in the book to frustrate the matter being properly aired, they were forced into what can only be described as a most unsatisfactory settlement.

In that context the House of Commons' committee recommended that we do something about the Statute of limitations. In that regard the Minister states that in respect to the recommendations to suspend the Statute of Limitations, there is no limitation on time for commencing criminal proceedings that might arise out of this type of matter and this option remains open.

I will address that point first. I find this completely disingenuous. For a start, the Director of Public Prosecutions has already said that he will not run these prosecutions. Is the Minister now saying that we are supposed to seek some incredible new precedent whereby these victims of the Christian Brothers take the criminal prosecutions themselves? Is she seriously expecting this? If not, given that the Director of Public Prosecutions has made a determination that he will not take action, in what sense does this option remain open?

Mr Pental: Why don't you take action against the Director of Public Prosecutions?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I am asking the Minister -

Mr Pental: I am asking you.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The member may well be asking me, but it is a completely irrelevant question.

Mr Pental: You would not answer the question this morning when I raised it about why you supported the DPP in withdrawing the abortion charges. That suited your agenda then, but you will not let him get away with this decision this time.

Mr Carpenter: There is no analogy there.

Mr Pental: There is a close analogy.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I am prepared to take the interjection, if the member for South Perth will let me respond. The answer is as simple as this: In my comments I am not criticising; I am not making any comments on the rights and wrongs of the decision of the Director of Public Prosecutions. I am simply pointing to the fact that that decision has been made. I am asking the Minister for Family and Children's Services to explain, given that that decision has been

made, in what sense the option remains open for there to be criminal proceedings. There are only two possibilities: First, is the Attorney General in some way prepared to override the Director of Public Prosecutions and launch a prosecution? Has that been contemplated?

Mrs Parker: No.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The second possibility is in an incredibly rare and tricky legal manoeuvre whereby the victims launch their own private prosecution. Is that what the Minister is contemplating?

Mrs Parker: Comments were made in regard to the Statute of limitations. There is no Statute over criminal prosecutions and that is something the DPP has to deal with. If you are talking about civil compensation, the report is very clear. It says that it does not recommend the compensation claim.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The Minister clearly does not understand what is going on here. She is arguing that the possibility of prosecution of these matters in criminal courts remains open. As a practical matter, it does not because the Director of Public Prosecutions has made a decision not to prosecute. This Minister has trotted out a set of words. Everybody who knows what is going on recognises that this is complete rubbish. There is no option. The Director of Public Prosecutions has made his decision.

In a practical, real sense that is not an option. I do not know how well the Minister is acquainted with the law, but there is a very big difference between the criminal and civil standards of proof. To establish criminal culpability, one is required to prove a matter beyond reasonable doubt. To satisfy the civil standard, one need only establish beyond the balance of probabilities. As we all know, in these sorts of circumstances, with such time having elapsed, with the lack of material evidence still around, it will be very difficult to establish these matters beyond reasonable doubt.

Mr Pandal: Why did your Government not do something about it? You play to your little gallery here, you bleeding heart, and your Government did nothing. From 1989 onwards, you people sat on your hands because it suited you to do so.

Ms MacTIERNAN: There is nothing wrong -

Mr Pandal: You did nothing as a member of the upper House.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The member for South Perth is showing his profound ignorance.

Mr Pandal: I am putting the member for Armadale on the spot.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The member for South Perth is not putting me on the spot.

Mr Pandal: That is the humbug of people who press the line trying to be pushed by the member for Armadale.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I want to answer these comments because I can do so and I will answer them very fully. I do not believe that the fault has lain on one side of politics. It is a statement I made this morning. There has been a hesitancy on both sides of politics to deal with this matter, first, because of the power and influence of the Catholic Church and, secondly, because the State is concerned about its own culpability. I acknowledge to the member for South Perth that we should have done more when we were in government.

Mr Pandal: It is easy to say that now.

Ms MacTIERNAN: May I have an opportunity to comment? I do not have much to say.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member has allowed two or three interjections. Perhaps she does not want to accept any more.

Ms MacTIERNAN: What I am attempting to do is answer these questions. I have accepted that I believe the Labor Government could have done more during its period in office and that it was subjected to the same influences.

The member wanted to know what I did about it. While I was in the upper House I put this matter to our Caucus and we decided that we would change our position. I tried twice in the upper House to introduce a private member's Bill to modify the Statute of limitations. I moved legislation twice which would have enabled not only the victims of these various institutions but also a whole raft of other people who were subject to physical and sexual abuse - and even people with claims of a quite different nature - to have their cases prosecuted outside the limitation period provided certain thresholds were met.

Therefore, I indicate to the member for South Perth that I can talk with considerable authority on this matter. I have been prepared to take up this issue, identify what needs to be done, and propose to this place legislation that would

provide the opportunity for the justice that needs to be provided. If the member is interested, I can give him copies of the second reading speeches that I used when I attempted to introduce this legislation in the upper House.

I move on to the Minister's comments. She said -

However, retrospective change to the Statute of Limitations Act 1935 would need to be treated with considerable caution both because of its effect on the general principle against retrospective legislation and its effect on the general principal of limitation periods in relation to individual cases.

This is the pièce de résistance -

Any such legislation would need to be given careful consideration.

I think the Minister has been mining some old copies of *Hansard*. She has returned to the Government's comments in 1982 because when at that time the Law Reform Commission made recommendations on amendments to the Statute of limitations, this is almost word for word the Government's response then.

The Law Reform Commission has now considered this matter twice; once in 1982 and again in 1985. Law Reform Commission reports have recommended that we do something about this. This dates back to a 1963 case in the British appeal court which found that the limitation period ran not from when a cause of action was discovered but from when the underlying incident occurred. The court said it was grossly unfair and would lead to massive injustice but it could do nothing about the matter because that was what was set down in the Statute of limitations. It urged legislatures around the common law world to address the matter. Of course, this matter was addressed everywhere else except in Western Australia. This State has remained resistant. This is the only State in Australia - virtually the only State in the entire common law world - that has not taken to heart the words of the appeal court and been prepared to provide this measure of justice. What do we get from this Minister? Fifteen to 16 years on from when this legislation was first introduced into this place, she says that they need more time to consider it and that they have to be careful.

I say to the Minister that since 1982 this legislation has been put in place all over the world and all the fears of floodgates being opened up and other excuses that were used by various Governments not to put it in place have turned out to be completely vacuous. It has not led to a massive flood of claims. Yes, some claims that would otherwise have been denied have quite properly been heard. That is a positive step and that is what we have been trying to achieve.

It is time we were prepared to do something about this matter. I agree that members of the Labor Party should have moved in this direction. We did to a limited extent when we amended the limitation period in respect of people suffering from asbestosis and mesothelioma. We were not frightened then of retrospective legislation; obviously it had a retrospective effect. This legislation, by its very nature, will have a retrospective effect. We did it for those limited cases. There is no justification for singling out these cases and leaving all the other plaintiffs who have endured very real damage and loss without any course of action.

Therefore, the Minister should look again at the material that has been written on the need to amend the Statute of limitations. She should look at the debates in this Parliament going back to 1982. I know that the Catholic Church has been wielding much influence in this regard. Pressure was put on me by sources close to the Catholic Church not to move my Bill on the Statute of limitations. However, in the end we resolved that it was the right and proper thing to do and it was aimed not just at institutions run by the church.

I understand that powerful influences behind the Government are pushing for this. I understand also that there is a very real potential claim against the State that could cost us money. However, at the end of the day we have an obligation to address our wrongdoing. We have an obligation to accept responsibility for our failings. As a State and an organ of the people of Western Australia, we must acknowledge that a mistake was made. We did not properly protect those children.

I support the motion moved by the member for Pilbara and supported by some of my colleagues. We need to allow a full inquiry. We need to allow the Barnett committee to complete its work. However, I urge the Minister also to take on board that her explanation as to why we do not need to amend the Statute of limitations is complete and utter nonsense. For some reason, the Attorney General has a particular opposition to any change to the Statute of limitations. It is a particularly idiosyncratic position that he takes. It is certainly not supported by any of the senior members of the legal profession and it has not been supported by anyone including two Law Reform Commissions that have investigated this matter.

MR BROWN (Bassendean) [3.19 pm]: I commence my short address in support of the amendment by asking some questions to which I invite the Minister for Family and Children's Services to respond by way of interjection.

The Select Committee into Child Migration report recommended that the committee be converted into an honorary royal commission prior to the prorogation of the thirty-fourth Parliament of Western Australia. We all know that that was not done. Has the Government made a decision that it will not now convene or establish a royal commission or an honorary royal commission?

Mrs Parker: Yes. We have said that it is important to provide the services, and that has been our priority. As I have said, we are noted in the report for doing so.

Mr BROWN: I am trying to get on the record the Government's decision that it will not accept that recommendation.

Mrs Parker: We will not proceed with the royal commission as recommended by that select committee.

Mr Barnett: Do not misuse words here. It is not that the Government has rejected a royal commission: It has no intention of establishing a royal commission. The matter has not gone to Cabinet formally. We have no intention of establishing a royal commission.

Mr BROWN: How has the Government made a decision without its being considered by Cabinet?

Mr Barnett: We do not make decisions on what we may not do. Cabinets make a decision to do something rather than not to do something. There is no intention or proposal, as I understand it, to establish a royal commission.

Mr BROWN: Given the Government's support for the establishment of a select committee, surely it would respond in the normal way to the findings of that select committee, even though it reported at the end of one Parliament and the response would have been tabled in the next. I ask that because, on 20 August 1997, at page 5264 of *Hansard*, I asked the Premier -

- (1) Is the Premier aware of the Interim Report of the Select Committee into Child Migration?
- (2) Is the Premier aware the select committee recommended it be converted into an Honorary Royal Commission?
- (3) Does the Premier intend to establish an Honorary Royal Commission into Child Migration as recommended by the select committee?
- (4) If so, when?
- (5) If not, why not?

The Premier's answer to questions (1) and (2) was "Yes". In answer to questions (3) to (5), he stated -

The Government has considered the committee's report. However, at this time, no decision has been made on any future action.

I then sent a letter to constituents of mine who have a particular interest in this matter, and I pursued the issue again with the following question on 11 November 1997 -

- (1) Further to question on notice No. 1636 of 1997, does the Government intend to make a decision on this matter this year?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) Does the Premier intend to have the matter listed for Cabinet consideration?
- (4) If not, why not?
- (5) Has the Government essentially decided to shelve the issue by refusing to make a decision on the recommendations in the report?
- (6) If not, when is it envisaged a decision will be made?

The Premier's response was -

- (1)-(6) As indicated previously, no decision has been made on any future action. However, a British House of Commons Select Committee has announced that it will hold an inquiry into child migration. The Government will forward a copy of the Western Australian report to that Committee to assist with its deliberations.

I refer to the Premier's answer to the first question asked on 20 August 1997, in which he said -

The Government has considered the committee's report.

I do not know how the Government could have considered the committee's report if it has not been presented to Cabinet. There is a question in my mind about whether the Premier has misled the Parliament, because according to the information we now have from the Leader of the House, no report has been presented to Cabinet; no decision has been made by the Cabinet. I interpret "government consideration" to mean not ministerial consideration but consideration by the Cabinet. We are now told by the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party and Leader of the House that this matter has not come before Cabinet.

Mr Barnett: I did not say that. You will not get away with trying to put words in people's mouths.

Mr BROWN: Let us have it again; it is already in *Hansard*.

Mr Barnett: I said there has not been a submission to Cabinet to establish a royal commission. That does not mean that it has not been discussed in Cabinet. I will not talk about what we discuss in Cabinet. The member should not assume things. There has been no cabinet submission to establish a royal commission.

Mr BROWN: But it has been considered by the Cabinet.

Mr Barnett: It has been discussed. It is an issue, but there has been no cabinet decision to establish a royal commission.

Mr BROWN: That is about as slippery as an eel. If that is the calibre of honesty and integrity the Government intends to use in dealing with this issue, we can see why people who want a proper inquiry into what transpired have major concerns. The Government has dealt with it in an eel-like slippery fashion to try to minimise the political damage and cop out by not going ahead with the select committee's recommendation.

The Minister criticised the Opposition's amendment. I invite her to read it carefully. She should then read the select committee's terms of reference. The amendment before the Parliament today and the committee's terms of reference as established by the Parliament in 1996, with the exception of about 10 words, are exactly the same. It is interesting that the Minister has criticised the form of words used in this motion when the Government had a hand in establishing a select committee with terms of reference containing the same words. Perhaps with the benefit of hindsight, the words are not adequate. However, that was the position that the Government supported in 1996, when the select committee was established.

The Minister referred to the outcome of the inquiry by the House of Commons Select Committee on Health - the third report into the welfare of former British child migrants, volume one. She said that that report looked to the future and that that was its essence. The Minister elected to ignore or did not read recommendation 116 of that report, which states -

We urge the Federal Government of Australia to initiate an inquiry into post-war practices in institutions such as Bindoon and Neerkol, with a view to establishing the truth behind allegations of physical, mental and sexual abuse; discovering the names of any perpetrators; and prosecuting any surviving members of staff against whom evidence is available.

It is true that the recommendation refers to a federal government inquiry. However, as we know, these matters have traditionally fallen under the States' jurisdiction. It is appropriate for the State to pick up that recommendation. A view has been expressed by the House of Commons Select Committee on Health which, again, has been ignored by this Government.

I now briefly refer to the fact that opinions have changed on this matter. The member for South Perth, by way of interjection on the member for Armadale, referred to the fact that things had not been done previously. That is true. However, people from all walks of life have been slowly coming to grips with the need to change their position. I instance one example. I refer to the third paragraph of a letter dated 5 October 1994 dealing with a legal dispute which arose from matters concerning the Christian Brothers. It reads -

To my mind, the legal dispute about the will is much more significant than the abuse of the orphans. I know about that abuse. I spent some time at Castledare as a child. What I am not convinced about is that anything will be served by a public enquiry. Certainly it might help to heal emotional and psychological scars, but the wrongs can never be righted.

The author of that letter was Hon Derrick Tomlinson. I now turn to a newspaper report dated 8 August 1998 headed "Liberal MLC urges child migrant probe", which reads -

A senior Liberal has backed calls by the Opposition to hold a wide-ranging inquiry into the child migration scheme to investigate allegations of abuse at WA orphanages and institutions.

Liberal MLC Derrick Tomlinson said the Government should establish a parliamentary committee to investigate the allegations of abuse.

I raise that article because it has been extraordinarily difficult for people now well into their 50s, 60s or 70s to convince members of this place of the need for a thorough inquiry into these matters. It has been an extreme battle. When people first raised these matters, there was an immediate response of disbelief. They have campaigned vociferously, and I am sure now have strong community support. They believe that these matter should be investigated. Despite the time taken to gain support, and despite dimming memories and the problems associated with inquiring into events of long ago, it is now the right and just thing to do.

I congratulate Hon Derrick Tomlinson for making those statements. He has been honest and changed his position over the last few years. He is not alone in doing so. Many people have changed their position in the past few years, primarily because they have had time to think about the issues involved. They have been confronted with them by constituents and people scarred by the dreadful experience. They have considered the right thing to do, not the political action or protecting the financial interests of the State. The right thing in relation to these allegations is, as an absolute minimum, to have them thoroughly investigated. What that investigation might lead to can be determined only if the investigation is held.

In the event that Parliament does not agree to the establishment of a select committee, members would turn their backs on those people. People will not be permitted to tell the story and their history regarding what happened to them. Some costs to the State may be involved in that action; however, it is not as great as the cost to many lives affected in a detrimental way by the experiences they have had to endure.

I hoped to quote from a number of other experiences in this speech, but unfortunately time eludes me. Nevertheless, it is important to refer quickly to a question asked by Hon Jim Scott in 1995, through the Minister for Transport in another place, to the then Minister for Community Development. This was a long and detailed question in 26 parts. It relates to whether the files of the former Child Welfare Department contained reports dealing with abuse of children at those institutions, and what had happened to those reports of abuse. The pertinent part of all those questions is a memo from the then Minister for Child Welfare dated 19 March 1941, which reads -

On Friday of last week I had discussion with His Grace Archbishop Prendiville regarding the relationship of the Child Welfare Department and its officers to the Clontarf Orphanage and those charged with its management.

His Grace considers that hostility has developed between certain officers of the Department and Bro. Keaney and admits that blame may be attachable to some extent to all concerned, including Bro. Keaney. However, he is anxious to restore the friendliest of relationships between all officers of the Department and all of those in charge of the Roman Catholic Institutions and assured me that any of your officers will now be received in a friendly and co-operative spirit at Clontarf and the other Roman Catholic Institutions.

His Grace suggested he believed the hostility had arisen because of a tendency for officers of the Department to arrive at a judgment in a particular case on the story given to them by any boy who absconds from an Institution. He thinks if those in charge of the institution concerned are given the earliest possible opportunity to reply to the story given to the Department by any absconder and the officers of the Department then arrive at a decision having studied both side of the particular case, there should be no difficulty in the future.

The next paragraph reads-

You will be aware of the bad atmosphere that is created and the many difficulties that arise when relations between those in charge of institutions and officers of the Department become strained. I am not now concerned with the measure of blame that should be placed upon the shoulders of any officer or anyone associated with the Institution.

That says it all.

MR MARLBOROUGH (Peel) [3.40 pm]: I shall begin my speech by trying to put the debate into some sort of present-day context and looking at the history surrounding it. Having heard the Minister for Family and Children's Services speak, while she is in the Chamber I ask: Does the Minister believe that murder is a horrendous crime?

Mrs Parker: Yes.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Yes, of course she does. Does the Minister believe that breaking and entering is a horrendous crime?

Mrs Parker: Keep asking your questions.

Mr Barnett: Make your speech and address your comments to the Chair. You can ask the Minister a question in question time if you wish.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: The Minister does not need coaching from the Leader of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The purpose of the member standing on his feet is not to debate with the Minister. It is to address his remarks to the Chair. If the Minister wishes to interject, by all means she can. I do not like the member asking questions directly to the Minister.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I only need to ask one more question. Does the Minister for Family and Children's Services believe that rape is a horrendous crime?

Mrs Parker: I think it is important for you to make your speech. We have a Criminal Code. A number of horrendous crimes take place and rape is one of them.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member to direct his comments to the Chair now.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I am staggered that the Minister for Family and Children's Services cannot find it within herself today when this debate is taking place to answer the simple question as to whether rape -

Mrs Parker: I said it was.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: That is all I wanted to know.

Mr Pandal interjected.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I will not bother with that interjection, because it is unparliamentary. We now begin to put what we have before us into context: There are people in Western Australia who were born in WA; and there are people in Western Australia who came from the United Kingdom who went into institutions in this State and were raped at six years of age. In 1998 this Government passes new legislation in this Parliament to put present-day criminals in gaol for longer periods. Members of the Government say they want to change the justice system so that the penalties are harsher, and in the past week the Attorney General said he wants to remove any benefits to prisoners in the penal system who may behave well while they are in prison. All of that is put together by a Government that says it is very tough on criminals and it will not tolerate criminals who carry out offences in which people are physically abused.

Quite rightly, the Government says it is sick of breaking and entering offences in which elderly people are battered around the head; of crimes such as a handbag grab in the street in which an elderly person falls down and breaks her hip; and of young people taking drugs who carry out these offences. The Government says it will bring the full weight of the law to bear on those who commit offences of this nature because the people of WA demand it. The Government thinks it is morally correct to be tougher on crime because it is listening to the people of Western Australia who are saying that the Government must be tougher on crime.

That attitude has been building up in this Government for the past four years or more and particularly so this week. I am sure that, as time goes by, it will continue on its way, and yet, when faced with some of the most horrendous criminal activities that can take place against society - that is, to put it bluntly, the misuse, and in many instances, the rape of young children - the Minister for Family and Children's Services stands up and promotes an excuse as to why an inquiry should not be held into the matter, and as to why she will not, in her position, encourage the Director of Public Prosecutions to change his position on prosecutions of people who are involved in that activity.

Is it not a tragedy that we are faced with that position today? It is a tragedy for this reason: Not only is it a human tragedy for the victims of such activities and also because the law is being abused by this House as it will not allow the law to be used to its fullest extent, but also it is a tragedy because it shows nothing has changed in the empire. This is a mentality that belongs in the old British empire which started exporting children for misuse in the 1640s when it first sent its orphans to Virginia. Do members know why the British Empire sent orphans to Virginia in the 1640s? It did not do that because America was the place of milk and honey, but rather because it was costing English society too much to look after these orphans in England. That is the decision it made. The British could not afford to have these children running around the streets of London, Liverpool or Manchester unkempt and uncared for in their society.

Unfortunately the mentality that applied in 1640 when the British sent the first children to be misused in Virginia still applied in England until the late 1960s. All of the stories about the people who did good, can of course be told, but they need to be put into context.

A report from the UK, albeit a short one, looking at New Zealand, Australia and Canada - it is not a very heavy document for a report - and which includes the present-day empire which is known as the Commonwealth, tries to address and redress some of the horrific events that took place. Let us put it into context in terms of these youngsters who were sent to Australia. The point I made about them not being sent here for the best reasons is clearly demonstrated in one or two paragraphs of the report. It says this -

Dr Barbara Kahan, OBE, who was a Children's Officer in charge of Oxfordshire County Council Children's Department in the 1950s, and who subsequently became Chair of the National Children's Bureau, wrote to tell us of her memories of local government decision-making in respect of child migration:

"it was clear from discussion in Parliament around that time (the early 50s) . . .

This is the first line - it is not something that somebody talks about over morning tea - and I emphasise those words.

. . . that the emigration scheme was seen as cost- cutting.

This was not for the benefit of the children at all; it was not for their health or for the goodness of mankind; it was a cost cutting exercise. She continues -

When Children's Departments were set up in 1948 the intention was to achieve drastic reform of a dreadful system. Inevitably this led to more expenditure and more children in care because need was much greater than Public Assistance had ever recognised. . . . One of the consequences was that great pressure was put on Children's Officers to board children out . . . there was a debate in the House of Commons when certain MPs urged the Government to put pressure on "these sticky-fingered Children's Officers" who were reluctant to emigrate their children. . . . The emigration schemes were, in my opinion, a shameful, disgraceful policy and in my memory the financial motivation was quite overt in the early 1950s.

In as late as the 1950s, and I suggest throughout this scheme, the real need was for England to get rid of some of its problems. That is what this scheme was all about. We have now established that the scheme was motivated not by care, but by economics. If we evaluated what these children would go through when they were sent overseas on the basis of an economic need, we would not ever make the right judgment, but if the basis were a care need, we would place an entirely different light on where we would send them and on what they would be doing.

We should not forget that when the United Kingdom looked at the empire, it exported not only its children but also its idea that in certain circumstances, children are simply chattels. That is indicated by the position that the Minister for Family and Children's Services has taken today, where she does not intend to hold an inquiry into what is possibly the most vicious criminal activity that has taken place in institutions in this State. I do not care whether those institutions are Catholic, Anglican or Methodist. My concern is that there is evidence in this document and from the parliamentary inquiry that has taken place in this State that abuse of the most horrific criminal type has taken place. No-one questions that. Even the member for South Perth, in his defence of the Catholic Church - and rightly so, because that is his religious position - said he was aware of 13 brothers who had committed the most horrific abuse of children.

There is no argument about what occurred. What we are now doing is making a value judgment in this Parliament, led by the Minister for Family and Children's Services, about whether we should put in place a system where, if crimes are found to have been committed, those crimes will be in the public arena and before the courts. It is unfortunate that this Minister has not seen fit to allow that. She is representing the Government. There can be no doubt that the Government has made a decision on this matter, and that will be evident when we divide on this matter. It is no use the Government's saying that it wants to move on. As I said earlier by way of interjection, the Minister should go to the Jewish temple in Northbridge this Saturday and tell the Jewish community that it should move on and forget the past!

More importantly, I ask the Minister, as a parent, as are most members of this Chamber, how she would react if one of her children aged late thirties or early forties said to her as a parent, "I was sexually interfered with when I was a young child by a friend of the family." I doubt that the Minister would say to that child, "Forget it. That happened 30 years ago." I believe she would demand that the police examine the matter and hear the evidence, and she would go to the Director of Public Prosecutions and demand that he change his view on whether these matters should be heard publicly. I do not think any parents who had a caring bone in their body for their children and for society at large would say to a child in those circumstances, "Forget it. Move on. What are you worried about? You are married and have children. You have a successful business." Unfortunately, that is not the picture that is painted by many of the children who went through these institutions, many of whom have carried this burden with them for all of their lives and are simply seeking the opportunity to let the world know about the burden that they are carrying.

I return to the report to indicate just how horrific was this situation. The Canadian body called the Home Children of Canada reported that 11 per cent of the population of Canada came from the British child migrant scheme; and the Canadians are very proud of that. That same body gave empirical evidence to the committee that 67 per cent of that 11 per cent of migrants were abused as children when they were sent to Canada.

The stand of the Government is outrageous and unjustifiable when we consider that many of the children who were abused in these institutions were born in Western Australia. I understand that 4 000 Western Australian orphans went through Clontarf - not 40 or 400, but 4 000. How can a Government deny those people the right to have their cases heard, now that they are willing to come forward and talk, as they have never done before, about the guilt, the fear and the trepidation, where nobody understood them, where they experienced ruined marriages and an inability to communicate, and where many of them were uneducated because the system did not give them the care that they needed to be educated but beat them and overworked them?

I cringed earlier when the member for South Perth said that to send a young child to a building site to mix cement is not his idea of abuse. My mother-in-law is 87 years old. She was John Curtin's secretary. She visited Bindoon and talked to the people there, and it has never left her memory. She still has the photos of that visit. The children were undernourished, barefoot and filthy, and they worked 14 hours a day on a building site at nine years of age. They were slave labour. This was not character building. This was to meet the model of the empire - cheap labour! Whether it was the Anglicans, the Catholics or the Methodists, they simply transported to Australia all of the evil things that went with that model.

We now have the opportunity to give these people the right to look at and uncover all of that evil that took place. On the one hand the Government states that it stands for what is right; it stands for law and order; it stands for stiffer penalties; and it will not stand for people being physically abused in their own homes. However, on the other hand, the Government and the Minister for Family and Children's Services want to deny a person who as a six-year-old was raped in an institution the right to have that matter heard before a court. That is an absolute disgrace. The Minister should consider her position as a Minister and resign immediately.

MR McGOWAN (Rockingham) [3.59 pm]: I congratulate the member for Peel on his speech. It was outstanding and very moving, and probably one of the best speeches I have heard in this Parliament because it had emotion behind it. That is what speeches in this Parliament should be about.

I do not profess to be an expert on this issue of child migration. I have not done a great deal of research into it, so I will not go into great depth about the facts of the matter; however, I have learnt a lot during the debate today. I am amazed that these events have happened recently and that they did not feature as great issues in the times in which they occurred. It seems to me that throughout history quite often events come to public attention a long time after they occurred. Such was the case with the Aboriginal children who were removed from their families and also child migrants. I am amazed that these events took place within my lifetime.

Recently I went to the federal Parliament where the Aboriginal children issue was the subject of a display. I was amazed to learn that those events took place during my lifetime. It seems to me that it is not too late for us to do something about these issues. About two years ago I visited Port Arthur in Tasmania and I saw the horrendous things that happened to the prisoners who were incarcerated there; in particular, solitary confinement and the lashings they had to endure for years on end. Although these events were quite awful, we cannot do anything about them now. They occurred over 100 years ago and have now become objects of historical fascination, rather than issues about which we are able to do something constructive.

By comparison, the events that took place in relation to the child migrants occurred recently, during my lifetime. A range of people in this State experienced those events and many people who grew up here remember them. We should take steps to address them. In the previous Parliament, my predecessor, the former member for Rockingham, Michael Barnett, took that step. He was the first member in any Parliament in this country to do so. At the time I came to listen to his speech on that issue. It was probably one of the longest speeches to be made in this Chamber; it went for two hours. He addressed the issues involved comprehensively and well.

This Parliament took constructive action. It helped the people who endured these events to come to terms with the fact that people in a position of authority in the State, which we in this Chamber are, were taking these issues seriously. It is incumbent on us to do that, not just as a basis for some historical record of what took place, but to help these people come to terms with what happened to them. Therefore, I support the amendment.

It is relevant to me because my electorate has a very high proportion of people who have emigrated from the United Kingdom. About 35 per cent of my constituency comprises people who were born in the United Kingdom. A huge number of them are quite mortified by what took place under the policies of the British Government and the Governments of the States and Commonwealth of Australia. Many of them would like to see us get to the bottom

of this issue and want to see something done about it. Many are child migrants and they look to someone like me, as their member of Parliament, to address the issue on their behalf.

I recently spoke to a staff member of Kim Beazley. I am often amazed by the people I meet. I found that this person was a child migrant. In fact, on Monday of this week he was telling me that he did not know that his father had been alive until quite recently. As a child he was always told that his father was dead. In fact, his father died when the immigrant was an adult. He was never given the opportunity to find out who his father was or where he was. He has not yet met all of his brothers and sisters. He appears to be a very tough person and does not show his feelings, but I imagine it would be quite traumatic to know that around the United Kingdom and Australia he has brothers and sisters whom he has never met. He told me that he and his brothers had come to Australia as children and had no knowledge of their family. It struck me, as someone who has come from a very supportive and loving family, that that would have a dramatic effect on a person's life.

These events were very sad. As a Parliament we owe it to these people to attempt to get to the bottom of what took place. To these people I say that I am sorry for what happened to them. They should not have had to endure what they did. I am sorry those things took place. I know the subject of people saying sorry has attracted a great deal of criticism in this country from certain elements over the past couple of years. I know I am not personally responsible for what took place to these people. I had nothing to do with it, but I am still sorry it happened. In the same way I would be sorry if someone whom I knew fell over and broke his arm; I might not have had anything to do with it, but I would be sorry that it happened. I repeat: I am sorry for what happened to these people. We certainly did the right thing earlier today in saying sorry to them. I think the member for Kalgoorlie has raised an important issue and we owe it to these people and to the Parliament to take their concerns seriously and to take them up in a proper fashion.

MR PENDAL (South Perth) [4.08 pm]: I will make a few brief remarks. The burden of what I want to say I said this morning when, along with other members, I supported the motion sponsored by the Leader of the Opposition. I said during that debate, and I repeat now, that I intend to support this amendment. I do so with the misgiving that I will repeat what I said this morning. An inquiry that looks at something that happened up to 40 years ago is fraught with difficulty, if not a little danger. Nonetheless I want to go on the record to say that I supported the earlier motion. I want to respond to some of the crocodile tears, the latter-day human rights concerns that I have heard mouthed in this place today, not least by the member for Peel. The more time I spend in this place, the more I see the question of human rights put up for auction, and human rights and their advocacy and their defence are what suits the day-to-day feelings of those doing the advocacy.

Mr McGowan: Show a bit of grace!

Mr PENDAL: The member for Rockingham has had his say. I am supporting the amendment but I could quite easily be talked out of doing that by someone like the member for Rockingham, who has made another lightweight contribution. He opened by saying that he had done no research and did not know much about the topic. I tell him, that showed.

We heard an Academy Award winning performance by the member for Peel a few minutes ago about the shocking things that happened. I remind members that these allegations first surfaced in 1984; three Labor Governments followed and they did nothing. I am pleased to see that one of the people in the chamber, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, is not interjecting like some of his colleagues because he was the Minister in charge of that ministry in one of those Labor Governments.

Mr Ripper: Perhaps I should interject. The Minister has already indicated that the select committee of the House of Commons praised the Western Australian Government for the services offered to former child migrants and I think those services began in 1985.

Mr PENDAL: Yes, that is right, I know that too. I am not talking about the services that were offered and that we were all keen to see offered. I am talking about the silence and inaction of people like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and his Labor colleagues in the Ministry of Community Services who did nothing, notwithstanding the fact that these allegations were first raised in 1984.

Mr Ripper interjected.

Mr PENDAL: I will come to that in a minute.

Mr Ripper interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PENDAL: If I have enough time when I have had my say I will take some interjections, but the member had his day and he fell asleep on it; he did nothing. I went through the list to see which other Labor Ministers were in charge

of that ministry in that period: Kay Hallahan did nothing; Mr Ripper, the member for Belmont, nothing; the former member for Mitchell, nothing; the member for out Nollamara way, nothing. I ask members to bear in mind that I am supporting this amendment. Do they know what the crowning glory of the hypocrisy was? We finally got an inquiry and it was not in Labor's day. We got an inquiry under the coalition and it was moved by a man who had spent 22 years in this place and he had fallen asleep too. However, in the past six months that he was here -

Mr McGowan: The member for South Perth is being very unfair.

Mr PENDAL: It may well be unfair. The member for Rockingham is irrelevant and feeble. He has demonstrated that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for South Perth should address his comments through me.

Mr PENDAL: I will. It may well be unfair on the former member for Rockingham. I think it is unfair that someone should have to get up and say what I am saying, but I am asking the rhetorical question: If it was so important, where was Mr Barnett? Where was he in 1974 when he was first elected? He later became a senior shadow Cabinet Minister and eventually occupied the seat of the Speaker but still did nothing. Six months before he left this House he finally got around to moving a select committee. Wow! That is commitment!

Ms Anwyl interjected.

Mr PENDAL: No, I will not. I have had many conversations with the ex-member for Rockingham. In many respects he is an admirable individual, especially having achieved what he did in the face of what he began with. It may well be unfair, as his successor has said, to reflect on the fact that he became this latter day convert to the human rights of these young children five minutes before he left the place.

The people for whom I felt the greatest contempt in the abortion debate in the early stages of this year were those in the Labor Party who were allegedly the greatest advocates of human rights. That is what I meant when I opened my remarks by saying that the very tenor and importance of human rights is something that was simply put up for bid in the Labor Party. I agree with the need for an inquiry and I outlined that this morning. I do not like having to support that. To use a word from the member for Rockingham, I think that happens to be unfair on the hundreds of brothers to whom I referred this morning, but that is life. Tough! Similarly, there are people in this place, including the member for Peel, who have to wear it in the knowledge that they sat here as members and did nothing. They have the cheek, the humbug, to stand and play to the crowds in demanding that something be done about a poor six-year-old child who was brutally maltreated when it was in their capacity to do something about it, not over the space of one or two Governments but three Governments until finally some support was given for an inquiry, which occurred in 1996. It took place with the idea that it would convert into an honorary royal commission to allow it to do that which the Labor Government did not have the guts to do in the previous two decades. If that is not hypocrisy, I do not know what is.

I heard the remarks of the member for Armadale this afternoon. She disputed my interjection that she was criticising the Director of Public Prosecutions for having failed to initiate prosecution against those evil errant ex-brothers. However, she did not mind the same Director of Public Prosecutions, exercising the same discretion, under the same Statute, deciding to withdraw the charges against the abortionists. I repeat what I said on that occasion. I was asked by the media at that time if I felt it was fair or whether I was angry that Mr McKechnie was dropping the charges against the doctors. I said I was disappointed but I accepted that what he was doing was acting with utter probity. I also said that if one accepts that Mr McKechnie was acting -

Point of Order

Mr McGOWAN: The member for South Perth is getting into areas which are not related to this debate. I reject his comments on the grounds of relevance. The abortion debate has nothing to do with the amendment before this place.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member is giving examples within his speech; he is quite entitled to do that.

Debate Resumed

Mr PENDAL: I understand there may be some discomfort for the member who raised the point of order. The analogy which I will draw again, since it was lost on him, was that I was a member of this Parliament when we agonised for months over the powers to be given to the Director of Public Prosecutions. The member for Murray-Wellington will remember it. However, in the final wash-up, the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions was created to depoliticise major and important criminal prosecutions and to take them out of the realm of the political spectrum.

The DPP exercised that discretion in the case of some ex-members of the Christian Brothers. If he exercised it in their cases, it was more than on the cards that he would exercise it a few years down the track in the case of the abortion prosecutions. Was he acting because he favoured this side or that side? No. He exercised the discretion on much the same grounds.

I recall when the Labor Attorney General of the day, Joe Berinson, intervened and brought a *nolle prosequi* against a trade union leader. He caused a helluva furor because the Attorney General of the day was seen to intervene in a criminal prosecution, especially in a prosecution against one of his fellow travellers. One result of that was that we eventually got bipartisan support for a Director of Public Prosecutions whose task it would be to decide dispassionately whom to prosecute and whom not to prosecute.

I have to say that as much as it discomfited me in the abortion debate, Mr McKechnie has it right on at least those two major occasions. The great human rights advocates in this Parliament cannot come back and say, "We were pleased that he did it in the case of the two abortion doctors but we hate his guts because he did it in respect of the Christian Brothers."

Ms Anwyl: We did not say that.

Mr PENDAL: All right, I will change it around and say that members opposite do not like it.

Mr Baker: There has also been a change in the law which has a slight bearing on that.

Mr PENDAL: That is right. I finish on this note: I supported the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition this morning and I support the amendment this afternoon to re-establish the select committee. However, I certainly do not want my support for it to be mixed up with the philosophical claptrap that I have heard from a number of members but topped magnificently by the member for Peel. He has a fabulous record anyway.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for South Perth not to reflect too strongly on another member of the House.

Mr PENDAL: The member for Peel invited all of that, notwithstanding that I will not respond, when he spoke the way he did; as did the member for Armadale and all other members who have been part of a political process and system in which they were mute when they were in a position to do something and now screech louder than ever when they are out of office. I resent that double standard. I resent that manufacturing of an issue. Although the member for Kalgoorlie shakes her head at the moment, she is fair minded enough to know -

Ms Anwyl: Does the member for South Perth include me in his remarks?

Mr PENDAL: No.

Ms Anwyl: He acknowledges that I was not then part of the Government?

Mr PENDAL: I do. That is one of the few reasons I support the amendment because at least the member came in here and, as far as I know, stated a fair and reasonable case; I told her at the time that I would support her and I will.

However, I do not want the record to reflect that I support an amendment which has been advocated by other groups and individuals who have shown nothing but cant and hypocrisy, because when they had the chance to do something, they did nothing. It may be - even though this amendment is not likely to succeed - that it will have at least helped a number of other people talk through the issue. Above all else, many members who have spoken in support of this amendment should never dare to say such sanctimonious things in this House. I support the amendment.

MR BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington - Parliamentary Secretary) [4.25 pm]: I wish to follow up on what I said this morning. In the early 1990s I became aware of the child migrants when one of my constituents contacted me. Because of that, I read *The Lost Children of the Empire* and I also saw the video *The Leaving of Liverpool* which brought home to me the problems faced by those child migrants. I became emotionally involved and supportive which is one of the reasons I asked to go on the select committee when it was formed in 1996.

However, by being on the select committee and after giving it more deliberation, I have changed my mind. The select committee commenced just before an election. I admit that I did not contribute as much time and thought as I should have at that time. Since then, I have given the matter a lot more thought and the information that we have received does not cause me to believe that having a further inquiry will produce any more backup evidence, statistics or figures. We need to get on with supporting those people who have some problems.

Ms Anwyl: Why did the member sign off on the interim report which recommended exactly that? What has changed?

Mr BRADSHAW: I have just explained that I was not looking at it as much as I should have been because we were

coming up to an election. I was the only one on the committee standing for re-election; all the others were retiring at that election. It is my fault that I did not give the matter as much input as I should have and I now regret that; otherwise I certainly would have put in a minority report not supporting it.

However, the statistics are not out there to enable us to find out how many children were sent to Australia. We have looked everywhere. We have been to everybody. The record-keeping was fairly poor. I know child migrants in my electorate who have returned to England and Ireland to try to get that information. As much as people are now trying to be cooperative whereas initially they were not, the problem is that the information was poorly recorded and is not there for those people.

That is no reason to say that we should not keep trying to centralise the information and give people a one-stop-shop where they can possibly find out where they came from and who their relatives are; because there are still people out there who need to find their relatives and their mothers and fathers, if they are still alive. I support that; we are trying to do that; and that has been in place for some time.

If I thought there was any advantage for those people in having a further inquiry I would be 100 per cent behind it. However, unfortunately, I do not believe it will help them. It will also reopen wounds for those people who have tried to get on with their lives and have said it was a bad time in the past. Not everybody found it a bad time. As I said this morning, some people found it a good time of life. I even quoted Mike Barnett, the former member for Rockingham, who said, in an article in *The Western Mail*, that he enjoyed life at Fairbridge. Therefore, not everybody was unhappy with those institutions.

Yesterday I received a letter from a person who had been at Clontarf. He was not a child migrant but went there because of a family breakup in the 1930s. He was very critical of me. He had a hard time in that he was physically but not sexually abused. However, there was no loving or real caring at that institution. He wrote -

Stop protecting the perpetrators from justice.

Look up *hansard*. You will see, that in 1940 it was stated that Brother Paul Keaney was not a fit person to be managing these institutions by two Senior Welfare Officers to the Minister of Child Welfare office, at the time.

The Child Welfare Minister at the time was Burt Hawk. Between the Minister and the Catholic Church, it was covered up, and is still being covered up by you politicians.

If that is correct - I have not had a chance to check the *Hansard* of that time - and the Government of the day had come to the party, there would be many fewer unhappy people and a lot less abuse would have been suffered by the children sent to Australia.

However, that behaviour was not unique to those institutions. I quoted the case of paedophilia activity in my electorate over the past 20 years that has just come to light. Should we have an inquiry into that as well? My great great grandfather was sent out here from England by himself at the age of 14 because he had committed a misdemeanour. Should we have an inquiry into that sort of thing?

Ms Anwyl: Is he still alive?

Mr BRADSHAW: No.

Ms Anwyl: That answers the question.

Mr BRADSHAW: It does not; many of the people concerned are no longer alive. If I thought a further inquiry would do anything to help these people I would wholeheartedly support it, but I do not believe it will. It is important that we help them as effectively as possible, and a further inquiry will not do that.

MR RIPPER (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.33 pm]: I did not speak on the motion about the apology this morning because of arrangements between both sides of the House designed to limit the time spent on that debate. However, I ensured that I was present in the House when the motion was put to the vote and I was very pleased to add my voice to those voting in support of it.

I did not intend to speak in this debate, but I was amazed to hear some of the remarks made by the member for South Perth. I would hate to be opposed to him if that is the way he supports us when we move an amendment. He seemed to spend most of his time attacking the people whose motion he claimed to be supporting.

The member alleged that the previous Labor Government did not respond to this issue. I think he went so far as to say that the Ministers responsible for the relevant portfolio areas were asleep on the job. I managed in the middle of his tirade to indicate by interjection that both the House of Commons Select Committee on Health and the present

Minister for Family and Children's Services acknowledged the excellence of the services offered to former child migrants by Family and Children's Services and its predecessors. The Minister also acknowledged that those services began in 1985, which was, of course, during the tenure of one of the Labor Governments of which the member was so critical.

The member for South Perth then went on to make allegations about the hypocrisy of the Labor Party in now supporting an inquiry but doing nothing when it was in government to establish one. We all know that time moves on and that issues develop and new information becomes available. The member failed to recognise that at the time the question of whether criminal prosecution would be launched was still open. In fact, it was suggested to the victims of abuse that submissions should be made to the Director of Public Prosecutions with the aim of instituting criminal prosecutions. Since then, the DPP has examined those matters and has made a determination not to proceed with criminal prosecutions.

That development changes the situation between the time at which the Labor Party was in government and now, when we are moving this motion to reopen the select committee inquiry. Since that time the prosecution avenue has been shown to be a blind alley or dead end. Of course, that increases the weight of the argument for a continuation of the select committee inquiry.

The member for South Perth was at that time a leading member of the coalition Opposition. Given the support he has given the Opposition this afternoon, I can see why he has ceased to be a member of the coalition. I would not like to have him as a colleague if that is the way he supports people. During those years I can recall no approach by the then Opposition pressing for an inquiry into this matter. I do not recall a parliamentary question, a letter or a speech in favour of an inquiry. The change in view about which he complains in respect of the Labor Opposition is clearly a change in view that he himself has experienced over those years. If he had not changed his view there would have been some action from the then coalition Opposition to urge the then Labor Government to conduct an inquiry.

I do not want to disfigure this debate any further by petty politicking over who was responsible for what. However, it was necessary for me to correct the record in light of the intemperate speech by the member for South Perth.

I was very pleased to support the apology motion this morning. I was equally pleased to support the motion to establish the select committee moved by my Labor colleague the member for Rockingham in 1996. I am also happy to support the amendment moved today for the reopening of that inquiry. As more information becomes available about the circumstances surrounding this scheme - more information has become available in recent years - the case for an inquiry becomes all the more weighty.

MR MARSHALL (Dawesville - Parliamentary Secretary) [4.38 pm]: I supported the apology motion this morning, but I will not support this amendment.

My destiny in life was determined by the principal of Christian Brothers College at Leederville, Brother Murphy. At the time I had returned from the international tennis circuit and was at a loose end. I was asked to fill in for a tennis coach at that school who had broken his leg. At the end of the lesson - my first - Brother Murphy told me that if I ever wanted to take up tennis coaching I could start at that school. I had never given the idea a thought. At the time the average weekly wage was about £15 per week. I counted the children at CBC Leederville and I determined that I could earn about £8 per week for half a day's work. By coincidence, at the same time Alexander Park Tennis Club approached me and asked me to be its tennis professional.

As a Fremantle person, I thought it was important that I start coaching in Fremantle. I approached the East Fremantle Tennis Club, which said yes. I thought "There's £10 a week." I suddenly realised that I could make a living as a local tennis professional. In 1958, nobody in Fremantle paid people to teach them sport as it was all done on a voluntary basis. Brother Murphy at the Christian Brothers College, Leederville, kindled that idea, and within a month he had organised that I coach at St Mary's next door to CBC Leederville, at CBC Fremantle, at Our Lady of Fatima, and subsequently I coached at CBC Highgate, St Ildephonsus, Bindoon and many other schools. Of the 45 schools our academy ran, 30 were Catholic schools. I am not a Catholic, yet the Christian Brothers I knew throughout that era, and in 38 years in the industry, were good, honest wholesome people. I place that on the record. The whole should not be judged by the few.

In my business career, the youngsters I taught who came out of the CBC schools were very good people. Fremantle CBC won every state team tennis tournament going, and won all the football competitions. Everyone I know from CBC Fremantle is very proud of the school. I attended Wesley College as a student. However, people at the Catholic schools did not treat me any differently from the people with whom they attended church. I have fond memories of the Christian Brothers. All the people from that organisation I met were good people.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (20)

Ms Anwyl	Dr Gallop	Mr McGinty	Mr Ripper
Mr Brown	Mr Graham	Mr McGowan	Mrs Roberts
Mr Carpenter	Mr Kobelke	Ms McHale	Mr Thomas
Dr Constable	Ms MacTiernan	Mr Pental	Ms Warnock
Dr Edwards	Mr Marlborough	Mr Riebeling	Mr Cunningham (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (28)

Mr Ainsworth	Mr Day	Mr Marshall	Mr Shave
Mr Baker	Mrs Edwardes	Mr Masters	Mr Sweetman
Mr Barnett	Dr Hames	Mr McNee	Mr Tubby
Mr Barron-Sullivan	Mrs Hodson-Thomas	Mr Minson	Dr Turnbull
Mr Bradshaw	Mrs Holmes	Mr Nicholls	Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Court	Mr House	Mrs Parker	Mr Wiese
Mr Cowan	Mr Kierath	Mr Prince	Mr Osborne (<i>Teller</i>)

Pair

Mr Grill

Mr Board

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR KOBELKE (Nollamara) [4.47 pm]: I raise matters relating to employment in this State, particularly the problems facing the unemployed and the services available to them. Unemployment services are largely matters of commonwealth responsibility. Nevertheless, they impinge directly on the citizens of Western Australia.

We have had a very good record in employment growth throughout the 1980s and the six years of this Government. People have not had that issue at the forefront of their minds; however, 60 000 or 70 000 Western Australians are the official unemployed. It is a major problem. The Western Australian unemployment rate increased in the last two months by a full half a per cent. It may be that those two months were an aberration. One must not draw conclusions from one month's figures. However, the figures for the last two months are concerning. One hopes that that does not signal the start of a major rise in unemployment in this State. Even the current level of unemployment is totally unacceptable.

The State provides a range of services through the Department of Training. They are insignificant when compared to the services provided by the Commonwealth Government, which has major responsibility for unemployment benefits and services to help people trying to find jobs. The Joblink program, although small in cost, is significant. Problems have resulted from the cutbacks in commonwealth programs. Many local Joblink services were able to tender successfully for commonwealth programs and run them in areas of specific needs. However, cuts in commonwealth programs has meant that many of those services have simply dried up. That was because the Howard Government cut \$1.5b over four years from its employment and training programs.

The worst affected people are the long-term unemployed. We have seen a marked increase in the long-term unemployed in Australia. Such people relied on the provision of an adequate service to help them return to the labour force. The employment market is one which will look after itself to a certain level. Employers will find employees to fill vacancies, and people will find work. That is not the issue. It is a question of whether the system is equitable and efficient. Does it ensure that employers can fill their vacancies at minimal cost? Therefore, one does not have a loss of sales and production because staff positions are not filled. It is crucial to the State and economy of the nation to have an efficient employment service. It is important to the 60 000 or 70 000 unemployed, as well as many more who are under-employed or seeking a shift in jobs. Is the system fair and equitable so people have the chance to gain the jobs available, so jobs do not go only to those in the know?

The Commonwealth has, in cutting back its programs to the tune of \$1 500m, introduced a new set of programs that it labelled Job Network which started on 1 May this year. Job Network has been beset with complaints even prior to its beginning. Those complaints have continued. People might have said they were starting up problems. That is what the Prime Minister told us because he was quoted in May this year as saying -

It is a huge reform and I'll wager that in three months' time, when I'm being interviewed like this, one beautiful morning in Melbourne, people will be saying what a huge success the Job Network has been.

Prime Minister Mr Howard seems to have a habit of putting his foot firmly in his mouth with statements which are

totally untrue or are shown to be untrue with the elapsing of time. The program is running no more efficiently over three months later. It is racked with problems, and it is causing huge concerns both with people seeking jobs and with the various agencies which are trying to provide those jobs. While it has suffered teething problems, a lot more is wrong with Job Network than teething problems. However, the teething problems have been exacerbated because of poor administrative planning in the implementation of Job Network, and CentreLink as the key agency involved has been under-resourced, which has made the problems of starting up these new programs all the worse. The whole structure has some intrinsic problems which will not be fixed, whether it be three months or three years.

I will comment on the fundamental issues very briefly. The whole basis of the Job Network employment service is that it is to be market driven; there is to be competition between the providers of the services, the employment agencies, and the training institutions; and this market competition will somehow produce the best of all possible worlds. Many people who have been involved in employment services for a much longer time than the current federal Minister simply see that as an impossibility. It is not a basis on which one can build a fair, efficient system of employment services. Real problems are being experienced with the viability of many of the service providers. Stories are told regularly in the media of the financial collapse or the eminent financial collapse of a number of the service providers. The third point I make in terms of the fundamental structure of Job Network is that it is more complex and fragmented than what was experienced with the old Commonwealth Employment Service. The complexity and the number of locations to which people must travel in order to avail themselves of the services must be changed drastically because that is creating an extra layer of bureaucracy and red tape which is not something one wants in an efficient system.

Having heard the many complaints and having responsibility for the Labor Opposition for employment and training matters, I held a phone-in or hotline on Saturday, 8 August. This was advertised in *The West Australian*. It ran from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. I appreciate the many media outlets providing further notice or advertising to the holding of the hotline, because while I had three lines available on a rotary basis, the phone rang from about 8.30 am until 4.00 pm to such a degree that people could not get through. People told me later that they tried to phone in but could not. For half of that time, all three lines were tied up. We received over 100 calls. Many of the callers spoke for 10 or 15 minutes because they wanted to tell us about a range of problems they had. It gave us an excellent feedback about the concerns that many people have who were trying to find work and who found that Job Network is simply not giving them the assistance they had experienced with the CES or that they had hoped to find under this federal government program. I apologise to the people who tried to get through but were unable to. The people who called in came from various parts of the State and the calls covered a range of different categories. The people who called were unemployed, job seekers who were not unemployed but wanted to use the services for a better or another job, employers who sought to use the service, CentreLink staff, and staff from employment agencies. A very good cross-section of all the people who are involved in Job Network phoned in. The results, while overwhelmingly negative, were not totally negative. That reflects something about the authenticity of the hotline and the interest that it created in the community. A small number of employers indicated that they found that it worked better for them than the old CES. Providers who had an interest in pushing their service rang and indicated they thought they would make a go of it. The phone-in was organised to ask people to give us their concerns and to talk about the issues. We also asked them to answer three standard questions. The results of those provided us with a very clear picture. The first question they were asked was whether they were satisfied with the service that they received through Job Network. Two per cent said yes, 92 per cent said no, and 6 per cent did not respond or did not want to give an answer. The second question they were asked was whether the new Job Network was an improvement on the old CES. Six per cent said it was an improvement, 84 per cent said no, and 10 per cent did not respond. The third question asked of those people who called in was whether they thought that Job Network would help reduce unemployment in Australia. One per cent said yes, 90 per cent said no, and 9 per cent did not respond. That gives a very clear picture of the attitude of the general public to Job Network, and this is over three months after the service was started!

I shall go through some of the key concerns and issues that were raised by the callers. One of the biggest, if not the biggest, was the issue of eligibility to be able to avail oneself of Job Network services. The old CES was just about available universally. No real cost was incurred for the people who wished to use it to find a job, and for most employers, there was no cost if they sought to fill a vacancy through the CES. To be eligible to use the services of Job Network and for the agency to receive funding for the services that it provides, the applicant must be in receipt of unemployment benefits. That means that approximately 400 000 people across Australia are unemployed or looking for work, but are not eligible to use the services of Job Network. On a pro rata basis, I can only assume that about 40 000 Western Australians need to find work and would like to use employment services, but are not eligible because they do not meet the narrow criteria for which an agency will get paid if it assists that person.

I will give some examples which I believe will drive home the fact that the new Job Network is totally unfair. One woman to whom I spoke had worked in a service station for two years. She had obtained that job through the former Commonwealth Employment Service. That service station had been held up twice, and because she could no longer

confront the trauma and angst of working in that business, she had thrown in her job and asked Centrelink whether she could use the services of Job Network to find another job. However, because her husband has a job, she is not eligible to receive unemployment benefits and cannot, therefore, receive assistance to find another job. Another woman who telephoned said that her husband is a contractor and has not been able to find work for two months, but because he is a contractor and has equipment, he is not eligible to receive unemployment benefits and cannot, therefore, receive any assistance from the employment agencies under Job Network for which the commonwealth provides funding.

People who transfer from one form of benefit to another may also be caught in limbo and be ineligible to use these employment services. One person told me that he had gone to an employment service and was told that he was ineligible to use the service, and when he protested to the Centrelink officer that he needed a job because he was unemployed, the officer said, "You are not unemployed. You just cannot find work." Imagine how that person felt!

People will find work regardless of the system, and employers will find staff regardless of the system. However, in Australia in 1998, we should have an efficient and fair system that will work for this country, and not one that is a total failure. Minister Kemp has said that many people are finding work. They will do that regardless of the system. What is very clear is that we have taken a huge step backwards in the provision of fair and efficient employment services. That is a cost to industry. If industry takes longer and incurs greater costs to fill vacancies, national productivity will fall, and even if that is only by a smidgen, that should not happen in Australia and Western Australia in 1998.

Another major problem is the provision by Centrelink of inadequate or incorrect information. A prime example is a letter that I assume went out recently, because quite a lot of the callers mentioned the same letter. The letter from Centrelink is to people who are eligible for assistance and who need to go to one of the employment service providers in order to maintain their benefits it states that they must register with an employment service provider, but they can do that over the telephone. However, when these people rang the employment service providers, in most cases they were told that they could not register over the telephone. This misleading or false information has gone out in a letter from Centrelink. I have been told of numerous other examples where people have been given wrong information.

I understand that the employment service providers can register people over the phone if they wish. However, most of them regard that as unprofessional. They have been contracted by the Commonwealth to run professional employment services. If they want to make a proper assessment of a person, they believe it is normal to interview that person; or in lieu of an interview, to at least obtain a detailed resume with some supporting documents about the qualifications and work history of the person, and perhaps also a photograph. In some cases, that would be adequate to judge whether that person was suitable for a particular job, because those employment service providers are supposed to place people into jobs to which they are suited and to which the employers believe they are suited. Therefore, to simply take a person's name and a few details over the telephone is not a professional way to handle an employment service; and, quite rightly, many agencies have said that they will not register people over the telephone. However, Centrelink has written to many hundreds of thousands of people and said that they can register over the telephone.

Some people indicated that they had some sympathy for the staff of Centrelink; however, that sympathy wears pretty thin when they are kept waiting for ages or are given false information. That is putting incredible pressure on Centrelink officers, to the point where I am aware through the media - it did not come through our calls - that in some offices the staff are not only tense but also are threatened and abused by some of the clients. I hope that situation can be adequately addressed. Many of the people who telephoned spoke about the length of the queues, the lack of privacy, and the impersonal nature of the service, particularly when use is supposed to be made of touch screens.

Another problem was that the information on the touch screens was often not updated. One person told me that he had travelled a considerable distance - I think to Midland - to get in touch with a service provider. He had picked up the job on the touch screen, but because it did not give him the name of the prospective employer, he had to go to the service provider. However, after he had gone to that expense, time and trouble in the hope of getting an interview, he was told that the job had been filled a week ago and they had forgotten to take it off the system.

Another problem is that young people aged between 16 and 20 are supposedly automatically eligible for assistance through one of the employment agencies. However, in order to get the right piece of paper to get into the system, they must have an interview at Centrelink. Thousands of young people are coming into the system all the time and are looking for jobs, but it sometimes takes them two weeks to be interviewed at Centrelink. If they see a job at a supermarket that interests them and want to apply for that job, they must go to the employment agency to have an interview or to be given the name of the employer in the hope of getting that job. However, the employment agency will not give them that information if they do not have the official piece of paper to show that they are registered. This added complexity and fragmentation in the system is a total inefficiency that we do not need.

Many of the employment agencies that are contracted to deliver the service have major problems. I will not go into the funding problems, because the few people who rang from employment agencies did not go into those details, presumably because they wished to maintain the service and they saw that it would undermine the service if they said negative things about its economic viability. What did come through is that the community or church-based services that have a real commitment to helping all unemployed have found themselves in a real dilemma. They have said they will help whoever comes through the door to seek work, whether or not they are eligible for funding assistance. If a job seeker or unemployed person is looking for work but is not eligible they will receive no funding, but the services will still try to help.

We must keep in mind that employment agencies must survive financially. Some of them are already running up large overdrafts or costs which have yet to be recouped from the Commonwealth for the services provided. Even when their books balance they must keep careful control over their costs. The largest part of their costs is staff. The general reports are that 25 to 40 per cent of the people coming through the door of the employment agency are not eligible for funding. If 25 to 40 per cent of an agency's staff costs are being used up in an area in which there is no financial return it cannot remain economically viable. Despite the philosophy and the best intention of these organisations to try to service all job seekers they are not able to do that. Many people are either turned away or given a perfunctory or inadequate service because the service providers cannot survive economically if they have such high costs for people for whom there is no return.

Another complaint from quite a few people was that they received letters threatening to cut off their unemployment benefits if they did not ensure that they were registered. They had gone to the employment agency and registered, but there seems to be a communication problem between the employment agencies with which they registered many weeks ago and Centrelink. Centrelink has recorded them as not looking and not registering for work, whereas they have. They are under threat of having their benefits withdrawn through no fault of theirs.

I will make brief mention of one employer - a woman who had been involved in a family business for many years. Her age classification was "beyond 55". She was familiar with the CES and had previously employed staff through them. She said that her family had a factory in Bayswater and she had found the phone-in system with Centrelink totally unworkable. She found that the person to whom she spoke was in another city or State and did not know where Bayswater was. When she was told there was no service in Bayswater, she had to go through the surrounding suburbs with the phone operator. After several phone calls she simply gave up, and put up a vacancy sign outside the factory. She could see no point in using the service as it existed. A number of employers had problems with the system. They did not like the added costs involved in trying to use the service which were not there with CES.

For many unemployed people getting around the system is complex. Members should keep in mind, that the unemployed, particularly the long-term unemployed, usually have little money, and the cost of travelling on buses or using their vehicles to chase jobs is a major issue. Also they have the pressure of knock-backs in interview after interview and not getting anywhere. This system puts another row of interviews into the system. For instance, a person in Fremantle goes to the touch screen and finds a job vacancy in O'Connor. It simply says "factory hand - O'Connor". The job may be in O'Connor but the service provider is in Midland. That person must go to Midland to register with the service provider for a job in O'Connor. He must travel all the way to Midland simply to get on the list and he may not even get an interview with the employer in O'Connor. Many unemployed people are saying that they are being led on a merry chase just to get to the agency that is an employment server, and not to front up to prospective bosses. One person said that he did not mind going from Fremantle to Midland for a job interview or a job, but he is required to go there just to log on with an employment agency. Most employment agencies have more than one office, so I hope that will address part of that problem. However, a number of people had complaints about the running around and bureaucracy that is required to get through to a company which may be able to consider them for employment.

I could provide many more examples. However, I repeat that we should be providing a range of services for job seekers that are equitable and efficient. The Job Network is not equitable or efficient. It fails Australia on that test. The Job Network system is a massive failure. The Government may overcome some of the initial start-up problems, but the problems are rooted in the structure of the system, in the belief that market competition will best provide these services. We cannot overcome that problem. The service will exist as long as the Government wants to hold it there, but it will not serve the interests of unemployed people in this State.

DR EDWARDS (Maylands) [5.16 pm]: I want to follow up on what the member for Nollamara has been speaking about. The decision by the Federal Government to abolish the previous system of assistance to people looking for work has caused real angst and distress in my electorate. Of all the decisions made by the Federal Government, this has been the one that has caused the most problems for people who live in the suburbs of my electorate. Previously the Maylands electorate had two SkillShare projects. The first was the Maylands SkillTrain attached to the WA Royal Institute for the Blind and the second was a body sponsored by the City of Bayswater, called the North East

Regional Training Authority. Both of these bodies over the years had carved out niche market programs and established reputations with not only local business but also people who had been unemployed. They had good track records. Unfortunately, SkillTrain has disappeared and NERTA has been so changed that its future is now uncertain.

About a year ago when all this was going on and I was concerned about the electors in my area, I sent out a survey to households in my electorate targeting people who had been unemployed and asking what sort of services they thought were needed. This was an open-ended questionnaire and the questions were: Have you been unemployed? How long was the total period of unemployment? What type of service was most helpful? What was least helpful? There were also some questions about travelling. It was not a tick-a-box type of questionnaire; it was open-ended and genuinely sought some answers. I was delighted that I received 200 responses. Given that it was targeted at people who were unemployed and who had put pen to paper and literally write sentences to answer the questionnaire, I thought that was a pretty good result. It was a qualitative survey but one worth doing.

They told me that the types of services that were most helpful were SkillShare, the newspapers, and their own resources. Interestingly, the Commonwealth Employment Service was rated by 28 people as being helpful, but 60 people put it as the least helpful. Overall, the problems with the CES outweighed the benefits that people were receiving - certainly among my survey recipients at that time.

The survey highlighted the despair of people who are unemployed. At that stage, among the people who answered, 63 out of 200 had been unemployed for less than a year. What came through in their written comments was their fear of never being able to find a job, and, if they found a job, the uncertainty and the fear that they might not hold that job for very long.

All of the responses became very poignant. One realised that there were real people who had real problems, because every answer was different and they were describing their dismay with their experience of what was going on. Many of the respondents felt that if people already had an education, somehow the system protected them. They had more skills to be able to negotiate and would be better off. There were quite a lot of comments from people over 40 years of age who felt that when people hit the age of 40, their job prospects were minimal.

I will go through some of the comments that were made in the survey. One response was filled out by a mother whose two sons had been unemployed for some time. She said that the most helpful service they had approached was SkillShare and the least helpful was the then Department of Social Security. As in the situation the member for Nollamara pointed out, they had problems travelling to services.

The difficulty I have with the new system is that in and around my electorate most of the SkillShares have gone and have not been replaced by new systems. If people had problems before with travelling, their problems are even greater now. This response had a good postscript because the woman pointed out that one of her sons had recently got a job on a vineyard in the south west. She was delighted with the help she had received from her local SkillShare.

One of the other respondents was not so lucky. That person had been unemployed for a total of 11 years and had found the Maylands SkillShare service the most helpful during that time. Another response was from a woman who is now employed but had been unemployed for six years. Members need to think how they would feel if they were unemployed for six years. Six years is a large chunk out of people's lives. Over six years whatever skills they might have would start to deteriorate as they were not using them. The woman stated that Maylands SkillShare was extremely helpful to her. She felt that her commitment to take any job that she could get, even if it were only for a couple of days, had helped her hang in for that period of time, so ultimately she was able to get a job. She went on to say that in the time she was unemployed travelling was an issue, and access to public transport and what she had to pay for it were issues as well. As the member for Nollamara said, if that was a problem before, it has been magnified even more now. The final response I refer to was from a person on a single parent pension with a young child. The person had been unemployed for three years. It is unclear from the response whether the person is male or female. The person said that the most helpful service was the SkillShare and the Job Club attached to it, and that the least helpful on this occasion was the newspaper. The person wanted to see more services like the Job Club and SkillShare.

Those comments and some of the others highlight the fear and uncertainty that people were feeling. One of the themes that came through the responses was that people wanted to be able to get help in an ongoing manner. The feeling coming through was that even when they had jobs, there was no certainty that they would have them for a long period of time. They wanted to know that they could again access places like the Job Club to help them keep their CVs up-to-date, to know what other jobs were around and to retrain and develop new skills, so that if they were retrenched or lost their jobs in the near future, they had a better chance of starting out all over again.

When the whole process started Minister Vanstone was the federal Minister in this area. She made the announcement that the system was to change. It caused a lot of concern and uncertainty in the system. However, people no sooner

had that to deal with than she started extending the dates on which the changes would take place. She started making changes to the program that would be undertaken in what was called the new world of employment services. The result of that in the two SkillShares that were operating in my electorate was that staff left. They saw that the writing was on the wall and knew that they were skilled. They knew their skills were transportable and that the system did not have a very long life, so they left. When they left, those SkillShares lost expertise built up in some cases over eight to 10 years. It also meant that their clients were affected. Many of the staff had developed good relationships with people doing the courses. When the clients saw that the staff undertaking the courses thought that the situation was hopeless, they felt pretty hopeless as well. The way the federal Minister handled it contributed to the decline in the whole area.

I will talk about my electorate's SkillShares in more detail. At NERTA SkillShare, which is sponsored by the City of Bayswater, people developed a number of very innovative programs. They had some mechanical workshop-type programs for young men in the area. They were brilliant at getting short-term or long-term unemployed young men, particularly those who had brushes with the law, engaged in an activity which they really enjoyed. They were able to rent premises where that could be carried out without interfering with other people. They had a program that was working for people in need in Maylands. Similarly the Maylands SkillTrain, which was attached to the Blind Institute, had done work with people with disabilities. Where it had really proved its worth was in the area of cleaning. It had developed real expertise in training people to be cleaners. There will always be a need for cleaners. It was a very wise choice. A lot of people went through that SkillShare and got cleaning jobs. The rate of placing people in the work force was very high in that area.

It is a tribute to the then Maylands SkillTrain that in December 1997 the then Minister for Employment and Training launched the cleaning traineeships at Midland SkillTrain. There was some irony when she did that because at that time I had been brought onto that SkillTrain's committee of management, as had a lot of other business people, to try to figure out how we could make the transition of this SkillShare to the new employment entity that we have now. I literally spent months meeting weekly or fortnightly, pouring through all its budgets and looking at all the work it had done in the past, looking at the expertise of its staff and trying to figure out what the new world would be like to see if we could survive. We went through all sorts of scenarios. The situation was not helped by the fact that the dates when the change would occur blew out, and that the types of programs we might get involved in changed as the Federal Government changed its mind. There was generally a great deal of uncertainty.

The problem was that the way the program was set up, if we could get people into the program and then get them jobs at the end, we did not receive much of the payment for those services until the people had been in work for six months. Basically a community-based, voluntary-type organisation does not have the assets to carry that sort of debt for six or nine months. Although we were told it would be six months, the period would obviously blow out by the time we had filled in the forms and the Commonwealth Government sent us a cheque. As one of our scenarios, we would have to put the agency \$100 000 into debt to see any light at the end of the tunnel.

One of the most difficult decisions that I have ever made as a member of Parliament was to call a meeting and say to the people with whom I was sitting that I did not think that it would work. I then had to call in the staff, look them in the eye and tell them that they were talented, that they worked extremely hard, that they had taken the SkillShare through all the changes that had been made through Labor Governments and the early part of the Liberal Government, but that I did not think they were up to the job and that they would be made redundant as soon as possible. We had to make them redundant as soon as possible so that there was some money with which to pay out their redundancies. That was a dreadful thing to do. Those people had given a large part of themselves helping unemployed people. There we were as politicians and business people telling them that although they were talented and had lots of skills, they could not work for us any more and we were folding their business.

Why should we care about all that? We must care for a valid reason; that is, we live in a society where work tends to define who we are. I have a 17-year-old stepdaughter who gets annoyed when I ask her new friends what they do for a living. Young people are particularly sensitive to that question. When we describe ourselves, friends, children or other people we tend to describe each other in terms of the work we do. For various reasons we live in a society in which, to a large extent, work defines the people we are. Therefore, it is no surprise that being in work or out of work has a large impact on our self-esteem. That was obvious in responses to my questionnaires. We could tell from some of the comments that people who were out of work for long periods were dispirited and undoubtedly their self-esteem had been affected.

In addition numerous studies show that people in employment are healthier and tend to live longer than those who are not. Nobody knows why that is so. Presumably it is to do with self-esteem, the care people take of themselves and poverty and access to money. There is no doubt that working means generally that people are better off.

I commend the member for Nollamara for his survey. However, my feeling is that it is just the tip of the iceberg. The 84 per cent who said that under the new system there was no improvement, deserve credence given all the feed-back

from my survey that people have been unemployed and tried desperately to get work. If people are saying they have been exposed to this system and there has been no improvement, I believe them.

I will read a quote one of my constituents sent to me when she returned the survey. It is from either an article or a book called "The Age of Unreason".

Less than half of the workforce in the industrialized world will be in 'proper' full-time jobs in organizations by the beginning of the 21st century... We are in the process of splitting the lifetime job in half... We are taking away 50,000 hours of the job. What will happen in those hours? That is our challenge, and our opportunity?

Amendment to Motion

Dr EDWARDS: To emphasise the seriousness with which I approach this problem I move -

That the following words be added to the motion -

but regrets to inform Your Excellency that the new Job Network program, established by the Commonwealth to replace the pre-existing employment services have failed to provide employment services, that both job seekers and employers require and expect. The lack of accessible, quality employment services for all job seekers, undermines any effort to successfully tackle the unacceptable levels of unemployment in Western Australia.

MR BROWN (Bassendean) [5.32 pm]: I support the amendment. It has been recognised for many years by Governments of all political persuasions - that is, until the election of the Howard Government - that everything should be done to encourage back into the work force those who are unfortunate enough to be unemployed; that every attempt should be made to provide the skills they need to enter the work force; and that employers should be given every opportunity to engage people at minimal or no cost.

The Commonwealth Employment Service provided a good service to both the unemployed and employers. That is not to say the service was perfect, or that every unemployed person referred to a job was enthused about the referral, or that every employer was enthused about the qualifications or aspirations of people referred to them. However, despite the weaknesses in the Commonwealth Employment Service it provided a universal service for everyone who was seeking access to it, whether they were job seekers or employers.

The Federal Government has abolished the CES and in its place is the so-called new Job Network. There are some striking differences between the Job Network and the former CES. The first is that where the CES provided a service for all who were seeking jobs, the new Job Network does not. Under the new arrangements, community organisations or private for profit service providers are given targets to meet and a schedule of payments for each person they place in employment. However, those payments are made only in respect of people who are drawing unemployment or other benefits. No payment is made for the spouse of a person employed who is seeking employment. In other words, if either a husband or wife is employed and earning, say, \$25 000 a year and the other person seeks employment, that person will not be assisted by the Job Network because the community organisations and private providers will not be paid a fee for locating a job for that person.

We are seeing a very mean approach by the Federal Government in seeking to limit its job employment service arrangements to only those people who are unemployed and receiving unemployment benefits. It does not apply, as it previously did, to someone who might be the spouse of an employed person. The Government gave no indication prior to the 1996 federal election that it would limit the employment services offered by the Commonwealth. Therefore, the Australian people who went to the election in 1996 were not told of this secret agenda.

In addition, a number of employers, particularly small employers, have been disappointed, to say the least, at the new Job Network system. Under the new arrangements, employers are being charged \$250 for agencies under the Job Network to find employees. Under the previous arrangements employers, particularly small employers and small businesses, were not required to pay this fee.

I listened with interest to interviews on the radio from both job seekers and the small business community. People representing small business and small business people themselves have expressed great disappointment at the way this new employment scheme operates, particularly at the charges being imposed on them. The scheme has also been established in such a way that payments to providers are skewed to the ultimate placement of unemployed people. Therefore, a number of organisations that have provided job skills under the previous SkillShare arrangement have ceased to exist because the new arrangements make it impossible for those organisations to operate without their taking a high level of risk. As those organisations operate on a non-profit basis, many of them are unable, or their directors are unwilling, to take that level of risk in order to continue those operations. One can try to sell a product, no matter how bad it is, with some glitzy advertising. The Howard Government has been trying to overcome the

problem with some glitzy television advertising. Only members without a television in their homes would not have seen the Job Network advertisements which constantly appear on television during the course of the day and evening.

The perception that the Howard Government has attempted to create is that the scheme is wonderful. It claims that people with certain interests or skills will be matched, for the first time, entirely with businesses looking for those attributes or skills. It is a clever advertising campaign. If one acquired knowledge from 30-second commercials paid for by taxpayers, one would believe that the scheme has been entirely successful.

It is one thing to promote the scheme by way of glitzy ads, but it is another to examine the scheme to see whether it has worked successfully. Interestingly, the federal Minister for Employment, Education, Training and Youth had a report delivered to him on the performance of the Job Network scheme. The federal Minister has not been prepared to release that report. This report, paid for by Australian taxpayers, was prepared by an independent agency. However, somehow the Minister, with all his arrogance, has decided that it is only for him to know its contents. I have never seen such outrageous arrogance in my life! He pontificates on television and elsewhere that his scheme is the best thing since sliced bread, yet he does not have the fortitude to release the independent consultants' report.

Why is it that the public is not entitled to look at this report? Why has he refused to release it? Is he saying that the consultants who made the report are incompetent, or that the report is flawed in some way? Obviously it is very embarrassing. The Minister has commissioned a report which has pointed out glaring problems with the scheme. Does the Minister act accountably? Does he front up to Australian taxpayers and explain the pitfalls and wrongs of the scheme? No. He thumbs his nose at the people for party political reasons; namely, an election is looming. Therefore, he holds the report to himself.

I do not know how any coalition member can stand inside and outside Parliament and speak about accountability. Such matters are in the bin as far as the Federal Government is concerned. It is happy to spend millions of dollars on glitzy advertising, but when it comes to the acid test of whether the scheme works, the Minister scurries away and puts the report in the bottom draw.

It is interesting to hear some of the comments made about the new scheme. An article which appeared in *The Australian Financial Review* on 7 August 1998 under the heading "Manpower condemns job system" reads -

The Federal Government risks increasing the number of people on the dole and the long-term unemployed if it does not make urgent changes to the Job Network, the head of a leading employment agency warned yesterday.

Mr Malcolm Jackman, the managing director of Manpower Services Australia - which did not tender for the Job Network because it believed the deal commercially unviable - said up to half the people looking for jobs with Manpower were not entitled to government help.

They had been disenfranchised by the demise of the old Commonwealth Employment Service, he said.

This comment was not made by somebody sitting on the sidelines not knowing anything about this area. He knows the field well and commented that the system is in serious trouble. In fact, he correctly points out that the new system introduced by the Federal Government has disenfranchised many people who were previously entitled to help under the CES.

The Howard Government would also be disappointed that its glitzy advertising campaign has not been effective in convincing the Australian public. One can spend a fortune on advertising to convince people that a bad product is good; however, they eventually find out. Despite the millions of taxpayers' dollars poured into the campaign by the Federal Government, it has not won the public relations battle. The polls are showing that the public simply do not believe the Federal Government or employment Minister when they say that the new scheme is working effectively. An article which appeared in *The Australian* on 4 August 1998 states regarding a Newspoll on this issue -

The poll revealed fewer than a quarter of people surveyed on the weekend believed the Government was doing a good job in helping employers finding new staff.

In a further blow, the survey showed more Coalition supporters thought the Government was performing poorly in creating new jobs than those who backed the Government's employment policies.

The result follows revelations in *The Australian* that the largest agency in the Job Network, Employment National, privately conceded it was not meeting job placement targets.

It also comes amid widespread concern among job-brokers about the new system as some agencies threaten to go to the wall. The largest non-government agency predicts the Job Network will collapse by the end of the year.

What a success! It has been operating six months. The federal Minister was scheming for this change for about a year, and he has had his top brass considering how to put the new system in place. What a manager! This bloke would not want to be in the private sector. The Job Network will last six months! The Minister has spent millions of dollars trying to convince the Australian people that this crock of rubbish is good. He is not winning. It is hard to stick an advertisement on television promoting a stinking pile of dung. People do not want it. He says, "It's good for you", but he cannot sell it. What a failure! It is unbelievable. No doubt this mob opposite will back him to the hilt. They will say that it is the best policy, and that the Howard Government is smart. No doubt they will back this abysmal failure.

All this would be laughable and could be dealt with in a jocular fashion, if it were not so important to have some respect and dignity for the unemployed. One thing that must be said about the former Prime Minister is that in 1993, when he unexpectedly won the election, on the night of the election he said to the unemployed that the Labor Government would not let them down. Despite all the economic problems, he was true to his word. Between 1993 and 1996 the federal Labor Government put more money into employment and training programs than had ever been done before. During that period the Australian Government showed great compassion when trying to assist the unemployed. Whether or not they were drawing unemployment benefits, the Prime Minister honoured in an absolute sense the commitment he made on the night of the 1993 election.

The Howard Government did not go to the people of Australia in 1996 and let them know that he intended to dismantle the Commonwealth Employment Service. I refer to the number of commonwealth public service positions that have been lost. I do not have the precise figures with me so I will stand to be corrected, but the Howard Government spoke about 2 000 or 3 000 public servants losing their jobs. In two years and five months, approximately 35 000 commonwealth employees have lost their jobs. What a liar; what a hypocrite; what deceitful ways the Howard Government has.

Mr Barnett: Do you like the tax package? It is a beauty.

Mr BROWN: I do not know whether John Howard has told lies in that either. Do members recall his other comment in 1996 that no Australian worker would be worse off under his deal? What a liar; what a cheat. He never mentioned anything then. He is the most insincere cheat I have ever come across, and he has produced this tax package today. Let us wait and see what it contains.

In terms of this motion and policy, I challenge members opposite to tell this Parliament that Job Network is a screaming success. I bet they do not.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Ms Anwyl.

BILLS

Restoration to Notice Paper - Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read requesting that consideration of the following Bills be resumed -

1. Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill.
2. Acts Repeal and Amendment (Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration) Bill.
3. Criminal Law Amendment Bill (No 1).

House adjourned at 5.54 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Answers to questions are as supplied by the relevant Minister's office.

CHILD CARE FUNDING

11. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the Community Affairs Committee of the Australian Senate is inquiring into the costs of child care and other related issues?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that *The Australian* newspaper reported on 28 February 1998 that 18 child care centres had closed in Western Australia in the past 10 months and that there is a serious underutilisation in private and community owned child care centres?
- (3) Has the Government made a submission to the Senate Committee?
- (4) If so, in that submission did the State call for additional funding to be allocated by the Commonwealth for child care?
- (5) If not, what was the nature of the submission?
- (6) Does the Government intend to make a submission to the Senate Committee?
- (7) If not, why not?
- (8) Has the Government made any direct submissions to the Australian Government about providing more money for child care?
- (9) When was the submission(s) made?
- (10) Have any representations been made to the Commonwealth Government to provide additional funding for child care?
- (11) What additional amounts has the State Government called on the Commonwealth to provide for child care in Western Australia?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. In the period 1 May 1997 to 28 February 1998 9 long day care centres relinquished their licences and 6 long day care centres have closed but not relinquished their licenses. Overall, during the period June 1996 to May 1998 there were 36 new licences issued and 23 licences relinquished, representing a net increase of 13 licences. Underutilisation is confined to pockets mainly within the metropolitan area. The Commonwealth government's limit on child care assistance places from 27 April 1998 will assist to alleviate this.
- (3) No.
- (4)-(5) Not applicable.
- (6) No.
- (7) I wrote to all the children's services peak organisations and encouraged them to put their own submissions to the inquiry as it is appropriate for the industry to raise their concerns directly.
- (8) No.
- (9) Not applicable.
- (10) I have raised industry concerns with the Federal Minister on a number of occasions.
- (11) Ongoing discussions occur between officers from the Commonwealth and Family and Children's Services in relation to the allocation of Disadvantaged Area Subsidy (DAS). However, decisions in relation to the allocation of DAS are a Commonwealth responsibility.

SENIORS

Airconditioning Homes in North West

83. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Seniors:

- (1) Did any organisation or person in any capacity within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister commission a report into the expense of airconditioning homes for seniors in the North West of the State?
- (2) If the answer to (1) above is yes -
 - (a) will the Minister provide a copy of the report; and
 - (b) from where can a copy of the report be obtained?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is no, why not?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The Office of Energy has had carriage of the development of costings for an air conditioning subsidy for people living north of the 26th parallel. Since late 1997 the Office of Seniors Interests has had discussions with the Office of Energy concerning an air conditioning subsidy. Calculations developed by the Office of Energy were based on information provided by the Office of Seniors Interests, Government Employees Housing Authority and Western Power.

EAST VICTORIA PARK FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CENTRE, FUNDING

121. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

I refer to the current four year old kindergarten program being run from the East Victoria Park Family and Community Centre -

- (a) is the Minister aware that the current funding arrangements expire at the end of 1998;
- (b) if yes, will the Minister be providing additional funding to the Centre so as to maintain the four year old programme; and
- (c) if not -
 - (i) what arrangements will be made to accommodate the children using these services; and
 - (ii) what arrangements have been made for the staff at the Family Centre?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No, all kindergarten programs will be the responsibility of the Education Department.
- (c)
 - (i) Children will access Education Department programs.
 - (ii) Eligible staff will transfer to the Education Department.

PERTH WOMEN'S CENTRE, FUNDING

123. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the Government two year plan for women (1996-98) -

- (a) has the Government continued to fund the Perth Women's Centre to provide a range of services to women affected by alcohol and drug problems; and
- (b) if not -
 - (i) has any funding been provided;
 - (ii) is this equivalent to previously provided funding; and
 - (iii) if it is not equivalent, what is the difference in dollar terms?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Not applicable.

WOMEN'S INTERESTS

Drug and Alcohol Services

124. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the Government two year plan for women (1996-98) -

- (a) has the Government contracted all drug and alcohol services to work to best practice indicators for services to women;
- (b) if not, why not; and
- (c) if yes, please detail?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Indicators of best practice for alcohol and drug treatment services including for services to women, have been developed by a working party convened by the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office and comprising representatives of the WA Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies, the Health Department of WA and Edith Cowan University. These indicators are based largely on work completed by the national Alcohol and Drug Research Centre. The indicators have been used as the basis for a review of non-government alcohol and drug services which assessed the services against best practice and developed an action plan for the agencies to meet best practice. Contracts for alcohol and drug services are now being redeveloped to incorporate best practice indicators relevant to the services including for services to women. This will be in place for the forthcoming financial year.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) The best practice indicators for services to women are:
 - the option of a female counsellor;
 - where group counselling is employed, there should be frequent women only groups with a female counsellor;
 - needs to be sensitive assessment and handling of the issues of sexual abuse and domestic violence;
 - attention to the full range of health, justice and welfare issues that the woman may be facing;
 - provision of child care (some agencies);
 - separate bedrooms and bathrooms in residential facilities.

MILLENNIUM BUG

142. Ms McHALE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services; Seniors; Women's Interests:

- (1) Is the "Millennium Bug" computer problem an issue for any of the departments or agencies under the Minister's control?
- (2) If so, when will those departments or agencies have installed and tested all Year 2000 corrections?
- (3) What have been the total funds expended to date to correct the "Bug"?
- (4) What is the total cost estimated to be to install all corrective measures?
- (5) Do those departments or agencies intend to engage external resources to manage the process?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Family and Children's Services: Yes.
Office of Seniors Interests: Yes.
Women's Policy Development Office: Assessed as having a negligible effect.
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Yes.

- (2) Family and Children's Services: The project plan has final implementation scheduled for November 1999. However, solutions will be implemented immediately they are identified.
- Office of Seniors Interests: By 30 June 1999.
- Women's Policy Development Office: By June 1999.
- WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: The project plan has final implementation scheduled for November 1999. However, solutions will be implemented immediately they are identified.
- (3) Family and Children's Services: \$15,000 for consultant services.
- Office of Seniors Interests: Nil.
- Women's Policy Development Office: Approximately \$3,000.
- WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Included with consultant services provided for Family and Children's Services.
- (4) Family and Children's Services: Work is proceeding on estimating this cost.
- Office of Seniors Interests: \$20,000.
- Women's Policy Development Office: \$8,000.
- WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Work is proceeding on estimating this cost.
- (5) Family and Children's Services: Yes.
- Office of Seniors Interests: Yes.
- Women's Policy Development Office: Yes.
- WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Yes.

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Safety Screening Procedures

200. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:
- (1) How will the Department of Family and Children's Services work with Government-funded agencies to assist them to develop appropriate safety screening procedures as stated at page 440 of the 1998-99 *Budget Statements Volume 1*?
- (2) Will Department staff provide training to Government-funded agencies, and if so, how many FTEs will provide the training, and for how many hours?
- (3) What is the total budget for providing this assistance to non-Government agencies?
- (4) Will funding to non-Government agencies who provide services to children be conditional on these safety screening procedures being developed, and if not, why not?
- (5) What available data is there about the extent to which Government-funded agencies already implement these screening measures?
- (6) How many young people are exposed to non-Government agencies?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Preliminary discussions have been held with Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS) in relation to the introduction of safety screening in non government agencies. It is proposed that significant consultation will take place within the next year to facilitate the introduction of safety screening.
- (2) The provision of training to funded services has been identified as a matter to be considered during the consultation process.
- (3) This information will only be available after consultation with the sector has identified the scope and volume of training required.
- (4) Yes.

- (5) Criminal record checks are currently in place in Family and Children's Services funded non government residential placement services and 'Keeping Families Together' services. It is also a requirement that services funded through Supported Accommodation Association Program (SAAP) work toward the implementation of service standards, which include Police checks. A limited survey was undertaken in December 1996 which indicated support for the introduction of safety screening.
- (6) It is not possible to fully gauge the level of exposure by young people to non-government agencies. The department is implementing data collection processes; however, even after these are implemented it is unlikely a definitive answer could be given as such a wide range of services are involved. However, as a guide, the data collection returns from thirty non-government services providing a life skills development program during July-December 1996 had contact with 7,693 young people. Approximately 65% of the service users 12-17 years of age with a relatively high proportion of Aboriginal youth (49%) accessing the services.

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES REGISTER

201. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Can non-Government agencies provide, or have access to, information on the Child Protection Services Register, and if not, why not?
- (2) Will information about -
- (a) convictions for; or
- (b) substantiated allegations of,
- child abuse against employees or volunteers of non-Government agencies be included on the Child Protection Services Register, and if not, why not?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) No. It is not proposed that non-government agencies provide information, or have access to the Register. However, there may be exceptions (as prescribed in Regulation) where an organisation providing a service to government on a contractual basis (such as the Joondalup Hospital) will be treated as if it were a government agency. The Register is designed to enhance coordination and cooperation between government agencies, not non-government agencies.
- (2) The Register will record the names of persons convicted of an offence against a child whose name appears on the Register. This information will be recorded regardless of the nature of the employment of the convicted person. The Register, does not record alleged perpetrators with a 'substantiated allegation' but without a conviction.

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES REGISTER

202. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Did the planned evaluation of the effectiveness of the Child Protection Services Register take place as proposed in last year's Budget statements?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If yes, what were the results?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The Child Protection Services Register has been the subject of several internal monitoring reports since its initiation. The reports have recommended some changes to structure and operation which have been recognised in the draft Bill. It has been inappropriate to conduct a large scale review yet because, for legal reasons, a number of key participating agencies are unable to fully undertake the provision and exchange of information. These limitations will be addressed in amendments to the Child Welfare Act (and consequential amendments to other legislation) which will facilitate provision of information. Once these amendments have occurred it will be possible to plan for a more comprehensive review.

CHILD ABUSE REGISTER

203. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the Child Abuse Register -

- (a) what information is currently recorded on it, and in particular, have details of convictions or substantiated allegations of child abuse been recorded;
- (b) what was the source of the information in each case;
- (c) if the inclusion on the register of any information is conditional on amendments to legislation, or agreement being reached with any person or body, in each case -
 - (i) what is the information;
 - (ii) what is the legislation;
 - (iii) what is the person or body; and
- (d) will details of substantiated allegations of child abuse be included on the register, or will it only include convictions?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) The Register records details and information relating to the substantiated child maltreatment. The Register also records the nature of services provided including the name of the person and/or agency providing the service. There is provision for the Register to record the names of persons convicted of maltreatment of a child, however, for legal reasons the Western Australian Police Service have been unable to continue to provide this information.
- (b) Most information provided to the Register was supplied by Family and Children's Services with additional information provided by the Western Australian Police Service, Princess Margaret Hospital/King Edward Memorial Hospital and the Health Department of Western Australia.
- (c)
 - (i) Western Australian Police Service: any information relating to a person who may be recorded on the Police Criminal Record System;
 Disability Service Commission: any information relating to a child without consent of his/her parent or guardian.
 - (ii) The following Acts require amendment:
 - The Young Offenders Act 1994
 - The Spent Convictions Act 1988
 - The Child Welfare Act 1947
 - Freedom of Information Act 1992
 - (iii) Western Australian Police Service, Disability Service Commission
- (d) Details relating to substantiated maltreatment, services provided and the names of persons convicted of assaults/maltreatment of children who are registered.

BRINGING THEM HOME REPORT

204. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What funds will be allocated in 1998-99 to responding to the "Bringing them Home" report?
- (2) How, in particular, will the Department respond to the report?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Family and Children's Services has allocated \$1,000,000 in the 1998/99 financial year to address the "Bringing Them Home" report.
- (2) The department is working with the Aboriginal Affairs Department, other government agencies both state and federal, non government organisations and the Aboriginal community, to identify, preserve and improve the management of relevant records, enhance and improve access to existing family information and tracing services, and put in place culturally appropriate counselling services. The new Family Information Records Bureau has commenced operations on 1 July 1998.

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING SERVICES

205. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What are the total funds allocated in 1998-99 to expanding Family Group Conferencing services?
- (2) How will the services be expanded?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) A total amount of \$500,000 is allocated to the service in 1998-1999.
- (2) The service will be expanded by increasing the number of service coordinators from 4 to 9, so that each of the 9 departmental zones statewide will have a locally based coordinator. Of the 5 new positions, 4 will be placed in the country zones of the Kimberley, Pilbara, Southern and Goldfields and 1 will be in a metropolitan zone.

STRATEGY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE ACTION PLAN

206. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Will the Strategy Against Drug Abuse Action Plan be evaluated?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If yes to (1) above, by whom and when?
- (4) How will the evaluation be conducted?
- (5) How can the effectiveness of the strategy be measured?
- (6) What has been spent to date on the Strategy?
- (7) Who will develop the Western Australian Strategy Against Drug Abuse Action Plan for 1999-2001?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The participating agencies, external evaluators and the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office as appropriate. Monitoring and evaluation is continuous.
- (4) The WA Strategy Against Drug Abuse Action Plan draws together activities by a wide range of government, non-government and community organisations. Evaluation of this strategy must similarly reflect a multi-faceted approach. The overall evaluation includes monitoring of:

Drug abuse trends for youth and adults in Western Australia;

Detailed drug abuse indicators including specific harms and impact on health and law enforcement systems;

Local statistical profiles.

It must of course be borne in mind that these trends are subject to substantial international and national influences, most particularly the world supply of illicit drugs, as well as the impact of the State's strategy against drug abuse. The effectiveness of major developments are assessed separately. For example, the School Drug Education Project, in addition to monitoring the extent to which it meets its objectives, is subject to an external evaluation measuring the impact on students' knowledge, attitudes and skills; and the community based methadone program is subject to a detailed program monitoring participation and evaluating client outcomes.

Contracted alcohol and drug treatment services, including the newly established Community Drug Service Teams, are required to report comprehensive information on their outputs and outcomes.

Specific projects such as the *Drug Aware* Pharmacy Project which has seen 70% of WA pharmacies participating to provide alcohol and drug information and advice, are subject to evaluations as part of their development and implementation. In this case, pharmacists have been surveyed regarding the appropriateness of their training materials and the information materials provided for the general public.

Public education campaigns such as the *Drug Aware* parent campaign and the *Be a Good Host* campaign component of the Host Responsibility Program are evaluated by assessing the level of recognition of the campaigns in the community and the recall of the intended takeout messages.

The various measures of specific programs and services are aggregated through the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office's performance measures for its designated outputs, "drug abuse strategy co-ordination" and "drug abuse treatment and prevention services".

- (5) The effectiveness of the WA Strategy Against Drug Abuse has to be measured on a range of levels. First is the extent to which the initiatives identified in the strategy are implemented and the participation of a wide range of government, non-government and community organisations is achieved. The WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office reports this bi-monthly. Second, is the evaluation of specific initiatives. These measures are aggregated through the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office's performance measures for its designated outputs, "drug abuse strategy co-ordination" and "drug abuse treatment and prevention services". Third, trends in overall levels of drug abuse and specific harms are monitored.
- (6) The total estimated spending by the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office in 1997/98, including the periods prior to and following its formal establishment as a branch of Family & Children's Services, is \$9,193,000. Additionally, it is estimated that some \$28,843,805 will have been spent during 1997/98 on activities across government which together form part of the overall State strategy.
- (7) The development of the WA Strategy Against Drug Abuse Action Plan for 1999-2001 will be co-ordinated by the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office but will involve the participation of all relevant agencies across government, non-government and community organisations and the broad community.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Child Concern and Maltreatment Reports

207. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) How many FTEs are available in the current financial year to deal with -
 - (a) child concern; and
 - (b) child maltreatment,
 reports, and how many were available in 1997-98 and 1996-97?
- (2) In each of the last three years, what was the total cost of the response to the reports?
- (3) In each of the last three years, what percentage of -
 - (a) child concern; and
 - (b) child maltreatment,
 reports were substantiated?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) The salary funding, from which FTE is calculated, is allocated to the various specific zones in Service Delivery. These allocations are not broken down to specific services but each Manager determines how they will be applied in response to demand. Overall allocated FTE to Service Delivery for the years concerned are:

1997/98	831
1996/97	722
- (2) It is not possible to provide the total cost of the response to reports of child concern and child maltreatment separately from other child protection activities for the three years in question.
- (3)
 - (a) Child concern reports have different categories of outcomes to child maltreatment allegations. They are not substantiated.
 - (b) Child Maltreatment allegations:

1994/95	33% of child maltreatment allegations were substantiated.
1995/96	41% substantiated.
1996/97	57% substantiated.
1997/98	54% substantiated.

CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

208. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Did the planned review of the New Directions in Child Protection and Family Support take place as proposed in last year's Budget statements?
- (2) If yes, what were the results?
- (3) If not, why not and when will it take place?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes. In addition a further independent review is currently being conducted by two eminent British academics, Professor Parton and Dr. Wattam. Their report will be completed by December 1998.
- (2) The results showed that the approach had led to a tighter focus in child protection on urgent referrals. This was achieved without any measurable decline in service standards. A large number of child concern reports were being recorded and as a consequence continued monitoring of service provision is required. The current review will further consider these issues.
- (3) Not applicable.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

209. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What is the total funding allocated by the Department for programs to deal with domestic violence in 1998-99 and what was it in 1997-98?
- (2) Did the planned evaluation of the Domestic Violence pilots take place as proposed in last year's Budget statements?
- (3) If yes, what were the results?
- (4) If not, why not and when will it take place?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) \$9.84 million in 1998/99
\$9.67 million in 1997/98

In addition, the allocation to the Domestic Violence Prevention Unit of the Women's Policy Development Office through the Women's Interests portfolio is \$2.26 Million in 1998/99 and \$1.64 Million in 1997/98.

- (2)-(4) Family and Children's Services funded five new domestic violence victim support and advocacy services in 1996/97. These services became operational late in 1996/97. The evaluation of these services is being planned to ensure that information from a full 12 months' operation is available for analysis and comparison.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Crisis Support

210. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) How are the operating revenues calculated for Crisis Support?
- (2) In each of the last three years, what was the number of -
 - (a) contacts; and
 - (b) cases,
 in Crisis Support?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) A large proportion of the operating revenue for Crisis Support is the income received from the Commonwealth for Supported Accommodation services. This amounted to \$10,669,000 in 1997/98. Other operating revenues include net profit on any assets disposal, any user charges and fees and any resources received free of charge. These amounted to \$531,000. The total revenue was \$11,200,000.

- (2) Output Based Management has been introduced as the framework for service management and reporting in 1997/98. Prior to this, reporting was by program and sub-program. The previous sub-program Crisis Management and Support is not directly comparable to the Key Output Crisis Support. It is not possible nor valid to compare numbers of contacts and cases in Crisis Support for 1997/98 with previous years.

CHILDREN IN CARE

Funding

211. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What is the reason for the increase of approximately \$1 million in the allocation in the 1998-99 *Budget Statements* for Care for Children this year?
- (2) In each of the last three years, what was the number of children placed in care?
- (3) What was the total cost of providing the care?
- (4) How many care and protection applications were lodged in the last two years?
- (5) What was the number of child placement weeks in 1996-97 and 1995-96?
- (6) How many -
- (a) foster care;
 - (b) family care; and
 - (c) group care,
- carers are registered with the Department?
- (7) What is each category of carer paid?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) The main reasons for the \$1 million increase in budgetary allocation for the care for children output for 1998/99 are to meet the increased direct costs of supporting additional numbers of children in care, to meet CPI increases in the next round of funding to non-government services and to meet departmental salary increases.
- (2)
- | | |
|---------|-------|
| 1994/95 | 2,311 |
| 1995/96 | 2,244 |
| 1996/97 | 2,284 |
| 1997/98 | 2,293 |

Note: this does not include some children in youth SAAP placements.

- (3)
- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| 1997/98 | \$26,875,000 (estimated total cost) |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
- The recent move from programs to output based management in 1997/98 and the introduction of accrual costing of services in 1996/97 means that it is not possible nor valid to compare the estimated total costing of care services as identified for 1997/98 with costings for previous years.
- (4)
- | | |
|---------|--------------------------------------|
| 1995/96 | 170 care and protection applications |
| 1996/97 | 211 care and protection applications |
- (5)
- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 1995/96 | 55,209 placement weeks (Estimate) |
| 1996/97 | 52,802 placement weeks (Estimate) |
- (6)
- (a) 563 foster carers (including family and group carers) are currently fully registered with the department. A further 145 carers carry interim registration.
 - (b) 162 registered foster carers (of the 563 foster carers detailed in (6)(a)) provide care to relatives. 102 foster carers caring for relatives have interim registration (of the 145 carers with interim registration in (6)(a)).
 - (c) Some foster carers are approved to provide care to more than one child. See table.

Number of Foster Carers

Type of registration of carer	Maximum Number of Children	
	1-2 children	3 or more children
Interim	119 carers	26 carers
Full	441 carers	122 carers

Note: Employees e.g. group workers working in either departmental or non-government service facilities are not described as carers.

- (7) All foster carers receive a basic weekly subsidy for each child in their care based on the age of the child. There is one rate for children aged under 13 years and another for those aged 13 years and over. Rates are reviewed annually and adjusted from 1 December in accordance with the previous year's CPI movement. The current rate for children under 13 as of 1 December 1997 is \$73.50 and for children 13 years and over is \$111.30. In special circumstances a carer may receive a Special Needs Loading which is based on the assessed needs of the child.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Consultants and Market Research

212. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What amount was spent by the Department on consultants last year?
- (2) What amount was spent on market research?
- (3) What key surveys and evaluations were conducted last year, who conducted them, what was the cost and what were the results?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) \$190,194.
- (2) \$168,929.
- (3) Included in Family and Children's Services 1996/97 Annual Report. The attached table provides details of key surveys and evaluations completed. [See paper No 82.]

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Funding to Non-government Agencies

213. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What is the total funding provided by the Department to non-Government agencies?
- (2) What agencies received funding and what amount was received?
- (3) What percentage of the total budget for 1998-99 does this funding comprise?
- (4) What percentage of the total budget for 1997-98 did this funding comprise?
- (5) How does the Department evaluate whether it saves money by out sourcing these functions?
- (6) What, if any, savings were made in the last three years by out sourcing these functions?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) \$46 million has been allocated directly through Family and Children's Services and an additional \$6 million has been allocated by the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office.
- (2) Two tables are attached. [See paper No 80.]

Table 1 represents payments to Drug and Alcohol services for 1997/98.

Table 2 represents the agreed annual funding level contained within Family and Children's Services Service Agreements signed with each individual service provider for 1997/98 and 1998/99.

There will be significant changes in the Children's Services area during 1998/99, with services being

transferred to the Education Department and the Commonwealth providing increased vacation care services. Additionally, Family and Children's Services will purchase \$200,000 of Youth Development Holiday Program services throughout the 1998/99 year. Remaining funds have been used for purposes such as increasing annual funding where approved, particularly where the introduction of industrial awards has impacted on service delivery; making payments to enable service providers to pay membership fees or purchase services from representative bodies; supporting service providers through the provision of training; and purchasing new services.

- (3) 36.97%.
- (4) 36.51%.
- (5) Purchasing services from non-government agencies has evolved from the historical practice of providing grants to non-government agencies, rather than being a considered decision to outsource these services, as many of these services have always been provided by non-government service providers. WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office evaluated the outsourcing of services in terms of increased resources, increased service delivery and a more comprehensive statewide coverage of service delivery.
- (6) Not applicable to services purchased directly through Family and Children's Services. WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office made no savings as all additional funds were reinvested in an expansion of service delivery.

GENDER BIAS TASK FORCE REPORT

216. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Women's Interests:

In relation to question on notice 3050 of 1998 when does the Government plan to actually implement the recommendations of the Chief Justice's Gender Bias Task Force, given that a report on the matter was compiled in April 1997?

Mrs PARKER replied:

As advised in my reply to question 3050 of 1998 the 1997 report summarised progress. Ongoing reporting will be part of agency reporting in annual reports.

SENIORS

State Plan on Ageing

238. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the Government Two Year Plan for Women (1996-1998) -

- (a) has the Office of Seniors' Interests developed a five year State Plan on Ageing;
- (b) if yes, provide details in regard to -
 - (i) older women's health issues;
 - (ii) healthy ageing; and
 - (iii) carers' issues;
- (c) if not, why not;
- (d) if not, does the Government intend honouring its commitment;
- (e) if yes, when; and
- (f) if not, why not?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) The Five Year Plan on Ageing is in the formal stages of development.
- (b) Negotiations are still being held with State Government agencies to finalise initiatives in a range of areas including women's health, healthy ageing and carers.
- (c)-(d) Not applicable.
- (e) It is anticipated negotiations will be finalised and the plan released later this year.
- (f) Not applicable.

SENIORS

Positive Role Models of Older Women

239. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the Government Two Year Plan for Women (1996-1998) -

- (a) has the Office of Seniors' Interests -
 - (i) identified; and
 - (ii) promoted,positive role models of older women;
- (b) if yes, will the Minister provide detail;
- (c) if not, why not; and
- (d) if not, when will this commitment be honoured?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b)
 - (i) Senior of the Year 1997 is a woman, Dorothy Meiklejohn. The Office of Seniors Interests profiles her role as Senior of the Year in promotional photographs and in publications produced by the Office of Seniors Interests.
 - (ii) The Office of Seniors Interests nominated Dorothy Meiklejohn for WA Citizen of the Year Award for Community Service.
 - (iii) The Office of Seniors Interests has a range of display material portraying senior women in positive roles within the community.
 - (iv) The Office of Seniors Interests has established a library of photographs to be used for promotional material which include positive roles for older women.
 - (v) The Office of Seniors Interests supported the Women's Information Service by displaying their information at the Seniors Card Directory launch.
 - (vi) There are currently five women members of the Seniors Ministerial Advisory Committee (SMAC). This committee advises the Minister on seniors issues.
- (c)-(d) Not applicable.

CHILD POVERTY

248. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Further to question on notice No 2993 of 1998, will the Minister answer sub-questions (3) to (10) which the Minister failed to answer previously?
- (2) If so, will the Minister advise if the Government/Minister has examined the findings of the Mission Australia report on child poverty?
- (3) Does the Government concur with the findings?
- (4) If not, why not?
- (5) Does the Minister/Government intend to discuss the report findings with the Federal Government?
- (6) If not, why not?
- (7) If so, when?
- (8) Does the Government intend to make any representations to the Federal Government on changing any of its policies to alleviate child poverty?
- (9) If so, what policies will the State Government ask the Federal Government to change?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Please refer to the response to question on notice 2993. In addition the following response is provided.
- (2)-(9) The Government is aware of the Mission Australia report on child poverty which addresses issues of poverty in Australia. The International Year for the Eradication of Poverty (1996) Taskforce was specifically set up by Government to develop strategies to strengthen responses to poverty in Western Australia. The Taskforce report *Community choices - individual lives* addresses issues of poverty specific to Western Australia and the Government has presented its response to that report.

POVERTY TASK FORCE REPORT

249. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Further to question on notice No 3595 of 1998, will the Minister advise if the Poverty Taskforce report and/or any recommendations arising from the report have been considered by Cabinet?
- (2) On what date or dates was the Taskforce Report or any recommendations contained in or related to that report considered by the Cabinet?
- (3) Have any decisions been made on any of the recommendations of the Taskforce or recommendations arising out of its report?
- (4) What decisions have been made?
- (5) On what date were those decisions made?
- (6) If the Poverty Taskforce report and its recommendations or any recommendations arising out of the report have not been considered by Cabinet, when is it envisaged that Cabinet will consider such recommendations and/or the report?
- (7) On what date did the Minister receive the Poverty Taskforce report?
- (8) What was/is the reason for the delay in having the Poverty Taskforce recommendations considered by Cabinet?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 29 June 1998.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Of the report's 60 recommendations, 39 are supported or supported in principle, 12 are under consideration and seven are not supported.
- (5) 29 June 1998.
- (6) Recommendations five and nine were not considered by Cabinet as they were addressed to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- (7) A transmission copy of the report was received on 24 December 1997.
- (8) The Taskforce Report and its recommendations were considered by Government for a response by the end of June 1998 as requested by the Taskforce. The report, its executive summary and the Government's response were released on 10 July 1998.

WOMEN'S INTERESTS

Government's Two Year Plan for Women

258. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the Government Two Year Plan for Women (1998-2000) -

- (a) what groups and organisations had input into the new plan;
- (b) was a committee formed to formulate the 1998-2000 Government Two Year Plan for Women;
- (c) if yes, who were the members of that committee;

- (d) does the Government intend honouring all the commitments made in the 1996-1998 Government Two Year Plan for Women; and
- (e) if not, why not?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Three forums have been held at which a large number of women's groups had the opportunity to give feedback on the first Government Two Year Plan for Women 1996-98 and have input into the planning process for the second Government Two Year Plan for Women 1999-2001.
- (b) No. The planning process for the second Two Year Plan has just commenced.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d) Yes.
- (e) Not applicable.

ADOPTIONS

Number Approved

308. Mr PENDAL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

Will the Minister advise the number of adoptions approved within Western Australia in each of the past 10 years?

Mrs PARKER replied:

ADOPTION ORDER GRANTED IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Year	Local Adoptions	Overseas Adoptions	Relative Adoptions (Australian Born)
1996/97	13	13	30
1995/96	25	29	21
1994/95	26	9	92
1993/94	35	16	50
1992/93	18	14	55
1991/92	19	24	77
1990/91	34	22	80
1989/90	27	20	81
1988/89	51	36	60
1987/88	65	37	89

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr John Swarbrick's Allegations

319. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

I refer to Mr John Swarbrick of Fremantle and ongoing concerns he has reported to the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) about the welfare of his son David aged 8 years, and ask -

- (a) what actions have been taken by the DFCS and on what date to investigate the welfare of the child and the name of each office involved;
- (b) has the child been located and, if so, where and when;

- (c) has the child been attending school and, if so, where, and if not, why not;
- (d) what contact has occurred between the Western Australian Police Service and the DFCS and when; and
- (e) when was the Department notified that the child had been notified as missing to the Western Australian Police Service?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a)-(b) In March 1998 Mr Swarbrick contacted Fremantle Office of Family and Children's Services with allegations about his ex-wife's care of his son. The information provided by Mr Swarbrick to Officers of this office did not have the substance to warrant statutory action to be taken by the department at the time. On 23 June 1998 Mr Swarbrick recontacted Family and Children's Services after he had received information from the Wyndham Police that his ex-wife and son had been located in their area. Consequently officers from both Wyndham Police and Wyndham Family and Children's Services visited the mother and child and concluded that there were no welfare concerns for the boy.
- (c) The child is not currently attending school, as the mother has not decided her final place of relocation. However, from information provided to Family and Children's Services Wyndham Office by the Wyndham Police, the mother has made arrangements for continued education of the child in the interim, in consultation with the child's previous school.
- (d) See (a) above.
- (e) In March 1998 Mr Swarbrick was encouraged by Officers from Fremantle Family and Children's Services to list his son as a Missing Person with the Police. This department was not notified of specific details concerning this action.

RALLY AUSTRALIA

320. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

I refer to the Rally Australia project ("the project") and ask -

- (a) when was the Minister first made aware of allegations that rorts were occurring in the project;
- (b) what was the nature of the allegations put to you;
- (c) does Brian Wilkinson receive Government funds to run the project and/or a salary for that purpose;
- (d) if the answer to (c) above is yes, what is the amount;
- (e) since its inception what amount of State Government funds have been spent on the project for each year the project has been funded;
- (f) what Government human resources have been made available to the project and provide the cost of same;
- (g) what private sponsorship has been obtained;
- (h) name the sources and the amounts;
- (i) has the project been designed to assist disadvantaged young people and if so, how can the Minister justify the preference displayed for children from prominent rally driving families;
- (j) what level of funding will the project receive for the financial year 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999;
- (k) what leads the Minister to renew funding for the Rally Australia project without conducting a full enquiry into matters of concern already raised;
- (l) are Rally Australia vehicles made available to staff for use in other rally races;
- (m) have any Rally Australia vehicles been involved in motor vehicle accidents in the financial years ending 30 June 1996, 1997 and 1998;
- (n) if so, what was the date of such accident, the circumstances, the amount and whether a claim was lodged with an insurer; and
- (o) who was the driver in each incident?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a)-(b) *The West Australian* reported concerns in April 1998 that drivers and navigators were from families with a Rallying background, that the project did not target disadvantaged young people and that the Project Coordinator had driven one of the vehicles in a Rally.
- (c) Bryan Wilkinson is a Level 5 full-time employee of Family and Children's Services.
- (d) At the Level 5 salary which in 1997 was \$48,125.
- (e)

1993/94	\$105,922
1994/95	\$132,925
1995/96	\$140,688
1996/97	\$136,200
1997/98	\$137,500
- (f) 1 FTE. Refer answer (d).
- (g) The total value of corporate sponsorship for this project from 1993 to 1998 is calculated at approximately \$349,500.
- (h) The source of sponsorship and value is provided. [See paper No 81.]
Cash sponsorship levels are provided as exact amounts and an approximate dollar value is given for provision of services by sponsors.
- (i) The Project was designed as a strategy for providing a service for young people including those who are disadvantaged or marginalised.
- (j) \$137,500.
- (k) The value of the project to young people.
- (l) There is a vehicle allocated to Rally Australia Coordinator for use administering the Project. All Rally vehicles are used only for training, participation in rallies and promotional activities.
- (m) Yes.
- (n)

Date	Circumstances	Cost	Insurance
Sept 96	Broken lower control arm in Rally Australia causing vehicle to leave road.	n/a **	No
Feb 97	Collision with service vehicle parked on rally route.	nil	Yes
Apr 97	Collision with tree in Forest Rally.	\$1,310*	No
May 97	Hit stump in Clubman Cup Rally.	n/a **	No
Nov 97	Roll over in Rally Australia. Vehicle written off.	n/a **	No
Nov 97	Roll over.	\$325*	No

* In 1997 [calendar year] some costs for repairs were paid directly by the department to the Whitfords team. These have been identified. In 1998 costs of a car roof were paid to the Peel team by the department due to Lotteries Commission funds being unavailable. This was to repair damage caused by a roll over when the car was used by Narrogin in 1997.

** Damage to vehicles is usually paid for by funds received through the Lotteries Commission. These funds are paid directly to Host Organisations who are responsible to account for expenditure directly to the Commission. The department does not keep records of these transactions by Host Organisations.

- (o) The driver in each incident was:

Sept 96	Joshua Gardiner
Feb 97	Bryan Wilkinson
Apr 97	Barry Liddle
May 97	Barry Liddle
Nov 97	Barry Liddle
Nov 97	Justin Tilby

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**CANNABIS CAUTIONING SYSTEM***Mirrabooka and Bunbury Police Districts***21. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:**

How did the Government choose the Mirrabooka and Bunbury police districts for the trial of its cannabis cautioning system and what specific criteria were used to select these regions?

Mrs PARKER replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. The police determined where those trials would take place. The criteria related to existing police programs such as community policing. We wanted a trial in the city and one in a regional area. The choice related to community policing programs already in place.

CANNABIS CAUTIONING SYSTEM*Consultation with Local Government Authorities***22. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:**

Were local government authorities in the Mirrabooka and Bunbury districts consulted before those areas were chosen; and, if so, do they support the trial?

Mrs PARKER replied:

The member may wish to ask the Minister for Police for information. I cannot give the member any information on whether the police contacted those local authorities. We have talked to the community drug service teams that are in place in those areas which will conduct the educational intervention. I can obtain the information, if the member for Kalgoorlie would like.

Mrs Roberts: Are you in charge of the drug strategy or not?

Mrs PARKER: Yes, I am.

TAX REFORM PACKAGE*Details***23. Mr OSBORNE to the Premier:**

Is the Premier able to provide to the House and the people of Western Australia details of the Federal Government's tax reform package?

Mr COURT replied:

Today we have seen the launch of the most comprehensive taxation reform package in this country since federation nearly 100 years ago. A number of issues for which my Government has been campaigning have been incorporated in this package. For the first time since the Second World War when the States lost their ability to raise income tax, the States will be given access to a major growth revenue. The States will receive all of the revenue from a goods and services tax. By being locked into that growth revenue, within a 10 year period the States' revenue base will increase in the vicinity of \$7b, which is about \$700m for Western Australia.

The package has been designed to be sensitive to low and middle income earners. There are considerable taxation breaks, very significant changes to the income tax system, and generous compensation to ensure that people will not be affected detrimentally by the introduction of a GST.

Exporters will benefit to the extent of \$4.5b nationally. However, because Western Australia is this country's major exporting State, it will be a great benefit to our export areas. Under the arrangements, the States will receive all of the revenue, not a share. The GST rate and the base on which it is raised cannot be changed without unanimous agreement of the States. In effect, it will become a major states growth tax. In return for that, the States must give a commitment to abolish financial institutions duty, the bank account debit tax and a wide range of stamp duties on marketable securities -

Several opposition members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members, I assume that every member in the Chamber is vitally interested in this information.

Mr Graham: No.

The SPEAKER: I am making that assumption.

Mr Graham interjected.

The SPEAKER: I formally call the member for Pilbara to order for the first time for interjecting when I am on my feet. I want to listen to the Premier, and I will be fairly tough on interjectors.

Mr COURT: FID, BAD and stamp duties on marketable securities, conveyancing on business properties, leases, cheques, bills of exchange, promissory notes, credit arrangements, hire purchase arrangements, mortgages, bonds, debentures and other loan securities will be abolished. Bed taxes in places that have them like New South Wales will also be abolished. GST-free areas will include health, education and child care. There will be no GST on land tax, the stamps and duties that are left, motor vehicle registrations, water, sewerage and local government rates. However, there will be a GST on power, because most States have a competitive arrangement with the private sector.

When one considers the overall package, the voters of this country will have a clear choice to support what is a comprehensive and significant taxation reform package and one which is beneficial to Western Australians; or to vote for an opposition party which has not as yet provided the details of its taxation arrangements. The challenge to the opposition parties is to put the details of their arrangements on the table, so the people of this country will be able to make a choice.

This is a comprehensive package that significantly simplifies our taxation system. It will be beneficial to low and middle income earners. Unashamedly, it has been skewed to provide support, incentive and assistance to the low to middle income earners. If this package is supported by the Australian people and is introduced, 80 per cent of income taxpayers - or the great majority - will have a top rate of tax of 30¢ in the dollar. Therefore, I look forward to the debate in the forthcoming weeks and months on what I believe is a unique opportunity for this country to change the taxation system that is out of date and can be put into shape as we move into the next century.

CANNABIS EDUCATION PROGRAM

24. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What will be the focus of the education program offered to first time cannabis offenders?
- (2) Who will be responsible for preparing the education material?
- (3) Who will be responsible for running the program?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1)-(3) The education intervention sessions will be a combination of things. Information will be given about the harm caused by cannabis, but those sessions will be particularly designed as interactive programs so that people are encouraged to change behaviour. Those programs are being developed by the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office teams in consultation with the community drug service teams.

Ms Anwyl: Has this been planned for a while?

Mrs PARKER: Yes, it has been planned for some time and the community drug service teams will be responsible for delivering those intervention sessions.

CANNABIS EDUCATION PROGRAM

25. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

How much money has been allocated to the education program and from where will the money come?

Mrs PARKER replied:

I have done a full costing of the anticipated costs of the education program and that will be one of the things that we will look at over the trial period. All of the costs will come from the budget of the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office; and that has been estimated and accounted for.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members, we all make interjections, particularly when they have relevance, but we cannot get to a situation where we have people on both sides of the Chamber interjecting when the person on his or her feet is not accepting the interjections.

CANNABIS CAUTIONING SYSTEM

26. Dr TURNBULL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

Can the Minister please tell the House how the drug abuse strategy will be progressed particularly in relation to the trialling of the new cannabis law enforcement approach, the public education campaign on the dangers of cannabis use, and the formal cautioning system for first time offenders along with the mandatory intervention sessions?

Mrs PARKER replied:

I thank the member for this question.

This Government continues its opposition to drug abuse, acknowledging that all drugs cause harm in our society. The moves that we announced today and yesterday regarding the public education program and the cannabis cautioning system for first time offenders being linked to the mandatory education intervention program are all part of that opposition to drug abuse.

In terms of our overall strategy, we have consistently said that no single strategy will work, that the Government cannot do it on its own, and that we have to link in with the people of Western Australia on this project. Ten community drug service teams are in place, operating and receiving good responses. We also aimed to establish 40 drug action groups in two years. I am pleased to announce that, within 13 months, we have 43 in place. The school drug education program has resulted in a complete rewrite of the curriculum. It has been trialled in schools and professional development is progressing well. It includes a national first in that it has take-home work for parents to be involved in the activity.

Our heroin program and the initiatives to deal with this terrible problem are progressing well. At any level a loss to heroin is too high, but despite a national trend of increasing numbers of deaths in this area, I am pleased to say that in Western Australia this year we are consistently seeing a decreased rate of about 20 per cent. What we have announced today is part of this Government's overall commitment to fight the scourge of drugs that confronts our society.

CANNABIS CAUTIONING SYSTEM

27. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Do police intend to target cannabis smokers so they can caution them and direct them into education programs?
- (2) If so, does that not defeat one of the main purposes of a cautioning system which, according to the Commissioner of Police, is to free up police resources?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1)-(2) I thank the member for the question. The answer is, if we run two pilot trials, one in the city and one in the country, then we must do so in such a way that, at the end of the trials, we are able to compare the results between the areas where the trials have been run and the areas where they have not. If we have an active campaign to seek out first time cannabis users with only 50 grams then it will skew the results.

Dr Gallop: You had better talk to the Minister then. There are two positions now.

Mr PRINCE: No, that is absolute nonsense.

Dr Gallop: The position of the Minister and the position of Family and Children's Services are different.

Mr PRINCE: That is absolute nonsense.

Dr Gallop: You have to get your arguments in order. You have two sets of arguments. Get your act together over there.

Mr Marlborough: There will be another announcement tomorrow.

Mr PRINCE: The first time they are picked up there is a discretion to caution with the education campaign that follows which enables the individual to be counselled one-on-one as opposed to a generalised campaign which does

not have that effectiveness. That will be trialled and the results will be looked at. If it needs some modification, it will be done statewide. If it is not seen to be effective, obviously we will re-evaluate it. However, there is no intention to target people, but the police will - as they always have - deal with offenders as they occur.

Mr Marlborough interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Peel is having a good day but it is about to come to an end.

CITY OF JOONDALUP

28. Mr BAKER to the Minister representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

There is a tremendous need in the new City of Joondalup for a facility to house services pertaining to employment support, women's health, family counselling, parent support, community information and advocacy, migrant support and youth services. Can the Minister inform this House of any Government support for the provision of these vital services in the young, vibrant and rapidly expanding City of Joondalup?

Mr COWAN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question because it has permitted the Minister in another place to provide the answer.

In June 1997 the Lotteries Commission approved a grant of \$2m towards the development of Joondalup Lotteries House. The Commission is working in partnership with the City of Joondalup and the local community to provide quality, secure and affordable office accommodation for a range of community organisations. The total project budget is \$2 330 000. The city, which has also provided land for the house within the civic precinct, has provided the balance. Tenant groups of the house will include Relationships Australia (Western Australia) Inc; Citizens Advice Bureau of WA; Whitford Women's Health Centre; Joondalup Community Foundation Inc; Wanneroo Accommodation & Support Services Inc; Australian Red Cross; Australian Asian Association of WA (Inc); Workpower Incorporated; YMCA; CentreCare; and the Patricia Giles refuge.

The service delivery of all these organisations will be enhanced by their accommodation in the Joondalup Lotteries House. The house and its facilities will be available to other community organisations in the region. The facilities will include a conference room, interview/counselling rooms and reprographics equipment.

The architects for the project are James Christou and Associates, and the builders are Hawk Development. The construction of the building has commenced and it is expected that it will be completed by January 1999. A community-based committee comprising tenants and independent community members, with support from the Lotteries Commission, will manage the house.

MENTAL HEALTH PATIENTS

Accommodation Charge

29. Mr MCGINTY to the Minister for Health:

Will the Minister confirm that the Government has commenced charging long term, chronic mental health patients for inpatient accommodation in Western Australia's public psychiatric hospitals to overcome inadequate government hospital funding?

Mr DAY replied:

I do not have any information on that specific query, but I will seek the information and take the appropriate action. I do know that the State now has \$125m in additional funding that it did not have a week ago to be spent over the next five years on a very substantial program of elective surgery. We have witnessed a comprehensive debate about funding between the State and the Commonwealth over the past 12 months. During that time this Government has fought to ensure that the State has adequate funding to be able to provide the services that are needed in our public health sector. Clearly, until recently we did not have the necessary funding. As members are aware, the debate moved to the heads of government level and was taken up directly by the Premier with the Prime Minister. As a result of those discussions, an extra \$125m is available over the next five years.

The Government has made the decision that all of that money will be quarantined and used to increase substantially the amount of elective surgery performed. The Government does not regard it as acceptable for people to wait, for example, for joint replacements for three or four years, and it will do something about it. It is taking action.

MENTAL HEALTH PATIENTS

*Accommodation Charge***30. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to an account for \$230 rendered this week to the mother of a chronic schizophrenic for accommodation in the psychiatric unit at Bentley Hospital.

- (1) Is this policy of charging long term public patients for accommodation and treatment in public hospitals in breach of the Medicare Agreement?
- (2) Does it apply only to psychiatric patients who cannot stand up for themselves?

The SPEAKER: The rules applying to supplementary questions are that they should come straight to the point and should be one question only. If the member wants to ask that question, I will give him the call at the soonest opportunity.

NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY

31. Dr TURNBULL to the Minister for Primary Industry:

Will the Minister report to the Parliament on the outcomes of the meeting of state and federal Primary Industry Ministers, which was held in Western Australia about 10 days ago? In particular, can he address the issue of the national competition policy?

Mr Carpenter interjected.

Mr HOUSE replied:

I will be very happy to do that. The member can bring on the debate at any time.

Several members interjected.

Mr HOUSE: I am happy to do that any day. I am very pleased to support that regional development and the 500 jobs it has created, which is more than the member could do with his blue-sky projects. I am happy to have that debate, but the member would not know enough about the topic to participate. He can raise it and we will address it.

Several members interjected.

Mr HOUSE: There is a number of issues -

Ms MacTiernan: Why not ask him to go outside?

Mr HOUSE: The member for Armadale could wait all night for someone to ask her outside. She would be waiting a long time; in fact, she would have to charge.

Ms MacTiernan: You would be too scared.

Mr HOUSE: I would be too scared to go outside with the member; she is right about that.

Several members interjected.

Mr HOUSE: A number of issues were raised at the meeting with the federal Minister and the wool industry decision that has since been made -

Point of Order

Mrs ROBERTS: Mr Speaker, will you let the Minister get away with making that kind of totally unparliamentary remark in this House? If so, he is setting a new low standard of behaviour, particularly when a Minister of the Crown is attempting to demean a female member of this House.

The SPEAKER: The member for Armadale was travelling very well and she decided that she would do some interjecting and the Minister responded. There is no point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr HOUSE: If the member for Armadale took offence, I apologise. I am sure she did not. The interjection was made in the same good humour as the reply.

The meeting of state and federal Ministers discussed a number of issues, and the wool industry was probably the most

important. The decision since made by the Federal Government to suspend the sale of the stockpile was supported by the Western Australian Government, and I commend that decision. We can now look forward to dealing with that stockpile in a commercial way.

However, the most important discussion at the meeting was about competition policy. All Ministers supported the view that competition policy with regard to statutory marketing authorities needed a lot more debate and time for discussion in the community. In addition, the required legislative process would take more time. The federal Minister has accepted that point of view and we will have more discussions about that issue at the next meeting.

FEDERAL ELECTION PREFERENCES

32. Dr GALLOP to the Premier and Leader of the Liberal Party:

Now that the Labor Party has made clear its position that One Nation and like-minded parties, including Australia First, will be preferenced below the Liberal Party in all Western Australian seats in the forthcoming federal election, is the Premier prepared to show the same moral leadership and call on the Liberal Party to do the same? If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

The member for Eyre is rather concerned about some of the decisions that are being made. I will repeat my answer: In the Liberal Party those decisions will be made by the state executive when the nominations close. I will tell the House who will make the decision in relation to preferences: The people of Australia.

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF PERTH NORTH-WEST CORRIDOR

33. Mr BAKER to the Minister for Lands:

Can the Minister advise whether there has recently been a demographic survey of the population of Perth's north-west corridor? If so, what were the findings of that survey?

Mr SHAVE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. I hope that if the member for Armadale contemplates interjecting, she does not become as excited with me today as she did yesterday with the Minister for Health, because we will have a problem.

Ms MacTiernan: That depends on whether you tell blatant, outright lies like those told by your colleague.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: The member for Armadale, a very experienced member, realises she cannot make such a statement. I ask her to withdraw.

Ms MacTIERNAN: Of course I withdraw - I would not want to upset sensitivities.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr Carpenter: How did this bloke survive a cabinet reshuffle? He's a joke - he's the first Minister to replace!

Mr SHAVE: Me or the other bloke?

Mr Carpenter: You. Your stock answer to every other question is, "I do not know; I have not read it yet." Do it again, and sit down.

Several members interjected.

Mr SHAVE: Dear me - is the member not a sulky boy now he is not the journalist? Can we have a break so that we can have cry session for the member for Willagee? He is a poor little boy.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Carpenter: You couldn't get me to do the story.

Mr SHAVE: Aren't you a sook!

The SPEAKER: Order! Two members have interjected while I am on my feet and have forced me to act. I formally call to order for the first time both the member for Willagee and the Minister for Lands. Perhaps the member for Willagee could at least wait until the Minister for Lands starts to answer the question before continually interjecting.

Mr SHAVE: I will lend the member for Willagee a handkerchief if he runs out.

I thank the member for Joondalup for some notice of the question. I am pleased to indicate that a demographic profile for Joondalup was prepared with some significant findings.

Dr Edwards: There are people there.

Mr SHAVE: Yes; that was a nice interjection.

Mr McGowan: Have you worked out how to use the shoeshine machine yet?

Mr SHAVE: I did - with the member's help.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call the member for Rockingham to order for the first time for an inane interjection.

Mr SHAVE: I am sure Parliament will be interested to know that the current population of Joondalup is 214 000 people, and that the north and north-east sectors of the north-west corridor are expected to reach an ultimate population of 466 000 people. I am pleased to confirm that Joondalup's city status as a major urban centre, as planned for and supported by this Government, will accommodate 30 000 jobs in the near future, 25 000 students, and homes for up to 3 500 residents. I hope that if a redistribution of seats occurs in that area with this increase in population, the people there get a further member with the capabilities of the member for Joondalup.

NARROWS BRIDGE

Cabinet Consultation

34. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

- (1) Will the Premier explain why the proposal to build a new bridge over the Narrows did not go before Cabinet for approval?
- (2) Was Cabinet consulted about this policy change?
- (3) When precisely did the Premier and his cabinet colleagues learn of this change?
- (4) Given that the Premier was involved with the launch of the Transform WA project, when did the Government intend to advise the public that a new bridge will be built rather than extend the existing one?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(4) I do not want to upset the Leader of the Opposition, but the matter went to Cabinet. It was always made clear that the plan for more lanes on the Narrows Bridge involved a number of options, one of which was to build a separate structure. I do not understand the issue. The engineers determine the best and most-efficient structure to provide more lanes. As with talkback radio, I seem to be receiving a lot of engineering advice these days on how best to widen the Narrows Bridge. The fact is that a bottleneck exists at the Narrows - this will be fixed.

Ms MacTiernan: It will be moved.

Mr COURT: No. It will be fixed.

NARROWS BRIDGE

Cabinet Consultation

35. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

Will the Premier confirm that the second bridge at the Narrows was discussed in Cabinet?

Mr COURT replied:

The then Minister for Transport brought a detailed submission containing all the different proposals to Cabinet on which lengthy discussions were held. He specifically outlined that a number of options were involved including how engineers would design the widened lanes at the Narrows Bridge. As I said, I do not understand the issue: We have said it will be widened, and that we will put in more lanes, including traffic and public transport lanes. If the Leader of the Opposition is the design expert, he has skills we did not know he had.

WHITFORD CITY SHOPPING CENTRE

Stolen Car Statistics

36. Mr JOHNSON to the Minister for Police:

How many cars per month have been stolen at Whitford City Shopping Centre since the opening of the Hillarys Police Station in April of this year? How do these figures compare with statistics from previous months before the station was opened?

Mr PRINCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question, as it enabled me to obtain the figures. For the six months from October 1997 to March 1998, the monthly figures were three, eight, eight, 23, 24 and 31, with a monthly average of 16.17 car thefts. The police station opened at the end of March, the beginning of April. The vehicle theft figures since are April, 11; May, four; June, three; and a monthly average of six thefts.

If more people would take up the immobiliser offer designed to help with car immobiliser installation, far fewer vehicles would be stolen. Immobilisers are very effective, and people can help themselves in this way and, consequently, release police to do other things.

REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT

37. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for the Environment:

I refer to the Minister's comments yesterday indicating her intention to bring the regional forest agreement process to a close as quickly as possible. In light of this comment, when will the environmental impact assessment of the draft regional forest agreement referred to in the RFA scoping agreement be undertaken?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The RFA agreement is not subject to an environmental impact assessment. Therefore, any changes to the forest management plan will be so subjected and will be undertaken in accordance with the statutory requirements.
