

**BAUDIN EXPEDITION BICENTENARY, GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**

*Statement by Member for Perth*

**MS WARNOCK** (Perth) [12.50 pm]: Today I must relay the serious disappointment felt by members of the French community, academics and others who were part of a planning committee for a proposed celebration of an important historical anniversary for France and Australia in 2001 - the bicentenary of the Baudin expedition in 1801. Baudin came out in the *Geographe* and, with Hamelin in the *Naturaliste*, carried out a significant scientific and mapping expedition, leaving a legacy of over 250 place names on the Western Australian coastline, such as Peron, Heirisson, Lancelin, Mentelle, Bouvard and Freycinet. The French expressed great enthusiasm for the project. President Jacques Chirac is the patron of the organising committee there, and many events were planned. In South Australia, where Baudin met Flinders in 1802, there is great enthusiasm, considerable funding and serious planning activity going on for Encounter 2002. Here in Western Australia the planning has come to a virtual halt, because promised government support and assistance has not been forthcoming. A tall ship event, a museum exhibition, a history symposium, a medical conference, a documentary film, a wine festival and a music event will go ahead only if they are privately funded, as a result of government inactivity or lack of response. With the event's tourism promotional potential, I thought the Government would at least have paid as much attention as it did to the Dutch tercentenary celebrations. Enthusiasts for the project have been deeply disappointed by this Government's lack of support and they fear the event will fail because of it. This is reprehensible and a great pity for Western Australia.