

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 1 June 1994

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko) took the Chair at 2.00 pm, and read prayers.

PETITION - WHITEMAN PARK, NO DEVELOPMENT

MR BROWN (Morley) [2.04 pm]: I present the following petition -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned petitioners call on the Government to;

- (1) Recognise the importance of preserving the national environment in a way in which it can be enjoyed by all West Australians and visitors to the State, and
- (2) Reject any development or other proposals which would have the effect of reducing the size of Whiteman Park.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition bears 834 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The **SPEAKER**: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 28.]

PETITION - CARNARVON JETTY, HERITAGE VALUE

MR LEAHY (Northern Rivers) [2.05 pm]: I present the following petition -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned respectfully call upon the Government of Western Australia to recognise the heritage value of the Carnarvon Jetty as the last remaining structure of its kind in the North West of this State and to provide the Shire of Carnarvon with sufficient funds to ensure restoration of the Jetty can be completed.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition bears 340 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The **SPEAKER**: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 29.]

PETITION - WESTMINSTER PRIMARY AND JUNIOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS, AMALGAMATION

MR KOBELKE (Nollamara) [2.06 pm]: I present the following petition -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned:

1. Totally oppose the amalgamation of Westminster Junior Primary School and Westminster Primary School.

2. Completely reject the proposal to cut spending on our schools through a change that would reduce the quality of our children's education.
3. Call on the Minister for Education to maintain the separate Westminster Primary and Junior Primary Schools with the high quality education they provide to our children.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition bears 46 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 30.]

PETITION - BULLSBROOK DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL, FUTURE

MRS van de KLASHORST (Swan Hills) [2.07 pm]: I present the following petition -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned people of Western Australia wish to express our support for the retention and continued growth of years 11 and 12 of the Bullsbrook District High School.

We also request that a commitment that a minimum period of five (5) years be allowed before any review or public indication be made on the closure or downgrading of these two years. This will enable the community to stabilize its views and allow unhindered parental planning of the students' future education.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition bears 187 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 31.]

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT - MINISTER FOR LABOUR RELATIONS

Workers' Compensation, Dispute Resolution System

MR KIERATH (Riverton - Minister for Labour Relations) [2.08 pm]: This statement relates to the new dispute resolution system in workers' compensation which started on 1 March this year. More than 1 600 matters were unresolved before the former workers' compensation board and about 700 have been settled in just two months. Many were simply discontinued because the parties reached agreement. The remaining 900 are being dealt with under the new system. The progress of some cases surfacing from the old system is interesting. Typical is a one year old unresolved matter which was listed for a two day trial in May this year but, after contact by a conciliation officer, was settled in less than one day. The alternative would have taken three or more days.

I turn now to the new system. There were 530 new matters referred for conciliation in the first two months. That was more than expected, but it reflects one of the aims of the system; to make the dispute resolution system accessible to the average worker. Informal talks at an early stage in the process have encouraged quicker resolution, and disputes are now being lodged by workers and other parties without the worry or cost of legal representation.

Mr Brown interjected.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: Order! I think I heard the member for Morley say something unparliamentary. I ask him to withdraw the words.

Mr BROWN: I withdraw.

Ministerial Statement Resumed

Mr KIERATH: One matter lodged for conciliation on 28 March involved an insurer who denied liability. It was settled within 10 days following telephone contact between the conciliation officer and the parties, including a medical practitioner. In another case, a worker's claim was disputed over the cause of his injury. The conciliation officer contacted the worker's general practitioner who advised that the injury was work related and, as a result, the claim was accepted. These are actual case histories; they are fact. A number of letters of thanks have been received about the new system. One stated that conciliation officers had been able to assist in resolving some difficult problems through the successful combination of lateral thinking, realistic options and an absence of lawyers.

There are many more examples and I will table a selection of these letters. But they all highlight that the new system has achieved a great deal more informality in obtaining key information necessary to resolve some disputes.

The medical assessment panel register contains 128 GPs and specialists and three separate panels have now conducted medical examinations of five injured workers. The use of these panels to obtain final binding decisions on medical questions is most appropriate.

Finally, Mr Speaker, to the involvement of the legal fraternity: Most cases are proceeding without the need for legal representation, particularly at the conciliation stage, but in some cases lawyers have been of valuable assistance in resolving issues and reaching agreement. Regrettably, some solicitors and law firms have rejected the new conciliation system and have been more confrontationalist than cooperative. Their actions are detrimental to their clients because it slows the process. I believe it could be a deliberate campaign to frustrate the changes. I am satisfied at this early stage the new system is working better than expected - it has had significant results in early intervention to resolve disputes and is achieving the aim of getting injured workers back into the workplace more quickly. I am happy to table the letter.

[See paper No. 85].

[Questions without notice taken.]**SELECT COMMITTEE - ANCIENT SHIPWRECKS***Leave to Meet During Sitting of the House, Wednesday 1 June*

On motion by Mr C.J. Barnett (Leader of the House) resolved -

That this House grant leave for the Select Committee on Ancient Shipwrecks to meet during the sitting of the House on Wednesday, 1 June 1994.

BILLS (3) - INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Fire Brigades Superannuation Amendment Bill
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Wiese (Minister for Emergency Services), and read a first time.
2. Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Court (Treasurer), and read a first time.
3. Subiaco Redevelopment Bill
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Lewis (Minister for Planning), and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Motion*

Resumed from 31 May.

MRS HALLAHAN (Armadale - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.47 pm]: It seems to me that Western Australians are on the brink of an economic recovery brought about by a number of factors, mainly by the natural resources of this state and the efforts of the Federal Government in restructuring the Australian economy. Western Australia will benefit from that quite significantly. At this stage the Court Government is claiming credit for the recovery, which does it no credit at all because we all know it has been a long process. There can be no claim by the Court Government that it is responsible for the benefits flowing through our economy. For most Western Australians the future is brighter, and we would have to say that the future is brighter in Western Australia than in other parts of Australia, with the exception of Queensland where that economy continues to outperform other areas of Australia.

Where then could there be any cloud on the horizon of great opportunity in this state? Having thought about this I regrettably came to the conclusion that the only serious cloud that faces Western Australia is the policies of the present Court coalition Government. It is a sad commentary on a government elected by the people to administer their affairs. Western Australia is under attack from within by its own government's actions within the state and its relations outside Western Australia.

Within Western Australia we see a reduction in the support services for families at every level. There is a lack of support for the police and for the fire brigades, and the desecration of public services. No care is exhibited in the maintenance of programs that affect the disadvantaged. There is turmoil in education. There is a very cynical and simplistic approach to the problems experienced by Aboriginal people. Our health services are under great pressure and in some areas disarray. This has all been brought about in a very short time by this conservative Government. The politically driven policy which harms our standing nationally and, from what we have heard today, may harm us internationally, is the Court dynasty's recipe for political success. That recipe that puts the interests of the Courts and their comfortable group of friends above and beyond the interests of all other Western Australians is reprehensible. It is a cynical expedient, on the one hand purporting to promote and take care of the interests of our state while, on the other hand, making decisions and taking action that materially disadvantages Western Australia.

I want to outline some of the programs where this is evident and where, if there is not a change in attitude, we will see a growing disadvantage to the people in this state in receiving their rightful share of the national cake.

The dental health program is one such program. This year, Western Australia has already missed out on \$1.7m under the emergency care component that would have come to the state if it had signed the agreement. The program provides \$278m over four years. All other states signed the agreement and had the benefit of funds from 1 January 1994. The significant amounts that would flow from that program over four years are in jeopardy. We have not heard any statement that the Minister for Health is about to sign that agreement. He and his colleagues - this Government - have already cost Western Australians \$1.7m. I make the point that the program is targeted at pensioners and holders of health care cards because they have most difficulty affording expensive dental care. Members would agree that most dental care is expensive these days. A serious situation has developed on that front.

Dr Watson interjected.

Mrs HALLAHAN: The member for Kenwick is right when she says that the Government does not care about people in difficult circumstances or whether their basic health care needs should be met.

The child care strategy is emerging as an area of concern. It is to be hoped that it will not develop into the same debacle as has occurred with the dental health care program. I am

told that Western Australia is reconsidering its obligations under the 1990 agreement. Does that mean the Government will put at risk all the funds which have made such important services and facilities available to Western Australians? Last night, debate centred on how that Minister handles his portfolio. Is he going to create the headaches for Western Australian parents that existed before we implemented our marvellous and revolutionary child care program, an excellent cooperative effort between state and federal Governments? That joint agreement has made an extraordinary difference to supporting parents in their responsibilities for the care of their children.

I turn to the Council of Australian Governments. Many people would not see that as affecting them on a daily basis, as they would the dental health care program or the child care program. However, apparently Western Australia is either not represented at a number of the committees under that council, is underrepresented, or its representatives leave meetings early and have not taken part in discussions. Some weeks ago, I placed on notice question 132, which asked -

What action has the Premier taken to gain Western Australian representatives on the 12 Commonwealth bodies which were identified in February as lacking such representation? Has the Premier written to the relevant Commonwealth Ministers responsible for making appointments to these bodies to ask for such representation? If not, why not? If so, on what date did the Premier write? Will the Premier table such letters, and any replies received from the Commonwealth in this regard?

I am sad to report that there has been no response to that question. I do not know whether it is because the Premier does not place any importance on the question. I wonder whether he is too embarrassed to answer it. He makes a loud song and dance about the interests of Western Australians; however, when it comes to being part of decision making bodies and doing substantial work to progress the interests of Western Australia, he does not do it. Although we can all say that the Premier does not represent Western Australia very well on occasions, he is less well supported by many of his Ministers who do not come up to what is required in diligence and ability in representing Western Australia.

Another area of concern relates to the national credit laws. Western Australia was the only state which refused to introduce template legislation on uniform credit arrangements. In that regard, the Commonwealth is not even a signatory to the agreement; it is an agreement between the states. The Commonwealth acts as a coordinating body so that Australians can have the benefit of standard agreements on hire purchase, credit unions and matters outside banking laws. Again, Western Australia is not involved. It is looking foolish because its lack of negotiation is putting at risk the welfare of many Western Australians. We must keep in mind that, although the Premier and his Ministers see themselves as representing Western Australia, many Western Australians move interstate and to other parts of the world. However, many people from other states make Western Australia their home. It is ridiculous that the Government does not have the capacity or the vision to see that it is responsible for looking after the interests of -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! It would be better if the members conducting a private discussion conducted it somewhere else.

Mrs HALLAHAN: On this rare occasion, Mr Speaker, I agree with you.

The SPEAKER: I hope that it is not only on a rare occasion.

Mrs HALLAHAN: The other matter which has come to the attention of the community recently and which will have a significant impact on many citizens, especially the unemployed, is the White Paper to address the issue of unemployment drawn up by the Federal Government. Again, Western Australia has not signified its cooperation with the measures recommended under that White Paper, despite the fact that conservative Governments in South Australia and Tasmania have joined employers and unions in

praising its initiatives, and have signalled their intention to join in the national task of promoting economic growth and reducing unemployment.

I do not see what the Court Government thought it was gaining by not being a part of that national task to reduce the problem of long term unemployment and to increase the skill base in the community as employment opportunities arise. The outcome will be that, as the economy continues to pick up speed and jobs become available, the size of the pool from which skilled labour can be drawn will be reduced and we will see inflationary pressure emerge as we have to go overseas to bring in expertise. That should be addressed by the provision of training for Australians. Australia's population is well educated when compared with people in most other countries. We have the capacity to provide the training that is needed to meet the opportunities that will arise as the economy continues to recover. It is a very myopic state of affairs that any state should think that it can move on its own to address this problem. A concerted national effort is needed between employers, unions and every state and territory government. The Court Government's response to the White Paper should be considered carefully.

Members from electorates who have not been face to face with people who have been forced into long term unemployment might not understand the human tragedy that results. Perhaps that is why Cabinet is so insensitive and so reluctant to become part of what could have been an historic national initiative. The states' rights argument is put very forcefully by the Premier on every occasion and is taken up at times by members of his Cabinet. The Deputy Premier threatened a regional local government body regarding funding if money were taken directly from the Federal Government. I understand from people in local government that concern -

Mr Cowan interjected.

Mrs HALLAHAN: The Deputy Premier does not remember that headline.

Mr Cowan: I remember the headline. I want the member to get it straight so she does not make a fool of herself.

Mrs HALLAHAN: If the Minister wants to make a sensible comment I will allow the objection, otherwise I will not.

Mr Cowan: The Grants Commission has an obligation to take into account all funding for local government.

Mrs HALLAHAN: Before the Deputy Premier makes a fool of himself, the Grants Commission has the capacity to make all those decisions. A few weeks ago I attended a meeting at Local Government House where people from various local government authorities met representing regional bodies. It makes sense to cooperate on a regional basis. At that meeting threats made by the Deputy Premier surfaced and very grave resentment existed regarding the Court Government's attitude. The regional councils were forming in a sensible way at the local level where local governments could see they could cooperate and achieve better outcomes working together. One would have thought that even a Court government would have encouraged that movement, but instead people felt frustrated and betrayed when support was not forthcoming and threats were made. Many of those people came from country areas and resented the position taken by the Government. Regional areas stand to lose a great deal if the Court Government does not take up the initiatives offered under the White Paper. That White Paper proposes the setting up of a number of regional councils around the country which could then apply for funding to address regional needs and unemployment problems. If the Court Government does not signify its intention to cooperate with those programs, Western Australia will miss out on very large amounts of money. Individual Western Australians and their families will be significantly disadvantaged compared with families in other states by the attitude of the Court Government - an attitude not founded in anything practical but rather in some philosophy which is about its being re-elected and then forsaking the interests of Western Australians, individually and collectively.

The area of great concern, which dominated debate in this State in the early part of this year, resulted from the High Court decision on Mabo and the position taken by the Court

Government on native title policy. That has not served this state well at all. On the one hand, the Court Government states it supports development, the mining industry, and employment creation. On the other hand, it has embarked on a most destructive path, causing great indecision for the mining industry. It has made the Aboriginal community feel uncared for and undermined, with obstacles placed in its way at every turn in relation to its aspirations regarding land. Western Australians will miss out on huge amounts of investment and large numbers of jobs. That will be one of the most significant legacies the Court Government will leave and the Opposition will need to rectify on gaining office, to create a climate of certainty for investment, and of job opportunities that are so vital to the standard of living that most of us enjoy.

I turn to comments made in question time by the Minister for Labour Relations. He stated that he was going on an overseas trip, visiting the International Labor Organisation and would be making representation from Western Australia regarding industrial laws.

Mr Bloffwitch interjected.

Mrs HALLAHAN: It will bring real problems to this State and to this country.

Today a press clipping came to my notice, dated 13 April 1994 from *The West Australian* page 8. The leading paragraph states -

The WA Government wants to deal directly with a United Nations body to prevent the Federal Government controlling the Shark Bay world heritage area.

This is the second time it has come to my notice that Western Australian Ministers are stating they will negotiate internationally on internal Australian matters. That is in contradiction to other positions the Government has taken regarding Western Australia's independence. It is a worry that promotion of Western Australia will be in the hands of inexperienced and fairly mediocre Ministers who troop off overseas to make representations to world bodies when they do not understand the nature of the negotiations that have taken place nationally here. In the same article of 13 April, Bob Pearce, a former Minister for the Environment, was interviewed and stated that the agreement signed by him on behalf of Western Australia with his federal colleague gave Western Australia control over that area. No delegating of control over that area from this state was mentioned, and so either deliberately or by accident the Minister, Kevin Minson, is misleading the Western Australian public in the way he has represented this matter to the media. His proposed visit to the United Nations body is stupid because Western Australia maintains control of that area. The previous Labor government took a strong view that we had to have an active and controlling interest in that matter. It will be interesting to watch the cavalcade of Ministers who go overseas. Given their performance here on behalf of Western Australians, not representing us well, spending lots of money and renegeing on national policy negotiations -

Mr Lewis: Didn't you go to New York with Marcelle Anderson and then have to pay the money back?

Mrs HALLAHAN: I certainly did go to New York and had legitimate business there. I did not have to pay the money back and I tabled in the other place a statement on the reasons for that visit. Again, an ill-informed Minister is making poisonous statements, and interjecting in a most unfortunate way. That signifies the calibre of the Ministry that this state has representing it today, and the interjection by the Minister for Planning demonstrates that. His track record is poor; he represents himself and his party very poorly indeed.

I indicate to the House and the Governor very clearly that there are very serious concerns about the attitude of the Western Australian Government towards Western Australians. On the one hand there is rhetoric that it will put Western Australians first at every turn but, on the other hand, decisions are made and actions taken which actually and very materially disadvantage Western Australians. I hope that at some time Western Australians will recognise this and that their condemnation will be loud and very clear. In the meantime I can only say to the current Government that it must change its attitude and direction, and that the path it is following is not the recipe for political success, as it

was in the days of Sir Charles Court. Times have changed and people are looking for more substance and care from their government. They want policies that look after the health, education and security of their children and families. In line with that sentiment, I propose an amendment to the Address-in-Reply.

Amendment to Motion

Mrs HALLAHAN: I move -

That the following words be added to the motion -

but this House regrets to inform His Excellency that the Hillview child and adolescent psychiatric service at East Victoria Park is still under threat of closure despite the endorsement of the service in the Burdekin report and the support for the service from the Friends of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Service (Inc.).

[Quorum formed.]

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park) [3.13 pm]: In supporting this amendment to the Address-in-Reply, I begin by informing the House of some shocking and indeed unpalatable statistics in relation to youth suicide. It is a fact that Australia has the highest rate of youth suicide in the industrial world. A UNICEF report presented last September indicated that in Australia there are 16.4 suicides per 100 000 among the 15 to 24 year olds in our community. With that rate of suicide Australia enjoys the unenviable distinction of having the highest rate in the industrialised world. When one turns to Western Australia, one finds the problem is equally appalling. In the last decade in Western Australia the youth suicide rate has been increasing. I asked the Minister for Health a question on this matter last month, to which he replied -

Death due to suicide has increased over the period 1981-92 for both the 15 to 19 and 20 to 24 age groups. The suicide rate for the 15 to 19 age group increased from 5.2 per 100 000 in 1981 to 15.2 per 100 000 in 1992. The suicide rate of the 20 to 24 age group increased from 14.6 per 100 000 in 1981 to 24.6 per 100 000 in 1992.

It means that the rate of suicide in Western Australia is higher than the Australian average. The point is that suicide problems among our children and adolescents are the tip of an iceberg that represents the numbers of those in our population who experience psychiatric illness. It is worth reporting to the House that it has been estimated that in any given year approximately 10 per cent of children will show significant psychiatric disturbance, and 1 per cent are in urgent need of psychiatric treatment. These figures are taken from the report of the National Inquiry into the Human Rights of People with Mental Illness, known as the Burdekin report. The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists has estimated that 15 per cent of adolescents suffer from recognisable psychiatric disorders, and 5 per cent suffer from serious disorders which warrant intervention. About 1 per cent of that age profile have a severe psychiatric disorder. It is interesting to note that the figures relating to the number of adolescents in Western Australia receiving inpatient and outpatient treatment roughly accord with those estimates. A question was asked in this Parliament by the member for Floreat in March of this year to which the Minister for Health responded by advising her of the number of adolescents receiving inpatient and outpatient psychiatric treatment between 1988 and 1993. In 1990 the number receiving treatment was 1 787; in 1991 it was 1 710; and in 1992 it was 1 821. We see there is a group in the child and adolescent profile of our population which is experiencing psychiatric disturbance to various degrees of intensity, and the tip of that iceberg are youngsters with suicidal tendencies or those who attempt or succeed with suicide.

I started with these gloomy statistics, but I now refer to one young person in our community whose story was written in *The West Australian* on 25 January 1994. It is a story by Leanne Pitcher, under the by-line "Hillview saved my life". The story was told of Georgina Turner, a 20 year old Balga woman with a young baby. I quote from that article -

When you meet Georgina Turner you may notice a faint patchwork of scars on her wrists.

I continue -

At the age of eight Georgina was sexually assaulted by a family friend.

The attacks continued for two years but she did not talk about them until she was 16.

By then she had become withdrawn and self-destructive.

She already had tried to take her life by throwing herself from a moving car.

Georgina told the guidance officer at Balga Senior High School about the attacks.

She was referred to the Warwick Child and Adolescent Clinic where staff suggested she try the programme at Hillview.

So Georgina Turner, a young adolescent experiencing enormous problems and with suicidal tendencies, was referred to the Hillview Clinic. She finished up in the residential facility, Hillview Hospital. She stayed there for six months, and now she is a happy young person with her own baby. She said about Hillview -

There was a huge hole in my heart that needed to be filled . . . Hillview filled it up for me

In other words, this was one of those youngsters experiencing psychiatric disturbance, with a background of child sexual abuse, disturbed, unhappy and suicidal, who went to Hillview Hospital and was literally saved. What sort of community is it that wants to close down that facility? What type of madness is involved when the Government of Western Australia in all seriousness wants to close down that facility?

I remind the House of what is offered at Hillview. It has three components - an outpatient clinic and two residential facilities, the Robinson unit and Hillview Hospital. Robinson has six beds; it is used for residential and also weekend programs. Those in the Robinson unit during the week go home at weekends; weekend programs are available. Hillview Hospital in the old Millen Hospital at East Victoria Park, which is registered by the National Trust and is on the listing of the Heritage Council in Western Australia, has 12 beds. The key to this facility is that it is set up as a child and adolescent mental health centre. Its focus is on child and adolescent care. It aims to provide a normal and healthy home environment. It has developed very good links with Kent Street Senior High School and with primary schools in East Victoria Park and Victoria Park. Therefore, residents of the Robinson unit or Hillview Hospital can keep up with their regular schooling. In other words, they can lead a relatively normal lifestyle while they are treated for a psychiatric illness. This is what the psychiatrists call a non-clinical setting. The average stay at Hillview is four months. I have cited the case of Georgina who stayed for six months. Some stay longer and some stay for shorter periods. At the Robinson unit the average stay is one to two school terms. Who attends these facilities? The Robinson unit caters for eight to 18 year olds who experience psychiatric disorders, who have anger management problems, and schooling problems associated with attention deficit disorder. They can have low intelligence but are not legally defined as intellectually handicapped. They are the ones who finish up at Robinson. Hillview Hospital caters for the older age group between 13 and 18 years who suffer from emotional disturbances related to sexual, physical and emotional abuse, grief issues, schooling difficulties, eating disorders and, importantly, who have suicidal tendencies.

Hillview is made up of a number of components. First, it is especially designed to deal with child and adolescent mental problems. Second, it is in an ideal setting to deal with those problems. It has beautiful grounds and gardens; the gracious two-storeyed building, which is registered by the National Trust, provides a relaxing background for the type of treatment offered. Third, and importantly, it has developed strong links with the local community, particularly the school community. Fourth, these young people must want to go to Hillview. They are voluntary admissions. It is not a secure facility for those suffering from intense psychiatric disorders. They must be voluntary

admissions and they must agree to take part in the therapy programs. It provides a vital service for a particular type of individual.

In the amendment to the Address-in-Reply today I referred to two endorsements given to this service in recent times. The first endorsement came from the Burdekin report. Brian Burdekin did not simply describe Hillview. He said that it was a model service. In the course of that chapter dealing with child and adolescent mental treatment he took two pages to describe Hillview. He said that in the overall climate of child and adolescent services within Australia, Hillview stood out like a beacon as a service that offered opportunities for young people because of the types of therapy, the emphasis on individual, family and milieu therapy, the gracious buildings and the links with the local community. Evidence to the Burdekin inquiry demonstrated the importance of this type of intervention. Before young people experiencing mental disturbance end up in the youth drug culture or the juvenile justice system, Hillview is there as a circuit breaker.

The second endorsement and perhaps the more important one that Hillview has received recently is from the Friends of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Service. These are the parents of the children and adolescents who have gone to Hillview. These are the people who experience the trauma and stress of having young people with psychiatric disorders who have found their way to Hillview and have been able to recover - sometimes fully, sometimes in part. Sometimes, unfortunately, the treatment did not meet the needs of every individual. However, in the vast majority of cases there is a clear improvement in a condition following treatment at Hillview. Friends of CAPS agreed earlier this year to participate in discussions with the Health Department about ways and means by which to achieve a change in the way services are delivered. However, in the course of discussions with the department they concluded they were getting nowhere. It was clear that the agenda of the Health Department was simple. That is, it was to get the resources out of Hillview and to use them to fund an acute secure unit at the Bentley Hospital. That has always been the department's agenda in this matter. In good faith the Friends of CAPS, and some of the staff from Hillview, engaged in dialogue with the department. In frustration, the Friends of CAPS have withdrawn from negotiations. Today they released a document, entitled "Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services - Hillview Hospital Site - Provision of a Quality Service", which indicates their position on this matter. The document was presented to the Minister for Health.

The people who studied the problem through the Burdekin report and the people who know about these problems because they are parents of children and adolescents say that we should keep Hillview. Without question, the policy of closing Hillview Hospital, the Robinson unit and the outpatient clinic should not be on the agenda of our health system. What should be on the agenda is an improvement in that service and an extension of the opportunity to other children and adolescents who need it. That is precisely what the Friends of CAPS have stated in this document. I will read to the House the main recommendations presented to the Minister for Health.

The first recommendation is that additional funding be provided to establish and operate an acute-secure unit at Bentley Hospital. The notion that Bentley Hospital should be funded out of the closure of Hillview Hospital is morally wrong, given the needs that are being addressed at Hillview. The second recommendation is that the staff at Hillview Hospital seek to improve services with agreed changes in organisational and operational practices where possible. The third recommendation is that suitable day treatment facilities are instituted and developed to improve the range and quality of service offered at the Hillview Hospital site. The fourth recommendation is that the current services provided at the Hillview Hospital site are maintained and appropriate remedial building maintenance be carried out. The fifth recommendation is that an examination of appropriate resource sharing between the Robinson unit, outpatient clinic, day treatment unit, and the Hillview Hospital be carried out to maintain the integrity of the existing treatment modalities but which will improve the quality and provision of services. The final recommendation is that outpatient services remain an integral part of the regional child and adolescent health service provision and that any disbursement into the

community be supported by clear indications of benefit to the community. These are recommendations from the people who know about these things.

There should be no question about the future of the Hillview Hospital, the Robinson unit and the outpatient clinic. We should be looking to improve and extend that service for young people in our community. At a time when the Burdekin report has indicated that we need to allocate more resources to the area of child and adolescent mental health and to mental health programs related to our aged community, this Government is trying to cut out one resource to fund another. That other resource at Bentley is needed. There is no question about that proposition. We have a government that is quite happy to pander to the needs of people in Applecross who have so much public open space that they do not know what to do with it, but who are so greedy that they insist that the Heathcote Hospital site be maintained as a space where they can walk their dogs rather than to generate revenue for the mental health system in our community. What does this tell us about the Government's priorities? The dog walkers in Applecross come before the young people who have child and adolescent problems.

The time has come when all of us in this Parliament should take a stand on Hillview. The dillydallying has ended. The Friends of CAPS group has made it clear that the negotiation process into which it entered in good faith was not producing the results that it thought would accrue when it entered into it early this year. It has completely collapsed. It is up to all of us in this Parliament to support those young people and their parents to ensure that Western Australia does not lose an invaluable service. I conclude by returning to the case of Georgina. It is incumbent upon us to listen to her story - not just in our minds, but also in our hearts - and to step out and support the Friends of CAPS, and to maintain this service in East Victoria Park.

DR WATSON (Kenwick) [3.33 pm]: I support this motion and the plea made by the member for Victoria Park for all members to support it. It is incumbent upon us as decision makers to influence the Minister for Health to restore the confidence of the parents of current and past residents of Hillview Hospital and clients who are still serviced by Hillview, so that the services will continue and be augmented. In November 1992 a ministerial task force reported to the Minister for Health in the Labor government. The report contained 20 key recommendations on child adolescent mental health services. Although I will not read out all 20 - the report is accessible to all of us - some key recommendations were that there should be an increase in funding to at least 1 per cent of the total Health budget for child and adolescent mental health services in Western Australia by 1995 and that there be a redistribution of resources for child and adolescent mental health services across the metropolitan health regions on a population basis. Of course, a number of recommendations addressed that issue of resources and the issue of intersectoral cooperation and coordination.

Although Hillview Hospital provides a service, all children and all adolescents who have a need do not at the moment have access either to it or to a similar service. The same sorts of services are not provided at Princess Margaret Hospital nor at the Stubbs Terrace unit. No other psychiatric service is provided south of the river for people under the age of 15 years. We should look at the proposition put forward by the member for Victoria Park that the Heathcote Hospital site be sold and the proceeds be redirected into the provision of psychiatric services as mooted by the former government at Fremantle and at Bentley.

One of the problems that is most apparent and one of the issues with which the Friends of CAPS (Inc) has absolutely no problem is that secure beds must be provided; that is, for people who must be admitted involuntarily and who are ill and in great distress. At the moment there is no such provision other than at Graylands Hospital. Last year 138 people under the age of 25 had to be admitted to Graylands Hospital. Nobody who has been involved with the action group would say anything other than that secure beds must, and should, be provided away from Graylands Hospital.

I repeat that the Robinson unit admits children at very high risk between the ages of eight and 18 years. The average age is 11.5 years and the average length of stay is one or two

school terms. Where possible, those children go to schools in the area, either Kent Street Senior High School or Cannington Senior High School or to the various primary schools that are around the area. They feel safe and secure and do not feel stigmatised. We would have to deal with that very significant issue if their home were to be the Bentley Hospital. The Hillview Hospital caters for a slightly older population of children, those between the age of 13 and 18 years. Very often those children have been subjected to various kinds of abuse. They may have threatened suicide or they may be suffering a grief reaction because of a death in their close family or of a close friend.

In 1993 the clinic component of the Hillview services saw 755 new clients. None of us has any problem in acknowledging that it is a very specialised service which is focused in the south east corridor. People in that same health region, people in the Swan part of the geographical location, do not have access to similar services. Overall I understand that the plan continues to reduce the beds for adolescents by six and to create four secure beds. The Hillview Hospital site statistics indicate that in its patient profile people under the age of 18 years, admitted as victims of domestic violence, family disintegration or excessive disorders, account for 14 per cent of the population; victims of rape or sexual abuse account for 16 per cent; children or adolescents suffering gross emotional or behavioural dysfunction account for 34 per cent; and adolescents who are suicidal account for 46 per cent.

Nearly half of the children admitted to that unit have a history of wanting to kill themselves. Western Australia has an enormous problem. We have the highest adolescent suicide rate in Australia, which has the highest rate acknowledged in OECD countries. We must contend with a huge set of issues. It is not about Labor or Liberal; it is about decision makers and adults and what we are doing to our children that sees these kids wanting to kill themselves. The joyful statistic out of that is that not one child who has been admitted to the Hillview site has then gone on to suicide. Perhaps we cannot have a better recommendation than that for the treatment and care that they receive at Hillview. The members for Victoria Park and Kalgoorlie and I have attended a number of public meetings organised by the Friends of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Service (Inc) comprising on the whole parents and relatives but also some past clients and patients and some of the very devoted staff. I am sure that those two members would join with me in congratulating staff who work at Hillview on the very dedicated approach they have always taken and on the professional way they treat the people who are there.

I intended to talk about Burdekin's assessment of Hillview but the previous speaker did credit to the way in which Burdekin described it as a model service. It is beyond the comprehension of parents and children who go there, and of the media, why a service that is described as a model service would be undermined and destroyed. Underneath all of this is what has been described as a certain kind of madness; that is, to set about to build the adolescent unit at the Bentley Hospital in the first place. It was planned by bureaucrats without any intention to consult with people whose lives will be affected by decisions that they make.

A number of newsletters were circulated among the community of interest in December and January of this year. The one that was circulated from the Bentley district health service told its readers that the Minister for Health had endorsed a proposal submitted by the general managers which identified Bentley Hospital as the preferred location for this unit. It said that the hospital will have an extensive adult psychiatric service which will provide an extra clinical support unit and that the Bentley district health service will deliver child and other services. The newsletter stated that it was felt that relocation of the Hillview inpatient component would support the general policy of mainstreaming. Perhaps in all of medicine there is not a more sensitive field in which people are working as doctors, psychiatrists, nurses or specialist social workers. It is a very sensitive area requiring skilled communication, yet at the first step the department had to take it failed miserably. Another newsletter that was circulated as a proposal reinforced the plans that had been made, except by this time it was saying that the adolescent inpatient unit would move into Bentley Hospital. There was no consultation and no participation in decision making until it was foisted upon them.

It was my very great pleasure to work closely with the executive of CAPS, with a number of key parents, but most of all, with some of the young people who had been patients there. Again, if ever there was a testimony to the way in which Hillview has worked to treat and support its client group, it was the way in which young people were prepared to stand up in a way that I could not. Had I had a mental illness and recovered, I could not have got up as a 16 year old to speak to a hall of 300 adults and told them my story. One particular young one woman wrote to me to express her concerns. She has been cited in the newspaper and been interviewed on both radio and television. She says -

The reasons relating to my views on the issue stem from the time I spent at Hillview Terrace Hospital as a resident/patient in 1992.

As I am sure you are aware, the residents/patients at Hillview voluntarily admit themselves to the unit to receive treatment. The nature of admittance is, I feel, the first acceptance that there is a problem, with the person willing to receive treatment.

I will read particular paragraphs because they go to the heart of the matter. She states -

I have great difficulty in understanding how patients who need to be in "secure beds" and those who are capable to continue their studies or work can be successfully treated in the same confined area.

During the time I spent at Hillview, the staff were all very supportive of not only myself, but also the other residents that were there and our families. This support does not end when residents leave, as the staff are available through appointment to past in patients when the individual feels a need for advice or support. . . .

With all the beds in the proposal of the relocation to Bentley being "approved beds", would it not be difficult for staff, patients and families to relate to the setting as there would surely be a broad diversity of problems

She has been a key worker in promoting the position and role of Hillview among young people as a young person in the wider community. One of the things that distresses me as the member for the area where Bentley Hospital is located - I have a series of questions on notice that have yet to be answered - is that psychogeriatric patients at Bentley Hospital have been relocated for the building of this unit. Although I have not received the answers, I understand that some of those patients have been moved to general wards, either to general geriatric wards or to general medical surgical wards. They are lost and confused and are causing a great deal of concern to the patients at Bentley Hospital who do not have a psychiatric disorder. As members know, people with senile dementia are often quite intrusive. They are able to walk about, and they go into other people's cupboards and their behaviour can be quite alarming, particularly if one is ill. Our position is unequivocal: The services must be provided through the Hillview centre; they must be augmented and more resources must be put into them in line with the report given to the Labor Minister for Health; and a secure facility must be built away from Graylands Hospital.

I want to bring to the notice of the House a booklet that I had the privilege to launch last week for the Association of Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill that all members will be able to use as a resource in their electorate. It is a booklet for young people about mental illness. It is aimed at children between the ages of 13 and 16 years who have contact with people who have mental illnesses. If young people are going to develop a mental illness, they are most vulnerable when they are between 13 and 16 years. How do people protect their siblings, their parents or their best friends who have mental illness if they do not understand it? ARAFMI should be congratulated, as should the Nedlands Rotary Club, for providing funding towards the publication and for the way in which the booklet has been produced. Half of the book is devoted to an explanation of the major psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia, depression and manic depressive illness and the other half is devoted to how to manage oneself when caring for a person with mental illness. It outlines how people can continue to attend school and study, and the anger, anxiety and fears that might be felt. There is still too much stigma, prejudice and misinformation about mental illness.

One in four Australians will be treated for mental illness at some stage in their lives. The illnesses cannot be caught; they are similar to malignancy, pneumonia and muscular dystrophy. As shadow spokesperson on disability, I have said previously that we need to take more heed of psychiatric disability and be able to provide proper conditions for acceptance and treatment of people who suffer the long term crippling and disabling effects of psychiatric illness. If we do not get it right when people are vulnerable and if we do not acknowledge that at any one stage 10 per cent of the adolescent population has some symptoms of mental illness, we are not gearing ourselves for the future. We owe it to those people and to their children to do something about the illness. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that young people who suffer now from mental illness will be fit and proper parents.

MR MINSON (Greenough - Minister for Disability Services) [3.52 pm]: This matter was canvassed during a grievance debate recently. As I had no notice of this debate, I have little else to add. I have asked for an urgent update on the position from the Health Department, but it has not arrived. I wish to make some pertinent points. Our duties as legislators and a Minister are twofold in this matter. The first duty is the most important; that is, a duty of care. The Government must make sure that its Ministers honour that duty of care. The second important duty is to provide for as many people as possible or, preferably, for everybody. Therein lies the quandary that confronts the Minister for Health. Nobody has ever said - I certainly will not say it, because I believe the opposite - that there is anything wrong with the service provided at Hillview Hospital. The whole complex is in a lovely setting and it is a lovely building. Everybody recognises that the hospital does an excellent job. Nobody is casting aspersions on the service provided at that establishment. However, it is an expensive hospital to run and the service provided is expensive. No-one denies that the hospital provides a Rolls Royce service.

Dr Watson: You think it is a Rolls Royce service?

Mr MINSON: Yes. It provides a magnificent service. Everyone acknowledges that it provides a Rolls Royce service. The problem that confronts the Minister for Health is: To how many people can he provide a Rolls Royce service? In other words, the service must remain very good, but he should provide it to everybody, or to as many people as possible. Hillview is an expensive establishment to run. The staff-patient ratio is very high.

Dr Gallop: By your criteria, you should close down Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital; that is very expensive.

Mr MINSON: Nobody is saying that it does not provide a Rolls Royce service. The service is fantastic. But the Minister for Health has a duty to make sure that that fantastic service goes to as many people as possible. Do members opposite understand that?

Dr Gallop: You don't do that by closing it.

Mr Hill: How is he doing that?

Mr MINSON: The Minister for Health is not here to explain it, but I can inform the member that it is expensive to provide a service like that. If as good a service can be provided on another site to more people, the Minister has a duty to do that. The member opposite cannot throw in a red herring about Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, which is a huge medical complex with research and laboratory facilities. I am sure that there is a fair bit of fat there, but that is for another debate.

Dr Watson: Not fat, prawns.

Mr MINSON: That is very unkind. I will not comment on that.

Dr Gallop: You missed the point. Have you heard about the prawn lunches with the board of the hospital?

Mr MINSON: No. I missed out on that. I hope that they graduate to crayfish lunches by the time I get there.

The duty of the Minister for Health is to provide a first class service to as many people as

possible. It may well be that infrastructure changes can occur at Hillview which will allow that service to remain open. I am not saying that it is going to be closed; I do not know whether it will or will not close, and neither does the mover of the amendment. The amendment reads -

that this House regrets to inform His Excellency that ... is still under threat of closure.

To the best of my knowledge, the matter is still under consideration. It is timely that we are debating mental health today.

Dr Gallop: Could I raise this Rolls-Royce issue? What we find offensive about that is that we normally associate Rolls-Royce with excess consumption.

Mr MINSON: It is only chardonnay socialists like the member who take that point of view. By "Rolls-Royce" I mean a very good service - the best. I do not know how anybody could draw that sort of conclusion. The member is being ridiculous.

Dr Gallop: Who drives Rolls-Royces?

Mr MINSON: I do not know. I believe that the Governor drives an old one. That comment tells us a lot about the member and his point of view. When coupled with his silly comment about the dog walkers of Applecross, it tells a lot more about him.

Dr Gallop: It is not a silly comment. You come with me to the lobby groups on mental health and ask them what they think about the dog walkers of Applecross.

Mr MINSON: Where was the member when the debate was occurring at Applecross? He was not at Applecross.

Dr Gallop: You read the *Canning-Melville Times*. I participated.

Several members interjected.

Mr MINSON: The Minister does not live at Applecross. The person who took the lead when we were in opposition was Hon Phil Pandal. If he were in the Chamber, he would have something to say about that. The matter under question in Applecross was somewhat different. A heritage argument was associated with that matter.

Dr Gallop: You can still preserve the heritage and make \$20m.

Mr MINSON: I agree with the Opposition spokesman on health. However, things did not pan out that way. In any event, his comment concerning that area was unnecessary.

Dr Gallop: I said it because the Health Department is using the excuse that it does not have enough money to fund the new secure unit at Bentley without closing Hillview. It is denying itself the revenue from the sale of the Heathcote site to extend mental health facilities.

Mr MINSON: It may not be that the Health Department is denying it. To be honest, I did not follow the debate closely enough two or three years ago when it was held. However, there may be many reasons other than that why the Health Department cannot get its hands on the money that could be realised from the sale of that site.

Mr Hill interjected.

Mr MINSON: The member for Helena was in government; what did his party do about it?

Mr Taylor: I am happy to deal with that.

Mr MINSON: The Leader of the Opposition can have his say.

Mr Taylor: I will.

Mr MINSON: I can tell him exactly what his government did about it: The then government decided to leave things exactly as they were.

Mr Hill interjected.

Mr MINSON: If the Minister for Health wishes to take action he can do that. There are

still many areas of need that would not be fixed by selling Heathcote. A good example was when representatives from the Association of Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill saw me this morning. I am sure the shadow Minister for Disability Services will be familiar with that group. They have a problem because they do not have sufficient funding. They provide an excellent service for thousands of Western Australians.

The duty before government is, first, of care and, second, of making sure that care is available to as many people as possible. I want to make it very clear in case the Rolls Royce issue has been improperly interpreted. The care at the Hillview complex is first class, if I can use that expression. Nobody will criticise the care and service provided there. However, can we provide the same service and standards at another place and treat more people for the same amount of money? I am informed that we can, but it may also be the case that reforms and changes can be made at Hillview which will make it possible for that place to remain in operation.

Mr Hill: Which is the most likely?

Mr MINSON: To be honest, I cannot tell the member. I think the representatives of ARAFMI are right to be concerned. They have friends and relatives who are being treated there. As the member for Kenwick rightly pointed out, many people are now alive who perhaps would not be alive and living a normal life had it not been for the service they received at that complex. However, I reject the notion that that service cannot be provided somewhere else. I cannot provide the figures on what can be saved or of how many extra people could be treated on another site. However, it is the aim of the Government to ensure that as many people as possible are given a first class service. Although one should not quote oneself, I will do it anyway and quote from the conclusion of the grievance debate held on 30 March this year. I finished with the words -

I assure the member that I will convey his concern to the Minister for Health in the upper House because it is incumbent upon the Minister to ensure that, following the changes at the Hillview-Robinson complex, the services provided are not detrimental to society.

I should have added, "not detrimental to society or the people who use the complex".

I am sure the Minister accepts that responsibility.

That is as true now as it was when I first said it. For that reason I am not prepared to commit the Government to supporting this amendment.

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Leader of the Opposition) [4.04 pm]: This issue cannot be treated as lightly as that. It relates directly to matters associated with the mental health of young people. Australia cannot hold its head high in relation to the mental health of its youth. We have the highest rate of youth suicide of any industrialised nation in the world. Western Australia has the highest rate in Australia. As the member for Kenwick has pointed out, this unit can hold its head up to the extent that young people who attend there quite often have suicidal tendencies, to say the least. Yet during the operation of Hillview not one of those young people has committed suicide. That fact alone supports the argument that there is every reason the unit should be held onto by this Government.

It is extraordinary and unacceptable for the Minister for Health to once again appear to be accepting a recommendation from a bureaucracy to establish secure beds in the metropolitan area - in this case at Bentley - and, to achieve that, instruct the closure of Hillview. I attended a meeting at that institution where it was made clear by the Health Department officers that it was their view the closure of Hillview would provide the necessary funds to allow that to happen. The very simple reason for that relates to the suggestion made by my colleague the member for Victoria Park that when the Labor Party was in government it decided to close Heathcote. That decision - it is in the Cabinet minutes - was based on the premise that we would sell that valuable land, bearing in mind that some parts were of historical value and should be kept, and the funds from the sale would contribute to the provision of new psychiatric care facilities at Fremantle Hospital and at Bentley.

Essentially, some of those facilities have already been provided. However, the now Minister for Planning, who represents Applecross, made it clear when in opposition that by the use of its majority in the upper House, the then opposition would stand in the way of any proposal, suggestion or attempt to sell that land at Heathcote for residential development. That was done on the basis that a few people in Applecross, living in very expensive homes - not that I hold that against them - want the opportunity, as the member for Victoria Park pointed out, to walk their dogs on some of the most expensive land around the Swan River. As a result, the Health Department and people with concerns about mental illness are being denied the opportunity to gain windfall revenue of probably tens of millions of dollars.

That money could be put back into mental health facilities in Western Australia. It could ensure the provision of secure beds and that the services described at Hillview would be available not only there but elsewhere in Western Australia. That Minister, whose views on that issue dominate this Government, made certain there was no way in the world that land would be sold; rather, it would remain parkland for a few people in his electorate of Applecross. That is unacceptable. As a result, people in Western Australia are missing out on opportunities. In addition, it has now been suggested Hillview should be closed because the funds are not available to provide the secure beds. I believe the funds are available to provide the secure beds.

Another furphy is the suggestion that Hillview is a fire hazard and should be closed. I have a Fire Brigade report on Hillview which says in part -

As the above building is of the age it is, then the main materials used in its construction is timber, which appears very prominent throughout, rendering the chance of fire spread extremely high. Also the type of occupancy the building is being used for was a major concern.

However, in reflection of the factors above, the inspection revealed that a full thermal fire alarm system was installed throughout the building along with approved exit and emergency lighting.

The letter then refers to a number of other factors which ensure that what is being provided at Hillview is not a fire trap, but an adequate building for the purposes it serves. It is unacceptable to suggest that Hillview should be closed because of fire problems associated with the building, when the Fire Brigades Board in a report dated 23 May states that that is not the case, subject to a few alterations to the unit.

Hillview clearly works. Members could understand how well it does work only if one of their kids had to go through the unit and they observed the sorts of changes that took place in that young person. At the meeting I attended one could only be impressed with the young people who had the guts to stand up and talk about their situation and the problems they were faced with. They said that Hillview had helped them. One bit of good comes out of this; that is, the people who work at Hillview have recognised that they must change their method of work to get more out of Hillview. If that is the outcome, well and good. However, if the outcome is a continuing suggestion that Hillview must close, that is unacceptable. It is time the Minister for Health attended a few meetings and talked to some of these people to find out the facts for himself, instead of hiding behind his bureaucracy. It is also time that a few members on the other side of the House pointed this out to their colleague the Minister for Health. The Minister should find out himself what is happening instead of relying on the bureaucracy to give him the answers because most of the time in these sorts of areas they are giving him the wrong answers, particularly in relation to Hillview. The suggestions about Hillview should be exposed so that the people of Western Australia can make up their minds about the matter.

I congratulate my colleagues the members for Victoria Park and Kenwick for their contribution to this issue. I also congratulate those who are leading the charge against the closure of Hillview. They are taking up this issue publicly but they need support from government members to back their case. Government members should be in no doubt; the Opposition will support the case and will continue to make certain - I hope with the

support of the Press in Western Australia - that Hillview is kept open. At a time when youth suicide rates must be of concern to all members of Parliament, the consequences of the closure of Hillview are too important to ignore. The age standardised rate of death due to suicide has increased from 5.2 per 100 000 in 1981 for the 15-19 and 20-24 year age groups to 15.2 per 100 000 in 1992. Over a decade the suicide rates for people in those age groups has trebled. That is how important this matter is, and how important the role of Hillview is. Although I understand that the Government will probably never accept any amendment to the Address-in-Reply, this issue cannot be ignored. The Minister for Health, in particular, cannot ignore the consequences of his action - not the bureaucrats' action - in proceeding down this path. It is the wrong thing to do.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (23)

Mr M. Barnett
Mr Brown
Mr Catania
Dr Constable
Mr Cunningham
Dr Edwards
Dr Gallop
Mr Graham

Mrs Hallahan
Mrs Henderson
Mr Hill
Mr Kobelke
Mr Marlborough
Mr McGinty
Mr Riebeling
Mr Ripper

Mrs Roberts
Mr D.L. Smith
Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Ms Warnock
Dr Watson
Mr Leahy (Teller)

Noes (29)

Mr Ainsworth
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr Blaikie
Mr Board
Mr Bradshaw
Mr Court
Mr Cowan
Mr Day
Mrs Edwardes
Dr Hames

Mr House
Mr Johnson
Mr Kierath
Mr Lewis
Mr Marshall
Mr McNee
Mr Minson
Mr Nicholls
Mr Omodei
Mr Osborne

Mr Pandal
Mr Prince
Mr Shave
Mr W. Smith
Mr Tubby
Dr Turnbull
Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Wiese
Mr Bloffwitch (Teller)

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

DR CONSTABLE (Floreat) [4.20 pm]: I will address four issues that are of particular interest in my electorate and of general interest in the community. I was interested to read in the Governor's address on the opening day of Parliament in regard to law and order that -

There is unmistakable community concern about law and order issues. The public perceives a general deterioration in safety and respect for the law.

Firstly, I will address safety. Some months ago, I asked the Minister for Police a question on notice about how many break-ins had occurred in my electorate and how many of those break-ins had been solved. The response was extraordinary. In the eight suburbs in my electorate, there were over 1 065 break-ins in the 12 months to 30 November 1993, and only 90 of those break-ins were solved, or about 8.4 per cent. That goes to the heart of the problem that people in every suburb in Perth face every day in their homes. People fear that their homes will be broken into and their lives will be disrupted, or, even worse, that they will suffer physical harm.

That also highlights the problem that we have in solving crimes and bringing to justice the people who commit those crimes, and in allowing people to feel safe in their homes. Less than 10 per cent of break-ins in my electorate are solved. I expect that we would come up with the same figure in every suburb in Perth, whether that be City Beach, Como or Armadale. I have found as I talk to people, particularly the elderly people in my electorate, that they are fearful. I have noticed in the last three years as I have doorknocked in my electorate that extraordinary changes have taken place whereby

people have fortified themselves in their homes for security, and even that is not enough for many people.

I was disappointed that I did not see among the initiatives that the Government intends to take in this session of Parliament anything about the Pawnbrokers Act, because there is a strong feeling among members of this House and also in the community that the Pawnbrokers Act should be amended and perhaps even rewritten in order to make it more difficult for people to dispose of stolen goods. A number of punitive measures are mentioned, including a young offenders sentencing Act and work camps, but there is no mention of this central issue of home break-ins. It is disappointing that that issue was not highlighted in the Governor's speech, and I regard that as a major omission of the Government. I understand from conversations with the Minister for Police that he is concerned about this issue, and I would have expected to see that legislation this year. I hope that even though it is not mentioned in the Governor's speech, we will debate that legislation shortly and it will be supported universally in this House.

We must take other measures to make people in the community feel more secure. There is a feeling in my electorate that we need more police and that police should be more visible in their local community. We must take police away from non-police duties by employing clerical staff in local police stations. Recently, I had a conversation with a police sergeant at Wembley Police Station, who said that although there are usually seven police on duty during the day, it is often the case that six of those people are out of the police station and he is left to answer three telephone lines and deal with people who come to the counter. Our local police spend a huge amount of time on non-police duties, which take them away from dealing with and solving the crimes that are committed in our suburbs. We also need police stations which are equipped with modern office machinery, such as fax machines, in order to make the job of the police easier.

An issue which has been of concern in the community in recent weeks and which was highlighted during the devastating bushfires in New South Wales earlier this year is our emergency services and how well they work or do not work at times. Last week we had problems with our power supply, because of unusual weather conditions, which meant that many people were without power for four or five days. Commonsense would dictate that an emergency procedure should be in place in our homes, schools and hospitals so that if an unusual event occurred, people would know what to do. Indeed, in all of the schools in which I have worked, there are fire drills from time to time. I remember that we had a fire drill in Parliament House. The events last week highlighted for me that perhaps the emergency services are not up to date with their procedures and could do more in that area.

After the devastating bushfires in New South Wales in January, one of my constituents came to see me because of his concern about what would happen if there were similar weather conditions here and an outbreak of fire in Bold Park. The Leader of the House is likely to interject and say Bold Park is in his electorate. In fact, it is also in my electorate.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Is it?

Dr CONSTABLE: Yes. Half is in my electorate and half is in the electorate of the Leader of the House. Oceanic Drive goes through the middle of Bold Park.

Mr C.J. Barnett: The best part is in my electorate.

Dr CONSTABLE: We will agree to share Bold Park for the time being.

Dr Watson: But you will look after it.

Dr CONSTABLE: Yes, I will look after it, because it is in the northern part of the Minister's electorate, and people in my electorate who use it come to see me about it. The gentleman who came to see me told me that he walks in Bold Park every day and he has considerable concern about the amount of combustible material in the park and about what might happen if we had fires in Perth similar to those in New South Wales. That was a genuine concern. In response to his concern, I wrote to the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Emergency Services, and the Perth City Council, because

Bold Park falls within the Perth City Council municipality, and in the near future will come under the Town of Cambridge.

I received some interesting responses. The Minister for the Environment, who is responsible for the Department of Conservation and Land Management, said that it did not have much to do with CALM because it fell within the auspices of the City of Perth, which indeed it does, and the Minister is correct in saying that to me, but it seems to me that this issue should be of concern to any Minister who has in his portfolio a related concern. This issue should also concern the Minister for Energy, because power lines run through and around the park, and were the Minister to put power lines underground anywhere, he should start by looking at Bold Park and other areas around the city where people live close by a park, because I understand from a briefing I had with SECWA recently that the fires in Adelaide some years ago were caused by trees that were interfering with power lines, again under unusual weather conditions. It would be an important area. If the Government was to start putting lines underground, it could start in that area.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Then perhaps just move north through your electorate!

Dr CONSTABLE: I am not saying that. We can joke about it, if the Minister likes, but an enormous expense is involved. It was a topic of conversation in the area before the present Government came to office, and it was certainly discussed last week. Areas could be identified for underground lines as a preventive measure.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Good idea.

Dr CONSTABLE: The events of last week highlight the necessity to look at the issue. I was a little disappointed by the Minister for the Environment's response on this subject. Although he is technically correct that Bold Park does not come under his jurisdiction, it should be a matter of concern for him. The Minister also indicated that action can be undertaken by the local municipality.

I received a much longer letter from the City of Perth regarding concerns about Bold Park, its maintenance and the fire risk. The city indicated that \$125 000 would be required immediately to overcome the problem, with an estimate of \$50 000 annually to keep the park safe. That is a major expense for any municipality, especially for the Town of Cambridge when it is formed on 1 July. The City of Perth is very aware of the problem and has attempted to resolve the matter. The main method of dealing with the problem is through controlled burning at certain times during autumn and spring. This is a controversial method, but it seems to be the response to which most experts return, although many environmentalists do not agree with it. We must continue to search for solutions to the problem.

I also wrote to the Minister for Emergency Services, who should be congratulated for his response, even though it took a while to arrive. In response to my letter the Minister had people examine Bold Park and he reported to me, and they were told to take whatever steps were necessary to correct the situation. When the experts visited the park on 4 May they discovered a problem with safety as a result of the combustible undergrowth in the park. People have visited the area since and it is recommended that controlled burning will reduce the hazard. If other solutions are available, we must look at them. If this controversial method is the only way to go, it must be applied before next summer. We had a dry summer this year and we cannot afford to have another one. Last year two small fires occurred in Bold Park; one fire was on a hot, windy day but thanks to a speedy response by the Fire Brigade it was brought under control fairly rapidly.

In circumstances such as last week we must thank our emergency services volunteers for committing themselves to dangerous situations to help people in the community. Too often volunteers go about their business, receiving and seeking no thanks, but contributing greatly to the community.

An issue of importance for some time to a number of people living in the Churchlands area of my electorate is the recently published urban bushland strategy. I cannot let the opportunity pass without referring to the strategy, released after a wait of almost a year.

This is a small document open for public comment. The strategy is divided into two parts; namely, bushland of regional significance and of local significance.

The Government takes responsibility in the strategy for regionally significant bushland, but hands the care of locally significant bushland to local authorities. In one sense that is not a bad thing. However, it indicates that the state regards the smaller pieces of locally significant bushland as not very important in heritage and other value terms. The state cannot ignore - particularly in the inner city, but also in other suburbs - this bushland. Small pieces of bushland are described in the strategy as being "greater than four hectares, but they also may be smaller". This is rather amusing, as they do not seem to know what the size can be. These pieces of land are of great significance to the state with regard to the tree types. The state should not handball the responsibility for these matters to local authorities. The description of a locally significant area is one of more than 4 ha but not more than 20 ha; larger pieces of land are regionally significant bushland. The description is that the shape "does not have to be rectangular, although it is better if it is", and the vegetation must be in "fair to excellent" condition. That means that the vegetation can be in any condition. The vegetation should be representative of the local system - and that is fair - and should not contain trees from other areas. Another comment in the strategy is that the possible presence of rare fauna or endangered species of flora suitable for scientific research would be significant.

The piece of bushland in Churchlands to which I referred is used for recreational and educational purposes; it is adjacent to two schools, and has important heritage value. Many pieces of bushland are recognised and classified by organisations such as the Wildflower Society, the National Trust and so on. It is too much to ask local authorities to provide all funding for the preservation of these pieces of bushland. Frequently, the municipalities will contain locally significant bushland, yet they do not have the large sums of money needed. For example, the land in Churchlands to which I refer comprises 7 ha and is worth approximately \$5m. I cannot imagine any inner city area which could be purchased by the local municipality. In the case to which I refer the Stirling City Council has supported the local community and has voted unanimously not to rezone the area. In that case the land cannot be developed. A type of stalemate will be reached, although that is not really a satisfactory situation for land recognised by the Wildflower Society and the National Trust. It should be secured for future generations, and that is the point of a bushland strategy. Significant bushland should be regarded as valuable to the community and be preserved forever; it should not be under constant threat. People should be satisfied that local bushland is safe.

It is important for all of us to take time to recognise the International Year of the Family, and we should consider the initiatives a government should take in this regard. Few people would disagree that the family - defined as broadly as one likes - is the backbone of our society. For many the Year of the Family is a year of celebration, and so it should be. At the same time we must look at some of the darker sides in many families. As well as celebrating and promoting the family the International Year of the Family gives us an opportunity to focus on and seek solutions for those people living in dysfunctional families or in families where there are problems such as domestic violence. The ideal family for all of us, as portrayed by role models and in newspapers, magazines and on television is a family that is united, where the members support, love and care for each other. The reality is that in our community are many thousands of families that are broken or seriously stressed by violence.

In the community which I represent a group of people has been trying to set up a domestic violence action group. They are a group of caring people from all walks of life, but from community groups concerned about people in distress in the community. In the past year or so we have been trying to seek information in the Floreat electorate and areas surrounding it about domestic violence. From talking with professionals working in schools, in child health clinics and in other areas we have found that this is a hidden problem. It is very difficult to explain or to understand its extent. Whatever statistics we have are not accurate and are very hard to obtain. If we go to the literature we find varying estimates that between one in three and one in 10 women suffer from violence in

their own homes. The real figure is probably somewhere in between, but one in three families is often quoted in the literature. There are many tens of thousands of women and children who are victims of unacceptable acts of violence and aggression by other members of their families. Although it is recognised, to a large extent we ignore it. We treat this sort of violence, which would be a crime anywhere else, differently and we do not in many cases consider it to be criminal activity. Indeed it is. If a woman were bashed in her front yard by someone she did not know, that would be considered a crime. If she is bashed in her own home by a relative, it is not treated in the same way, and that woman is left to take action herself rather than the police taking action and laying a charge. Many people suffer horrendous physical and psychological injuries in their own homes and fear permeates their lives.

I have just a few statistics to illustrate some of the things I am mentioning: Forty per cent of all murders in this state are within the family; 10 of the 20 murders in Western Australia from October 1991 to March 1992, in a six month period, were committed by a victim's relative; and eight of the 12 attempted murders in that time were by a family member. So crime and violence in the family at that level is appalling. An average of 3 000 restraining orders are issued to women each year in Western Australia. Probably another 3 000 would be issued if women had the wherewithal or felt they could seek those restraining orders. Every night in Western Australia more than 300 women, many with their children, seek safety outside their own homes in refuges and other places. The numbers are increasing all the time. The crisis care unit of the Department for Community Development reported a 36 per cent increase in crisis care calls from women between 1990 and 1993. This is not a problem that will go away. It is a problem that is getting worse. Whether it is one in three or one in 10, it is far too many. We must continue to do something about domestic violence; to try to curtail it and change attitudes towards it.

We know that domestic violence knows no boundaries of race, age, social or economic status, profession or location. Domestic violence happens everywhere in our state and in every suburb. Despite task forces, inquiries, commissions of inquiry and so on, the tragic reality is still there - this is largely a hidden problem. It is a tragic problem for far too many people. What happens so often is that when women are the targets and the victims of violent crime in their own homes, it is the women who must leave their homes, often leaving their children and the perpetrator behind. We must find some mechanism so that that does not happen. Not only is the women suffering physically and psychologically, but also she must leave her own home for respite and is often unable to go back. The family is disrupted in a number of ways.

Why is it that many Australians believe that domestic violence is justifiable, that it is all right in one's own home? It is an appalling attitude for this community to hold. In 1991 a survey published by the federal Office of the Status of Women showed that one in five people believed it was acceptable for a man to bash his wife or girlfriend if she nagged him too much; if she failed to keep the house clean; if she argued with him; if she refused to obey him and so on. We must ask why people think this way and why they continue to think this way. There are many women who tolerate domestic violence for years. Often the question is asked by people, "Why don't they get out? Why don't they leave?" It is not that simple. To start with, many women do not have the financial wherewithal or independence to get out of their own homes. They lack financial resources. They fear the repercussions from the perpetrator of the violence and they often have a very strong desire to keep their families together. They lack self-confidence. They fear reprisal. They feel ashamed and inadequate. They feel guilty that somehow they may have been the cause of this violence. Victims need us to help them; we must work on a change of attitude.

Although the Minister for Community Development, again in answer to a question I put on the Notice Paper recently, told me that \$1.6m has been earmarked for combating family violence - which is about \$1 per person in this state. That is not a lot of money. It is pleasing that at least some of that is earmarked for media and advertising, which I hope will be targeted at changing people's attitudes so that they realise it is not acceptable to

condone and turn a blind eye to domestic violence. Victims of domestic violence need information about where they can receive help. They need assistance if they speak different languages. Often they need access to alternative housing. They need real police protection. We must look at the powers that the police have in domestic violence situations. Victims often need financial assistance to care for their children, at least in an emergency or in the short term.

One line in the budget for the domestic violence package recently announced by the Minister for Community Development refers to district initiatives of nearly half a million dollars. I suggest that the Minister look at setting up community committees along the lines of the committees he set up for the International Year of the Family where not only the professionals within Community Development will be involved, but also people with expertise and a particular interest through churches and other community organisations can be part of the district and community initiatives. It is an area where the police, concerned people in the community, and people with skills and training in the community, can combine with government to assist. I do not think it is an area that the Government should feel it must deal with alone. The network of community committees set up for the International Year of the Family are working well, and the Minister could probably build on that sort of initiative in the area of domestic violence. The \$1.6m that has been packaged to help combat family violence is only a beginning and a lot more funds will be needed in the coming years to combat this hideous problem in our community.

MR W. SMITH (Wanneroo) [4.50 pm]: The member for Floreat mentioned the International Year of the Family and also made reference to issues affecting the family unit. I will do the same. These issues are important in the International Year of the Family. One issue now demanding attention is postnatal depression. It has been obscured for some decades, but reports from Australian states indicate there are several issues to be addressed, including the lack of professional and community understanding and the prevalence of postnatal depression and its prevention and treatment. Exactly what is postnatal depression? There have been various definitions. I take one explanation from a study group review of the 1989 consumer survey group, noted as "Having a baby in Victoria". It states -

Several states of ill health are commonly known under the name of postnatal depression. They range from the mild and usually the transitional third, fourth or fifty day blues through to more severe forms of depressions which may last for several months or even years and in a small number of women there is acute post-partum psychosis.

Whereas acute forms of maternal psychiatric disorder are relatively uncommon (2 per 1 000 births) studies indicate clinical depression affects a much larger proportion of women (10-20%).

On this basis we can estimate that of 1 000 women who delivered at Wanneroo Hospital from July 1991 to June 1992 up to 200 women experienced postnatal depression. Furthermore, women responding to the consumer survey in Victoria stated that they "lived with the symptoms of depression, and were reluctant to seek help and unaware that help was available". They stated also that they felt embarrassed, guilty and inadequate at a time when it was expected they would be enjoying motherhood. Others lived with the symptoms for many months, feeling that they were part of the blues and that many mothers just simply experienced it.

Now that postnatal depression figures in the goals and targets for Australia's health for the year 2000, and that goal is to reduce its severity and duration, we should be able to move from the recognition of this serious public health issue to effective action. The term post-partum mood disorders covers a wide clinical spectrum based on severity, and this ranges from the baby blues at the mild end, through depression to psychosis at the other extreme. Anxiety and other emotional disorders may also be problem features in many cases.

Recent studies report compelling evidence of the adverse effects of maternal mood

disorders in some infants. It has been pointed out from reports that impairment may persist after maternal depression has remitted. The outcomes include disturbed sleep patterns, emotional disorders, behavioural problems, poor growth and increased incidence of accidents; and, of course, the incidence of child abuse in homes, as members have mentioned earlier. In view of this scenario it is imperative that a comprehensive health plan directed to primary and secondary preventive measures, specific therapy and family psychotherapy be devised and implemented. Services provided should include mother-baby inpatient units, a family day-stay crisis service, a 24 hour counselling service, postnatal depression therapeutic groups, and, finally, the establishment of a continuing education program for staff, both voluntary and professional. One of the problems that exist in this state is the lack of professionally trained staff to cope with the demand. Indications for admissions to an inpatient mother-baby unit could be divided into two groups related to infant and carer problems. The first category includes excessive crying, sleeping and settling difficulties and the risk of abuse or actual abuse. The second category includes family crisis, marital issues, isolation, feeding or other infant care issues, which we generalise as "mother crafting", multiple birth and suspected or confirmed mood disorder.

The north metropolitan health region is known as the region with the highest projected population growth of all metropolitan regions. The major growth attributable to migration patterns is occurring in my seat of Wanneroo. The number of deliveries at Wanneroo Hospital has almost trebled since the hospital opened some 13 years ago. It is currently 950 births a year. Approximately 2 600 babies are delivered at Glengarry and Osborne Park hospitals. In addition, a number of low birthweight babies are transferred to these regional hospitals from the King Edward Memorial Hospital for the establishment of feeding and teaching young, inexperienced mothers the skills of infant care. Consequently, the number of new mums who face a transitional crisis or have difficult babies to cope with is steadily increasing. The exact incidence of postnatal depression in this region has not been ascertained for a number of reasons, including, of course, the low priority it has received so far in the state health promotion planning and the lack of appropriately qualified professional personnel. As I have said previously, some have had insufficient training to identify patients at risk. In other states in Australia it is estimated to affect between 10 and 20 per cent of mothers in the year after delivery. There is a high percentage of young mums with family and financial stresses in the north metropolitan area, in particular Wanneroo, which has a very high growth rate with very young families or those who are starting families, particularly with the development of the Joondalup region, and of new suburbs such as Kinross, Currambine, Clarkson and Meriwa, and Joondalup itself. One anticipates that the instance of post-partum depression will be in the upper range throughout this region.

Recognition of this increasing problem by a variety of health workers involved with new parents led to the formation of the postnatal depression support group in the ever expanding northern suburbs. That unit is right in the heart of my electorate. This group currently meets at Granny Spiers community house in Heathridge. The facility has done a tremendous amount of work with terrific volunteers and a full-time staff. This is one of the issues they have taken on. Since its inception in 1988 the group has assisted in excess of some 300 or 400 women and their families. The demand for the service has increased, and a number of general practitioners have agreed to assist in the management of the more severe cases.

A number of situations arise in which admission to an inpatient mother-baby unit is considered essential for rapid and successful reduction of stresses within the family unit. This should be highlighted in the International Year of the Family, and it is an issue the Government should pay particular attention to. The options are admission to a three-bed mother and baby unit at Graylands Hospital - Cullity Annexe, the Ngala Family Resource Centre, or the local community hospital. The first two are long distances from my electorate. Turning to the third option, Wanneroo Hospital has not been expanded, and the professional staff are not available to handle these problems and meet the growing community demands. Therefore, admission of a mother and child with specific problems

would make fewer beds available for patients with more serious medical problems. An imbalance arises with people suffering from serious postnatal medical problems and patients with serious problems in community hospitals having first option. Mothers are not always diagnosed as suffering from postnatal depression, and other illnesses are easier to diagnose.

Facilities available at Wanneroo Hospital are not satisfactory for the optimal care of these patients. A review of existing health resources has established that a mother and baby support unit is urgently needed in the northern suburbs. Previous admissions by the postnatal support group, through the Heathridge Granny Spiers Centre and a local paediatrician, have not met with success. This is a disappointing result from our Government. However, recent reports from various government appointed committees identified management of postnatal depression as a significant public health issue. Community awareness is increasing regarding the complications arising from this disorder. As demand increases for health care services and with a limited health budget, any improvement in health care facilities can only be achieved by the local community sharing the cost of the project with the Government. Members of the Wanneroo community, including me, have recognised this and have a special interest in the management of patients with postnatal depression and associated problems in infants. A committee has been formed for the purpose of building a mother, baby and family centre and establishing a home care program in the northern suburbs. I give this committee my full support and am delighted to have been involved with it since its inception last year.

Various options were considered for the siting of the centre. The establishment of such a centre within the grounds of Wanneroo Hospital presents many advantages, including the availability of hospital facilities, occupational therapy, radiology and pathology services, plus the sharing of medical and nursing staff. Raising funds for the building would be enhanced if such donations were tax deductible. The committee is considering setting up a charitable trust. The Joondalup Community Foundation is being considered as an option through which funds could be channelled for the specific project. However, the preferred option is to establish a Wanneroo Hospital trust fund, which is perceived as being more beneficial. Erecting the centre within the hospital grounds is acceptable and we hope that has the support of the Minister for Health. The hospital management team could administer the fund and oversee the project. The wider community will be more receptive to donating funds if it can see the mutual benefits which will arise by associating the establishment of such a centre with the Wanneroo Hospital. The plan is to look at not only the Wanneroo electorate but also the whole north metropolitan health region.

What is the home help scheme all about? It comprises subsidised domestic assistance for six weeks for a new postnatal mother. Home carers are mothers themselves who are keen to provide practical assistance in a friendly manner. These people have been specially trained and are prepared to work in the homes of postnatal mothers. Why does the committee consider it necessary? The early postnatal period is a time of intense change for all the family members. It is also a time when most mothers find themselves left to manage by themselves. The community has grown to expect mothers to breeze through the intense physical, social and emotional changes without any support at all. The few postnatal services which do exist are all problem orientated. No organisation offers support along the way to assist mothers in the transition to full domestic and parenting duties. Mothers find these times difficult and there does not appear to be a great voice asking them how much help they need. Has it been done before? Yes, it has been done in Victoria and Queensland where home help has been operating for 20 years. The home carers provide cleaning for safety and hygiene standards in the mother's home and these schemes are often run by local government but funded annually by the Health Department. With local government being close to the people, it is the ideal way of operating the funding process. Home help is a health promotion focus. It seeks to provide assistance at a time of intense need. I do not think any member would disagree with that. In the first six weeks a mother is physically recovering from pregnancy and child birth and is at increased risk of injury from heavy housework. Help is needed.

Mothers experience difficulties adjusting to the change of lifestyle after the birth of a baby, and one can imagine the difficulties they face in looking after their first baby and managing the home. During that time mothers establish breast feeding or prepare infant formulas, both of which involve night feeds and settling of infants. Newborns often feed hourly in the early weeks, especially breast feeders who stimulate hormones which produce and release breast milk. Mothers are still learning the skills of parent craft, often alone, as the partner, particularly in Wanneroo, is at work and the extended family very often - particularly in the most northern area of my electorate - is geographically, financially and socially unable to assist. Mother and baby bonding is necessary and mothers need time to do this with their babies. Other demands such as preparing other children for school and getting the partner off to work present difficulties.

Home help should be offered to all parents because they should be valued and supported at this time. Obviously, some parents will have organised some assistance and may not need home help. However, some mothers do not have this assistance, perhaps through ignorance of what the parenting role involves, the unrealistic expectations they put on themselves, their partner and their baby or the belief that they can sail through this time because mothers have always done so. The concept in the community is that mothers have always had babies and the blues problems they suffer is just a way of life. That is not the case.

The second project is a family support unit which is envisaged not only to cater for women's problems but also to be more far-reaching in its scope; the member for Floreat referred to some of the problems it would deal with, including violence in the home. The Government has an opportunity this year, the International Year of the Family, to fund a unit of world class standard to intervene, where necessary, and offer parenting and marriage counselling. It would give mothers and fathers advice and support in their difficult job of raising their children in a loving, secure family unit. The family support centre would also be able to direct and administer a domiciliary service. By providing effective help on the home front many parenting, emotional and isolation problems would be addressed without the need for hospitalisation of the mother and her child. The statistics available are incomplete and one of the major reasons for that is that many mothers are hospitalised with a spurious diagnosis, or with the baby's complaint, just to get them into a bed.

Funding of the first stage - the home care scheme - would provide not only home care help, but also accurate statistics of the number of families needing help and the problems they face. A commitment from the Government of \$10 000 is sought to fund this scheme. The second step will be a mother and baby family support centre which will be established on the hospital grounds; but of course that would require a lot more funding. It would be a purpose built unit and very much like a home. The units would be self-supporting and the husband and family could visit the mother and baby in a homely atmosphere. It would provide an excellent opportunity for the mother to deal with the problems she is encountering. The committee does not consider that the family support unit should take on the appearance of a hospital. It should be inviting and provide an environment where the mother's other children can be catered for.

When the mothers' problems have been diagnosed and they are ready to go home they will not be left to their own devices. The home care project could provide them with a carer who would visit the family for up to six weeks. In the International Year of the Family it is most important that this project is considered carefully because it affects the family unit. If the family unit were given more attention many of the problems in the community such as child abuse and domestic violence would be solved and children would be brought up in a loving atmosphere. The statistics reveal that problems during and after pregnancy can have an adverse effect on children. It could be a reason for the extent of juvenile crime within the community.

The committee and I strongly believe that without government support for this project, particularly the mother and baby home care scheme, it will not get off the ground. Many volunteers are ready to get on with the project. I hope the Government takes my comments on board and that the Minister for Health and the Minister for Community

Development discuss the attributes of the project and deliver what is needed to get it off the ground before the end of this year.

MR LEAHY (Northern Rivers) [5.17 pm]: My comments will be brief in view of the spirit of cooperation between the leaders in this House to finish this debate this evening, but I am amazed that the last speaker took 25 minutes.

Mr Bloffwitch: You cannot stop enthusiasm.

Mr LEAHY: I realise that.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Make sure you do not get enthusiastic.

Mr LEAHY: I will raise several issues concerning my electorate. Firstly, I will refer to the horticulture industry, which is the backbone of the economy in Carnarvon. It comprises 163 plantations which between them employ about 500 people and contribute in excess of \$40m to the local economy; the industry's export markets are increasing all the time. A number of the growers are exploring more export opportunities and are doing a very good job in increasing the industry's potential.

The growers have a problem with the security of water supply and I know that the Minister for Water Resources is aware of it. The growers were pleased last year with the expenditure of \$2.5m on additional bores. Earlier this year the river flowed, taking away the growers' immediate problem as it will supply the area with water for 16 to 18 months. However, the problem is that a decision has still not been made on whether the cost of the drilling program will be loaded onto the growers' rates or whether there will be a contribution by the state and, if so, what amount it will be.

Mr Omodei: That amount is under \$2m.

Mr LEAHY: Will the growers be required to meet that amount?

Mr Omodei: I have not made a final decision, but I will be taking a minute to Cabinet on Monday; but it is well under \$2m.

Mr LEAHY: I appreciate that information because it would have doubled the growers' rates.

During the winter months the Carnarvon horticultural industry delivers a benefit of approximately \$6m to Perth. That amount has been assessed by both the Water Authority of Western Australia and the Department of Agriculture as the additional cost which Perth consumers would have to meet if the produce supplied by the Carnarvon growers was purchased from the Brisbane market - that being the only alternative source of supply. Not only would Western Australia, particularly Carnarvon, lose that income, but also consumers in Perth would pay an additional \$6m for the produce. The whole of the water subsidy to growers, on the basis of Water Authority figures, is less than \$1m, which is a small subsidy to pay growers in Carnarvon towards the cheaper produce Perth consumers receive from that region.

My next concern relates mainly to Homeswest pensioner units in the Gascoyne region, particularly in Carnarvon, Denham and Exmouth. In the four years before the change of government a concerted effort was made to increase the number of pensioner units in those three towns. Neither Denham nor Exmouth had any pensioner units of note at that stage. There was some concern in Homeswest that the units would not have occupants, as initially at Denham only five people were on the waiting list. A program was undertaken and there are now 18 units in Denham, about 40 in Exmouth and about 100 in Carnarvon. All units are occupied and there is a waiting list. Many people wish to retire to our area because it is relatively close to Perth and because of the moderate weather patterns in the Gascoyne.

A housing program such as that undertaken in the past has additional benefits in that it is then not necessary to continually expand the metropolitan area and the outer suburbs to provide this accommodation. Residential developments in the metropolitan area cost a lot of money to bring on stream. I ask the Government to give consideration to implementing that sort of program. Geraldton is another town to which people wish to

retire, as are areas in the south west of the state. Regional redevelopment can certainly be enhanced by an increased building program by Homeswest in those areas.

Roads are the lifeblood of all areas, and I know the Minister for Transport has pressure on him in this regard from all parts of Western Australia, and particularly the metropolitan area. In the north west we rely heavily on the roads, which are an important part of the lifestyle. One area of great concern is the road from Geraldton to Mt Magnet. Previous governments and the current Government have spent considerable sums upgrading the Great Northern Highway, which the residents in that area are very appreciative of. However, the east-west link road between Geraldton and Mt Magnet is in a deplorable state. I drove across it the other day and it is downright dangerous. I urge the Government to give consideration to it. Some work is also needed on the road from Golden Grove, which is a mining settlement that has recently proved up deposits for another 20 or 30 years.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Is that Scuddles?

Mr LEAHY: Yes. It has a long term future and I am pleased with the administration of that mine. The company has engaged people from the area as workers - farmers' sons and the like, and people from Mullewa and Geraldton. It is a very important component of the local economy. Also, the children attend the Yalgoo school which gives that community some certainty, and they use the facilities in Yalgoo. The road between the Scuddles mine and the highway between Mt Magnet and Geraldton is a gravel road, which breaks up very quickly. There is an ongoing maintenance budget of \$150 000 a year shared by the local shire, the Main Roads Department and the mining operators, but that is insufficient to keep the road in a reasonable condition. I fear for the children who travel that road twice a day to and from the school at Yalgoo. A lot of dust is created by the trucks that use the road regularly, and the school bus must negotiate the road. Now that the company has reserves proved up for another 20 or 30 years, serious consideration should be given to sealing the road. The project would cost between \$5m and \$7m, but returns would be achieved in royalties. It is a base metal mine, returning copper and zinc, as well as some gold and silver.

Mr Bloffwitch: The company is prepared to put money in as well.

Mr LEAHY: Yes, it is. I know this Government's prime concern is to improve economic conditions, and this is one area to which it should give serious consideration.

Major issues in the last election campaign were the jetty and fascine at Carnarvon. Both the Government and the Opposition made commitments with regard to the jetty and the fascine, and I want to keep the Government to those commitments. The fascine is the absolute linchpin to the development of Carnarvon. It is the waterway through the middle of the town. LandCorp is very interested in the development and in bringing on stream waterfront blocks, and it is prepared to put money towards that. A commitment is needed from the Government for the dredging of the fascine area. I ask the Government to give urgent consideration to that. In the same vein, the unloading facility at Exmouth was promised in the last election campaign. I know the Minister for Transport, Hon Eric Charlton, has been to Exmouth and promised to undertake a feasibility study. I urge him to make that a priority.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Is that Burkett Road?

Mr LEAHY: No, that has already been done and it is under consideration for some sealing. I am talking about the unloading facility for the boats at Exmouth. I congratulate the Government on upgrading Burkett Road.

Unfortunately, the Minister for Planning is not in the Chamber at the moment to hear my concerns, and those of the residents of Denham, about the Minister's public statement that the Shark Bay region plan is dead and that he will instigate an inquiry into what should replace it. The Shark Bay plan was put together in consultation with all sectors of industry over a six year period, and was the blueprint for development of the Shark Bay region, including Denham and some tourist sites in the area. It decreed that the centre of development should be Denham and that two areas in Monkey Mia and Nanga should be

low key developments. In my opinion, and in the opinion of 99 per cent of the population in that area, that is appropriate although the Monkey Mia development has probably gone further than local residents would have wished. I do not share their concerns in this matter because it has been a very good development and the existing facility is about right. However, I certainly do not support the establishment of a nine hole grass golf course. Problems have been experienced with the leaching of sewage in the past in that area, and a grass golf course would create further problems. It would be a links course on the water and I am fearful of the possible environmental problems. I am sure my concern is shared by every person in that region. Another area of concern is that obviously applications will be made for development in many parts of that area. It is a pristine region with world heritage listing, and a number of proposals have previously been made for development, namely at Steep Point and other areas. I urge the Minister to reconsider the Shark Bay region plan. Some minor amendments are needed, but not wholesale changes. It should not be thrown out because if it is, the Minister will have huge problems with sectors of industry, particularly the trawl fishery, pastoralists and the tourism industry. The tenet of that plan should be adhered to; that is, major development should be restricted to the Denham area.

As Vice President of the Country Racing Association, I advise members that people in the country are very concerned about an attempt by the Western Australian Turf Club to stop remote country racing. A country racing plan has been developed, and it is universally opposed by every race club outside the Totalisator Agency Board country clubs and, indeed, they now oppose it also. The 32 clubs outside that region in Western Australia oppose that move by the Turf Club, including those clubs which will supposedly benefit from extra funds and racing dates. I am Vice President of the Carnarvon Racing Club, and I know it also opposes the plan. The Turf Club should take its hands off country racing. It should not be in the Turf Club's sphere of responsibility to decide what country people do. Country clubs provide entertainment. They provide the only social days that country people have in places such as Gascoyne Junction, Cue and Mt Magnet. Those centres raise 100 per cent more than the TAB distribution; that is, they match the TAB distribution dollar for dollar.

Mr Penda: I went to a race meeting with Hon Phil Lockyer, when one horse took off at the end of the track, and six years later they are still looking for it. It was a very entertaining day.

Mr LEAHY: I agree; they are very entertaining. To show how efficient the clubs are at raising money, in Perth 83 per cent of the funds provided by the TAB is spent on stake money, and in the country it is 200 per cent. By taking away that sphere of racing we will lose millions of dollars currently raised by local sponsorship for stake money.

Mr Board: The member will be aware that the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee has been looking at that issue and should be bringing down a report in Parliament in a couple of weeks.

Mr LEAHY: I am aware of the concerns of that committee. I voice my concern and my support for country racing as well. I would also like to place on the record my support for the thousands of hardworking people in the racing industry. It is the fourth biggest industry in Western Australia and it has been suffering a torrid time recently in the Press -

Mr Cowan: It is the what?

Mr LEAHY: It is the fourth biggest employment industry in Western Australia. This information comes from the Department of State Development. I refer here to all spheres of racing, from grain suppliers, to the marketing of stock feeds -

Mr Cowan: So we are included in the racing industry.

Mr LEAHY: Farmers are not included. Grain growers are not included. The stock marketers, the jockeys, the stable hands, as well as the horse float operators and so on are included.

Just as in any industry, the racing industry includes a few bad apples. Unfortunately,

those bad apples in the racing industry have received considerable press recently, and the general public of Western Australia think that the entire industry is like that. It is not. The vast majority of people involved in racing in Western Australia are hardworking. They are the real battlers who love the industry and detest the efforts of some people to drag the industry down.

Amendment to Motion

Mr LEAHY: I move -

That the following words be added to the motion -

but this House regrets to inform His Excellency that the Government has failed to move to protect the Creery wetlands which provide safe haven for millions of migrating birds from as far away as Siberia and has taken action which will endanger the rare living fossil stromatolites in Lake Clifton by allowing bores in an adjacent subdivision contrary to the recommendations of the Environmental Protection Authority.

MRS HENDERSON (Thornlie) [5.33 pm]: The amendment covers two key areas of conservation of great interest not only to the state but also to the whole country and its international obligations under international treaties on conservation of the environment. The amendment will have particular interest to members who represent the area around Mandurah. The first part of the amendment refers to the failure of the Government to move to protect the Creery wetlands. I remind this Parliament that the previous Minister for the Environment, my colleague Mr Jim McGinty, moved very clearly to offer protection to the Creery wetlands. He made it clear that he accepted the recommendations of the Environmental Protection Authority which was that areas B and C - those further from the Mandurah bypass road - should be fully protected and were of high conservation value. I refer to a letter from the Royal Australasian Ornithological Union, a world recognised body with scientific expertise in the study of birds, which reads -

... the RAOU has conducted numerous surveys of this area ...

According to our assessments the marsh areas in the Peel Estuary are as ecologically important as the shorelines, shallows, sandpits and other open areas. Our analysis of available data indicates, for example, that 61 species of birds are found in marsh areas compared with 46 species in nearby open areas. Of the species found in both areas, 20 have a significantly higher abundance in marsh areas compared to 19 species in open areas. The Creery Wetland is of high conservation value when compared with many other areas in the Peel-Harvey Estuary and elsewhere. In order to conserve it, the whole area must be retained, including the marshes ...

Because it is inundated less often than some other marshes in the system, this ephemeral wetland is likely to assume a very important conservation and ecological value to water birds at certain times.

The letter goes on to talk about the richness of the food sources in the area for migratory birds. We are talking about thousands of birds, not just a few, that migrate from as far away as Siberia to Australia, and which breed and eat to fatten themselves for the return journey. The letter continues -

Birds are also influenced by the depth of a wetland. For example, waders require shallow areas, while diving birds such as grebes and some ducks require deeper water. Just how important a wetland is to various birds depends on when it is inundated and the state of nearby wetlands at that time.

The letter talks about the amount of research which was done on the birds in the area and indicates that not enough has been done. It has been done only over 12 months, and that is not enough to show the significance of the wetlands when we have major dry periods like those experienced this summer. The letter states that the Creery wetlands should be preserved partly because -

Samphire habitat, including regularly inundated and ephemeral wetlands, is very important to many kinds of birds, and is a diminishing resource Australia-wide because of increasing coastal development. In the Peel-Harvey estuary a substantial part of the samphire habitat has already been destroyed . . .

The Creery Wetland is of international importance in two respects. It is listed in its entirety under the *Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterbird Habitat* (Ramsar Convention). Under this treaty Australia, and other signatory countries, are obliged to do everything possible to protect the wetlands listed . . .

The Creery Wetland is also a very important location for 14 species of birds listed on both the *Japan Australia Migratory Birds Agreement* and the *China Australia Migratory Birds Agreement*.

So, these wetlands are of major, international significance for these birds not only under international conventions but also under the bilateral treaties between Australia and Japan and between Australia and China. The letter states that any failure to protect the wetlands will undermine and diminish Australia's international status. The letter reads -

As many of the signatories of the Ramsar Convention are countries less privileged than Australia, with fewer natural resources and higher populations, there is likely to be little sympathy for any such moves.

That is, moves by Australia not to seek to protect these wetlands -

The development of the Creery Wetland is not in the interests of the Australian public at the local, State or national levels. . . .

In summary, the RAOU considers that the Creery Wetland is, in its entirety, important to water birds and should be conserved. We further recommend that a protective buffer zone be retained on its northern boundaries.

The letter from the ornithological union sets out in clear terms its scientific opinion that these wetlands are of international significance and that Australia has a special responsibility to protect them. It points out that of over 600 wetlands surveyed in Western Australia, the Creery wetlands are in the top one per cent for waterbird diversity. It lists 21 species of waterbird which are commonly to be found in the Creery wetlands. One would have thought that the Government would have regard for the comments from such a significant, completely independent, international organisation. I have been bitterly disappointed that the Minister for the Environment, on whose shoulders responsibility for this issue rests, has done no more than to go over the area in an aeroplane. What kind of assessment could the Minister make by taking a flight over these wetlands? He should have taken the opportunity which I took several weeks ago to go to the wetlands, to walk around, to look at the birds, and to talk to the local people and those who have been actively involved for over 10 years in seeking to preserve these wetlands.

I raise the significant issue of the role of the Environmental Protection Authority. When the Environmental Protection Authority first put out its bulletin on the Creery wetlands, it said quite categorically that areas B and C of the wetlands were of high conservation value. The former Minister moved, in response to those recommendations, to prohibit development of those two areas. However, with the change of government the Environmental Protection Authority was asked to reassess the Creery wetlands and the developers were invited to put in a new submission, which they did. On the basis of their submission, the Environmental Protection Authority made a new recommendation. The EPA effectively said that it still found areas A and B to have high conservation value but, because the Government was not prepared to purchase that land, it would allow the development to go ahead. That is an unacceptable criterion by which to make this judgment. The Environmental Protection Authority should be judging the environmental issue on environmental criteria, not on whether the Government is prepared to put its hand in its pocket to buy the land. It should be determined on whether the land is ecologically significant enough to preserve it for future generations. The Environmental

Protection Authority looked at the recommendations and the submissions by the developers.

I applaud some aspects of the developers' submission. They agreed to cede to the State the whole of area C, 30 ha, and part of area B, 38 ha; that is, 68 ha were to be ceded for a conservation reserve. I congratulate the developers for that. However, that area should never have been allowed to be developed. There should have been no question that the developers would be able to obtain permission to develop that area. The developers proposed to put up a vermin proof fence and, again, I congratulate them for that. There is nothing more important than keeping out feral cats and foxes to protect the birds. The aspect of most concern in this proposal is that there is a clear message to developers. It says, "If you buy up quite cheaply land which is zoned rural, some parts of which you know you will never get permission to develop, and then you say that you are prepared to give up some of this area because it is conservationally important, you might get permission to develop other areas which you would not otherwise get permission to develop."

I am glad that the Minister for the Environment is in the Chamber now. I was interested that one of the main arguments in the developers' submission is that part of area B is already degraded. I have seen area B. It had old car bodies on it and kids were riding around on it in off-road vehicles. It was degraded. It had rubbish on it. There is no question that that is not a good enough reason for a developer to be told, "Because you have not bothered to keep the public out of this area, because you have not developed a management plan, because you have not put up a fence, because you have not told kids that they cannot ride trail bikes on samphire flats, now you can argue that it is sufficiently degraded that it should not be preserved."

The world ornithological union specified that that area has great environmental significance, as did the Environmental Protection Authority in its first bulletin, and that it should be preserved. The fact that it is degraded by car bodies and other things is irrelevant. It would take no effort at all to get a truck to take the car bodies away, and to fence the area. No doubt, the samphire would regenerate. With the opening of the Dawesville Cut, there is some suggestion that the water level in the area will rise. If that happens, the whole of area B could well be inundated at various times of the year. The tidal extremes are expected to be greater.

As I mentioned earlier when I read out the material from the royal ornithological union, some birds require shallow wading water and other birds require deeper water. As signatories to the international convention, we have a responsibility to ensure that those migratory birds have places to nest, roost and feed before they return to the northern hemisphere. I am very concerned about what has happened.

The recent elections in Mandurah were a clear message that the people there want the Creery wetlands kept in their present condition. All of the councillors who were pro-development lost their seats. They were replaced by councillors who were opposed to the development of the Creery wetlands. That is a clear signal from the people of Mandurah that one of the attractions in Mandurah is the foreshore areas where the birds come to roost, and which is not covered with canal developments and large homes on the edges of artificially created canals. That natural attraction in Mandurah will be lost. The Minister should take heed of the election results. In my view, if the Western Australia Government is so remiss in its responsibility to protect the Creery wetlands, the Federal Government will have no alternative but to seek to provide protection for those wetlands under the external affairs powers, and I will support that.

Mr Bloffwitch: Would you?

Mrs HENDERSON: I certainly would.

Mr Minson: They cannot because it is not part of the agreement.

Mrs HENDERSON: Which agreement does the Minister mean?

Mr Minson: It is not part of the migratory bird agreement.

Mrs HENDERSON: The Ramsar convention protects areas, although this land is privately owned.

Mr Minson: You people specifically excluded it.

Mrs HENDERSON: We did not exclude area B. The former minister will speak during this debate -

Mr Minson: One of the previous speakers was one of the landowners so you made sure that it was excluded.

Mrs HENDERSON: The Minister should look at the approval given by the former Minister. Areas B and C were excluded from development. However, the present Government was not prepared to find the money to purchase area B. I would have preferred to spend more time talking about this matter, but I have only seven minutes more available to me.

I will turn to the stromatolites at Lake Clifton. Western Australia is indeed fortunate to have Lake Clifton, the largest reef of stromatolite fossils in the world. It is eight kilometres long and 30 metres wide. These living fossils that are almost 2 000 years old and grow extremely slowly, are extremely fragile and are seen as an enormously rich resource by scientists from all around the world. Lake Clifton is an area where the stromatolites have been protected because of the purity of the water. That area is now under threat for two reasons. One is that there is completely unrestricted public access to those stromatolites. When I went there to look at them, I saw thousands of footprints of people who had been walking on the stromatolites and on the beach next to the lake. Youngsters had been driving their motor bikes up and down the beach. People from around the world would be horrified to think that we should pay so little care and attention to such an invaluable biological resource as these stromatolites that we would not at least restrict public access to the area.

About 12 months ago, the Minister indicated that he thought there should be a boardwalk which would enable people to view the stromatolites without walking on them. I thoroughly endorsed that proposal, but nothing has happened. Not even a sign has been erected to warn people of the fragility and rarity of those creatures and to tell them that they should not walk on them. Total open public access is available to the area.

My other grave concern is that a subdivision development was approved on the edge of Lake Clifton. An announcement was made that the development was subject to strict environmental conditions, including there being no water bores on the blocks. There were to be no bores, to discourage people from watering and keeping animals on their lots which would add to nutrients being flushed into Lake Clifton.

Mr Omodei: How big are the lots?

Mrs HENDERSON: They vary. When the developer had problems selling the lots, he approached the Environmental Protection Authority and asked it to lift the condition on bores. The EPA lifted those strict environmental conditions and allowed people to install bores on their blocks.

Mr Omodei: Did they or did they not conduct a study?

Mrs HENDERSON: They have not conducted a study because the nutrients that would have been flushed in have not been flushed in.

Mr Omodei: My advice was that they were to conduct a study.

Mrs HENDERSON: The Minister's advice is wrong. Until people have bores and are keeping horses, sheep and goats and nutrients are being flushed into the lake, one cannot see the effect on the stromatolites. I have documentary evidence from three independent scientists that the level of phosphates in that lake is the key factor to the survival of those stromatolites. The EPA has said that it will monitor the level of phosphates in the water. The stromatolites have been there for 2 000 years. By the time they start to show the adverse effect of the increased nutrients in the water it will be too late. They are fragile and considered to be precious by people throughout the world. This Government has not

only not moved to prevent people from walking on them; worse than that, it also has allowed people to have bores, which will flush nutrients into Lake Clifton and probably lead to the slow death of the stromatolites.

I would like to read from a document titled "The World's pre-history in WA"; it states -

Western Australia has in its midst some of the world's most priceless assets in the form of stromatolites.

Sometimes called "living rocks" they are thought to be the oldest forms of life on the planet earth.

According to noted prehistorian and archaeologist, Josephine Flood, "*the finest living examples in the world of one of the earliest life forms on this planet . . .*"

They also occur at places like Lake Clifton . . .

Pressure from population and pollution could see these pre-historic yet living entities damaged or even lost to mankind.

Thus it is that Western Australia must see itself as holding its stromatolites in trust for the whole world. Accordingly, in government we will:

Begin urgent assessments of the condition of all known stromatolites in Western Australia;

Take advice on the steps needed to preserve these assets;

Implement all necessary measures to restrict access to them -

Mr Minson: And we have.

Mrs HENDERSON: There is no restricted access. I was there recently. The document continues -

Strengthen any Parliamentary protection that might currently be afforded to them.

Mr Minson: You didn't do it.

Mrs HENDERSON: The Government has done nothing. The document continues further -

We will call on existing expertise to take all necessary steps to achieve total protection.

The document I am quoting from is the Liberal Party environment policy. What a joke the Government's environmental policy is! It has done nothing. What is worse, it has allowed bores against the better judgment of the EPA, which will undoubtedly damage the stromatolites.

MR PENDAL (South Perth) [5.54 pm]: I am pleased to hear the Opposition spokesperson quote from the coalition environmental policy on the protection of stromatolites.

Mr Minson: A very good policy it is, too.

Mr PENDAL: It is a good policy. For those who are not aware, the summary that the member read into the record should persuade them that, by virtue of those stromatolites, Western Australia is home to some of the oldest living forms of life on planet earth. They require detailed and serious protection because of their scientific, tourism and other values. The thing that puzzles me is that the spokesperson for the Opposition should have just discovered the value of stromatolites, having been in government for the past 10 years.

Mrs Henderson: I haven't just discovered it. What have you done?

Mr PENDAL: The previous government, which spent nearly 10 years in office -

Mrs Henderson: You can't keep running this line. You've been there now for 15 months.

Mr PENDAL: The member should wait. We have listened to her. I want her to listen to a bit of logic among the emotion. The member has spoken about the Lake Clifton stromatolites, which require protection.

Mrs Henderson: You should tell the Minister that.

Mr PENDAL: The member should just listen. The Lake Clifton stromatolites require protection. If in the life of this Government they do not get that protection, the member's amendment would be worth supporting.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr PENDAL: If the member listens, I will point out that for 10 years her government did nothing to protect the stromatolites -

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr PENDAL: I ask the member to please be quiet, because she may learn that for a decade visitors to Hamelin Pool in Shark Bay were allowed by the authorities, including the member's government, to clamber over the most ancient form of stromatolites in that area with not the scantest regard for any protection by the government. The spokesperson has only now discovered what a stromatolite is. I doubt that she would even have been able to spell the word up until the time she introduced this amendment tonight.

Mrs Henderson: What a joke! Read the amendment.

Mr PENDAL: I have read the amendment. The second point is that I say to the Government that, unless in the next 12 months it takes that commitment seriously, the sort of amendment moved by the member for Thornlie will become more relevant and will be worth supporting. But for heaven's sake, in the space of 15 months the Government to my knowledge has moved -

Mrs Henderson: It has done nothing.

Mr PENDAL: The member will hear in a few minutes -

Mrs Henderson: I went down there.

Mr PENDAL: There is no doubt about the member! So far my seven minute speech has been taken up by at least four minutes of the member's interjections. I do not mind so much, but it is just that I cannot return to the Chamber after the dinner break. I must attend a meeting with one of the member's colleagues. If I do not have my say now, I will not say it at all.

I repeat that for 10 years the member's government neglected the stromatolites in Hamelin Pool. If the Opposition had any commitment to the principle expressed in the amendment, it would have done what the coalition promised in its policy; that is, to find the highest forms of protection available.

Mr McGinty: You promised a fair bit in your policy but you have not delivered much.

Mr PENDAL: The trouble that I have with the member who just interjected is that I tend to agree with his remarks. That is said without any detriment to my friend who is the Minister for the Environment. I used to say to the member for Mitchell that I liked it more when his members hated me. When one is on the opposing side, one can cope with people who say nasty things. It is when one's opponents say nice things that even one's own colleagues start to say that all the demotions were justified. The Opposition should give the Government a chance to perform. After the dinner suspension, members opposite will hear from the Minister what is being done. The member should note that the stromatolites at Lake Clifton are part of the Yalgorup national park and that a draft management plan has been ordered. Encompassed within that are the requirements for the protection of the stromatolites.

Let me remind the newly appointed shadow Minister for the Environment that in 10 years the previous government added very little to the national park estate in Western Australia and, more particularly, it did nothing to bring about management plans in most of those

national parks. Many people would be appalled to know that most national parks do not have management plans. There is, therefore, not much point in having a policy on expansion of the national park estate if there is no regime to manage it. I will not be drawn down the path of having to support an amendment of this kind at a time when the Government is no more than a third of the way through its term. If the Government wants to take on board the member's remarks, most of which are valid - except for some of the more silly and emotive statements - and the remarks that I have made, it would consider them as a form of joint request that it must perform on this issue. If the Government does not perform over the next two and a half years, a motion or an amendment of the kind the member opposite has moved tonight would be fully justified. It is not justified now when the Government has barely had the chance to do what it has promised.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Leader of the Opposition) [7.30 pm]: The Creery wetlands development brings into focus a range of issues that are now impacting on the west coastal area of Western Australia. One need only drive from Rockingham to Margaret River to be well aware that vast areas are under significant pressure from development. It concerned me somewhat to read the other day that the Minister for Planning seemed to be of the view that the answer to many of the problems arising from these developments lies with him and the Department of Planning and Urban Development. The Opposition does not agree with that. Local authorities have a very important role in that area, particularly in the case of Creery, for the community of Mandurah. The next step will be a referendum or poll concerning that development. I am certain the outcome of that will be a good guide to the future development of the area. If the recreational use by the people in the metropolitan area, who make very good use of that part of the state, is to focus on what is available and on the good points of the south west, we must be careful of the developments that might take place there and the pressures that will be imposed on existing communities and on the environment.

As we are focusing on Mandurah it is appropriate to talk about the most critical environmental development down that way; that is, the Dawesville Channel. Very little mention was made of it during the opening of the project. I suppose it was a creature of the Opposition when we were in government. Despite the fact that some people, such as the member for Mandurah, said in his maiden speech in 1989 that we should delay the project so that a chemical solution to the algal problem could be investigated, it now seems that the Liberal Party -

Mr Cowan: The coalition.

Mr TAYLOR: I beg the Deputy Premier's pardon, the coalition is more than happy to raise the flag and say it accepts responsibility.

Mr Cowan: Is it good policy or bad policy?

Mr TAYLOR: One cannot choose. The National Party is in bed with the Liberals and that is all there is to it! We announced commencement of the Dawesville Channel in November 1991. At the same time a deal was done with Wannunup Developments so that the project could be completed in two years - two years earlier than expected, with a saving of about \$20m. At the time of the state election in 1993 about \$23m had been allocated by the then government to the project which was well ahead of schedule. The present Government inherited that project and is still not giving credit where credit is due.

There is another important point about the channel. It was always acknowledged that the Dawesville Channel would have some adverse impact on the Peel Harvey estuary, even though it was accepted that its positive effects would certainly outweigh the negative effects. However, we always understood it was imperative that, once the channel was completed, scientists should ensure they were in a position to closely monitor the developments. Concerns were expressed at the possible consequences of the development of the channel, including of course the increased presence of mosquitoes which is especially a problem for Creery. In light of what the developers will leave

behind in terms of wetlands, and given that already, as the member for Murray well knows, Ross River virus is of some concern to people in that area, the problems which can arise from potential flooding of some areas of the wetlands should not be underestimated.

Mr Bloffwitch: Mosquitoes are certainly not a new thing.

Mr TAYLOR: They are not, but on examination of the effects of tides around the estuary it will be obvious that the water level will rise higher than it has previously. As a result, some areas will be regularly inundated -

Mr Bloffwitch: There has always been plenty of water for them to breed on.

Mr TAYLOR: The problem is that mosquitoes do not breed on the open waters, but in waters left behind in some of the tidal areas.

In addition to the mosquito problem, the change in number and nature of the fish stock in the estuary and general flooding of residential and farming properties owing to increased tides must be monitored. The channel could even have some detrimental effects on wetland bird life. All these issues, although they may not be seen to be of great moment, must be monitored. People must know what is going on. Despite promises by the Government to fully monitor the effects of the channel, the Government has not put in place a full monitoring program. It has set aside approximately \$200 000 to establish a fish monitoring program, but both the Fisheries and Health Departments have been told, I understand, to find the funds within their existing budgets to monitor the effects on fish nurseries and stocks as well as mosquito breeding sites. Undoubtedly the answer from those departments will be that their funds are well and truly limited and they will find it very difficult to monitor those effects. In addition it is fair to say that the amount already set aside is insufficient. If we are to do some proper scientific monitoring of one of the most dramatic changes to an estuary environment we will ever see in Western Australia, more funds must be set aside. In order for the entire estuary to benefit from a project of this size, it is important to know what is taking place from not only a scientific, but also a historical point of view.

In supporting the amendment, I urge the Government to tread very carefully in the areas associated with development proposals throughout the south west. A range of projects can create much controversy in communities. I have no doubt that the developers will want to meet the demands brought about by the desire of more and more people over the next few decades or so to recreate or live in that area. However, development must be done carefully, with an understanding of the environment and with the support of the local communities. They are the sorts of issues which the developers at Creery must face. It is important that the Mandurah council go ahead with the proposed poll on this development to ensure that it has a better understanding of the attitude of people throughout the Mandurah area. It is critical for the Dawesville Channel and in relation to the impact on the Peel-Harvey estuary that more work is done to monitor the impact of that change to the environment. If that work is not undertaken we will pay the price in the years ahead for our lack of understanding about these massive changes to the environment. We will also pay a historical price from not knowing enough about the impact of those sorts of changes.

MR MARSHALL (Murray) [7.40 pm]: The issues of the Creery wetlands and stromatolites are of concern to my electorate and they are close to me. The plan to split the Creery wetlands into three divisions - A, B and C - was acceptable to nearly everyone in my electorate. To develop section A with real estate, retail outlets, and a fisherman's wharf type of facility at the edge of the city would have been a wonderful development. To keep section B as a buffer and section C for the environment also looked as though it would be a good piece of insurance for the migratory birds. Sections A and C have never been in dispute. However, since the election and the change of government the developers have wanted to split section B, the centre section. When I looked at the plan originally I thought it was acceptable. I went around the Creery wetlands by boat and walked the wetlands and still thought with the perspective of what I saw from land vision that the development was in order. I then went above the wetlands by helicopter and saw

a different vision of the proposed split to section B. In my opinion - which is only an amateur's opinion; it could be an emotional opinion because I live in the area - splitting section B would not be acceptable.

Mrs Henderson: I hope you're telling your ministerial colleagues this.

Mr MARSHALL: I hope the member for Thornlie is listening. I have made open statements to the newspaper about what I believe. However, I am speaking as a sheer novice; someone who is not trained in making a study of the environment. That is why we have a common denominator that we call the Environmental Protection Authority - a neutral body to look at both sides of the mark. My concern about splitting section B is that from the air it appears to be mostly water. I am concerned that if the tidal influence in the Dawesville Channel is what many people expect - all the experts say it will not happen - perhaps half of section B that has been given to the environment will not be enough. It may be under water. People underestimate the bird life of the area. I see the birds and think they are nice; however, I do not have any idea of the varieties in the area. Recently I took a visitor from the United States of America in my boat and showed him the sheer beauty of the waterway. As we came back along the Creery he and his wife pointed out the various types of birds on the banks. They were ecstatic.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr MARSHALL: The member for Thornlie has probably never been out there in a boat or walked it; she has read about it in a book.

Mrs Henderson: I have walked it.

Mr MARSHALL: The member for Thornlie has only a bookworm's vision. I would like the member for Thornlie to understand the feeling of the place and not just talk about the matter without knowing it. We take for granted the bird life, and seeing it through the eyes of a visitor made me realise that it is precious. I know that many members want the area developed, and that some young people just rush in and make decisions. However, it is really the old bull and the young bull story because the Creery wetlands are the heritage of Mandurah.

Mrs Henderson: Hear, hear!

Mr MARSHALL: We agree! Has the member for Thornlie ever lived in Mandurah.

Mrs Henderson: I have been down there many times.

Mr MARSHALL: Many times is just like scratching the surface. When one crosses the new bridge and looks south to the Peel waterway, there is a majesty and serenity about the vista. I have said before that if William Wordsworth were alive today he would have written even better poetry about nature as a result of what the Creery has to offer. I do not believe that the Creery should be developed to a stage where we may realise an error later on. However, that is only an amateur talking. I know many people support my thoughts as well.

Mrs Henderson: Don't put yourself down. You are a member of the public. You are entitled to an opinion.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections.

Mr MARSHALL: I have been a professional tennis player and I have found on many occasions that when club players, who are mostly C grade amateurs, give opinions, they may not really know what they are talking about. Therefore, I put myself in the C grade category in making this decision. I have said already that it is an emotional decision.

Mr Blaikie: They are Z grade over there!

Mr MARSHALL: That is right. I recently put out a newsletter containing a survey and to my amazement we received an enormous response. One of the 42 questions asked whether we should preserve the Creery wetlands. Seventy per cent of the respondents, which included the Dwellingup and North Dandalup areas - not the emotional section of the coastal side, but the entire electorate of Murray - said that we should preserve the wetlands.

Mrs Henderson: Did you let the Minister know this?

Mr MARSHALL: Of course I let him know. A deputation from my electorate has met the Minister. The Minister and his committee will study every angle of the matter because they are professionals.

Mrs Henderson: He has already given the go ahead for the development.

Mr MARSHALL: The go ahead is now possibly subject to a referendum. The member for Thornlie should let me build up to the conclusion of my speech. The emotion of the town is such that the Creery wetlands are rural and need to be changed to urban before development can occur. It is in the council's hands. The council said before the recent local government election that a referendum would be held. In most referendums small groups lose. If one is a punter one should never back the emotional, minority groups. However, if my survey is any overall judge, in this case the referendum will go to save the Creery wetlands. The people who live there are involved in the emotional side of the matter. All of the representations have been made and all the information has been fed into our computer-like professionals. We must wait for them to make the decision.

The member for Thornlie mentioned stromatolites earlier. Stromatolites are an important part of the environment from a tourism point of view. I was privileged to launch the draft management plan for the Yalgorup park in late November.

Mrs Henderson: You know that that was developed by the former government.

Mr Minson: Rubbish! We had been in government for 10 months. If you had had that management plan you would have released it. Don't fib to this Parliament.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr Minson: You hadn't even got to chapter 1.

The SPEAKER: There are too many interjections. Although the member for Thornlie seems to be very much in agreement with the member for Murray, she is interjecting too much. I cannot allow that many interjections. Naturally enough, I will accept some interjections, and I think some of the interjections are good, for what that is worth, but we cannot have the quantity of interjections the member is making because the member cannot get on with his speech. It is obvious he wants to continue to speak, so we cannot allow him to be deterred. That should be understood, and the cross conversation that took place, including that by the Minister for the Environment, was such that it drowned out completely the member for Murray.

Mr MARSHALL: The member for Thornlie knows that I coached her when she was a young girl. She was pretty chirpy then, and I had to kick her out of the classroom a couple of times for talking too much, so nothing has changed.

The Yalgorup national park is a marvellous concept. It embraces five packages of virgin bushland, comprising an area of about 54 km from Tim's Thicket to Lake Preston, and it has a lot of natural beauty, one part of which is the stromatolites. Everyone is concerned about the stromatolites, because these are historic animals. The problem is with the bores and whether the development of blocks in that area will lower the watertable and kill the stromatolites. These issues were investigated by the experts and it was left to them to determine how much water will be needed and whether the watertable will deteriorate. All of us are emotionally involved. We too believe that stromatolites are a wonderful asset to the national park. The Creery wetlands, with its sheer beauty and softness of nature, is a reminder of old Mandurah, and this heritage should not be destroyed. For many years, grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren have gone crabbing in that area. Mandurah is now a wonderful city, and it will adjoin the metropolitan area in a few years. We must hold on to the heritage of that area, which lies in the natural samphire flats and the sheer beauty of the bird life.

The amendment moved by the Opposition has merit, but at the same time it is put forward with amateur opinions, and I prefer to be led by professional opinions, which is why we have the Environmental Protection Authority.

MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell) [7.55 pm]: The member for Murray was correct when he said that the whole of the Peel-Harvey estuarine system and, indeed, the Serpentine system, is one of the most environmentally sensitive places in Western Australia and one of our greatest jewels. It is unfortunate that when a region is as attractive and beautiful as that region, it will attract residential and other developments in the City of Mandurah and surrounds, and that inevitably will lead to conflict about land use around the estuary. We have already had amply demonstrated, at a cost of some \$55m to the state, that that entire ecosystem is extremely fragile and can be upset in a variety of ways. That essentially means that every proposed development in the Peel-Harvey area must be assessed very carefully at the three essential levels of development. The first level is a general zoning which may permit some kind of development; the second is a particular zoning where a range of developments is considered; and the third is where a particular development is considered for a certain piece of land.

It is of concern to me that since the change of government, the Environmental Protection Authority seems to be changing its attitude in regard to the level of assessment that it should do of these three stages. The most important stage is the initial one, where the Environmental Protection Authority must do intensive work to ensure that all of the environmental conditions that should be taken into account in regard to planning and development are identified and that a list is made of all the matters that need to be evaluated further as the other stages of development are undertaken. When it comes to environmental assessment, sometimes disputes arise in the community about what is important in regard to conservation and development. These matters have to be resolved initially in the community, but the ultimate decision should always remain with the responsible authorities, whether they be local government or state government.

Mr Minson: In this case, it is local government.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Yes, at this stage, but I will come back to that matter. However, when there are environmental considerations which are obviously above the norm, our approach to the issue must be quite different. The critical factor about this area is that it is a samphire and wetlands area which is an essential part of the bird habitat in the whole estuarine system. It is an area which is already subject to the Ramsar, Jamba and Camba agreements.

Mr Minson: It is not subject to the Ramsar agreement.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I take a contrary view.

Mr Minson: Do not waste the time of the House. At least get your facts right.

Mr D.L. SMITH: It was certainly approved by Cabinet for Ramsar listing.

Mr Minson: Your Cabinet did a lot of things that it did not tell Treasury about.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Minister is very good at playing that game. He is one of the biggest semantic hypocrites this place has ever seen.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr MINSON: Mr Speaker, I ask for your ruling on the word "hypocrite". I believe it to be unparliamentary.

The SPEAKER: Order! I find that to be very marginal, but our standing orders do say that if a member takes offence at any matter, it should be withdrawn, and I ask the member for Mitchell to do so.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Mr D.L. SMITH: I want to emphasise that the Minister takes issue with whether things are listed or are in the process of being listed. The fact of the matter, as the Minister knows, is that the previous government at Cabinet level did approve this area for Ramsar listing.

Mr Minson: I do not know that at all.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Minister should know, in his current position, whether it is one or other of those. This area is an essential element of the migratory pattern of birds between Australia and Asia, and there is simply no question that it has enormous environmental significance for that reason alone. That means that two of the areas that have, in my view, been properly identified should never be developed at all. The remaining area is, as the member for Murray said, part of the approach to the whole estuarine system as people come up to the Mandurah bridge, and for that reason the value of development in that area is so marginal that no development should occur. In that situation an arrangement should be in place whereby the state can immediately agree to purchase all of the land so that the two areas, which most people agree should be protected, are acquired and put into public ownership.

Today we had an example in the central business district of the Premier agreeing for the state to pay \$12m for the acquisition of the former R & I Bank building so that it can be demolished. In that way we can develop a historic precinct to improve the aesthetics of the area. I congratulate the Premier for taking that step. However, the idea is not new; it was very much promoted by me and the Deputy Premier in the previous government. Nevertheless, at that stage we could not gain approval from Cabinet for the entire plan. The acquisition of the former R & I Bank building was only part of the proposal as we planned to purchase the law chambers and the Public Trust building for demolition to do a proper job. The point is that the Premier has no hesitation in spending \$12m for that acquisition in the City of Perth. However, the Government is extremely reluctant to spend that sort of money on land acquisition in country areas.

A range of areas in the south west require acquisition by the state, not the least of which is the country between the two capes, the subject of recent planning meetings. It is a great pity that this Government has not been more proactive in speaking to proposed developers about the sort of conditions they seek within the area. As the Premier has made a good fellow of himself in the city, he could do the same at Mandurah by bringing the Creery wetlands into public ownership. This area should not be occupying as much time of public decision making as it is. It is of environmental value because of the recognised importance of the bird habitats and it is the window to the entire estuarine system. Therefore, we should be able to agree that no development should occur and that the land should come into public ownership.

The stromatolites may not be as appealing as birds, but they are a unique organism which survives for millennia. I was appalled by the decision made to allow development to proceed in that area. I was even more appalled when in the course of announcing the decision we were told that the nutrient and water table levels were to be monitored. This would consider the impact of the development on the lake and the stromatolites. The impression was that if adverse affects were felt, the decision would be reversed. This would be after allowing subdivision and houses to be built, and after many people had spent enormous amounts of money in establishing themselves in a way which may cause nutrient increase and water table problems. The area will undergo value adding, and when the move is made to protect the stromatolites it will cost 20 or 30 times as much money to acquire the area. At that stage it will be necessary to buy the houses and the improvements made. Also, pressure will be applied to develop the unique Binningup to Mandurah lake system. Long ago this was identified as being worthy of preservation; that is why we have Yalgorup national park. It is wrong that we should place the stromatolites in danger for the gain of developers.

Those concerns, along with others regarding the area between the capes, have been increased because of the Government's strategy: namely, bringing statutory planning schemes into regions subject to development pressures. I suspect that the motivation of the Government in this regard, as in the metropolitan area, is to develop the power for the Minister to direct local authorities to amend their local schemes to conform to the metropolitan scheme.

Mr Lewis: Currently, there is no power to direct. You tried to do that with the City of Cockburn, and you had to take it to the Supreme Court.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Minister for Planning has been in the job for 15 months, but I held the position for only 24 months!

Mr Lewis: You took the City of Cockburn to court.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Under the metropolitan scheme the Minister has a clear power to direct.

Mr Lewis: There is no power to direct.

Mr D.L. SMITH: That became an issue because the Cockburn council would not abide by the direction.

Mr Lewis: You are the hypocrite.

Mr D.L. SMITH: This Government is about introducing statutory schemes in country areas such as between the capes, and this will place the Government in a superior position to that of local government.

Mr Lewis: I cannot believe your hypocrisy. You are blatantly dishonest!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr McGinty: I would have thought that would call for a retraction.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr McGinty: It was heard by everyone in the Chamber.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are two ways by which words can be withdrawn: One is initiated by the Speaker and the other by members. If the member for Fremantle was here a moment ago when the Minister for the Environment asked for words to be withdrawn -

Mr McGinty: I was here.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call to order the member for Fremantle. He should not interrupt me. When the Minister asked for the words to be withdrawn, I said - I am sure the member picked it up, as he is a words man - that I thought the words used were a little marginal. However, as the standing orders indicate that members can take objection to words used, to which the member for Fremantle and I may not take exception, the practice and orders of the place require a withdrawal. The member for Mitchell was courteous enough to withdraw the words on that occasion. If the member for Mitchell found offence in the words used on this occasion, he may raise that point. However, I still regard the words to be marginal.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I do not regard much of what the Minister for Planning says to me or to anyone else as very offensive; his judgment in relation to these matters is very poor indeed.

This Government is about introducing statutory schemes in country areas for the purpose of the Government taking a superior position over local government.

Mr Omodei: You said that the Government should buy back the land.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Quite right. In the case of the Creery wetlands -

Mr Omodei: You were talking about the cape to cape area.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Yes; I will come to that in a moment.

Mr Omodei: That is interesting. Do you not believe in regional schemes?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I do not believe in statutory schemes in country areas which take away the power from local authorities and place it in the hands of this Government. I do not believe in statutory regional schemes.

Mr Lewis: You cannot answer the question.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The question we want answered is why the Government is keen to

have statutory schemes in country areas. As the Minister has demonstrated time and time again, he is much more pro-development than I ever was.

Mr Lewis: Of course I am, and the Government is proud of it.

Mr D.L. SMITH: All of the country areas in the south west are in danger as a result. Through the introduction of statutory schemes in country areas the Minister will take away from local government the right to make the final decision, indeed, the preliminary decision in relation to development.

Mr Lewis: You forced your will on Cockburn.

The SPEAKER: Order! Minister, you interjected and the member replied, and that is appropriate, but if you keep interjecting on the member's response to your interjection it is not possible for the member to carry forward the debate. I find what the member is saying most interesting. I will accept some interjections, and by his action I take it that the member for Mitchell will take some too, but you cannot interject to a point where he cannot put his speech together in a coherent way.

Mr D.L. SMITH: In the metropolitan area the need for a statutory scheme is essential. In country areas which have large local authorities and where there is not the competing land uses that exist in the metropolitan area, they are not necessary. The only reason this Government is looking at statutory schemes in those areas is because it wants development controlled by this Minister, who has admitted that he is much more pro-development than I was as Minister for Planning and that he is proud of it. That should sound warning bells for every community in country Western Australia, but especially in those areas in the south west which are environmentally sensitive. The second reason this Government wants statutory schemes in country areas is that it wants to introduce country improvement taxes in the same way as there is a metropolitan region improvement tax. That should not happen in country areas because the amount of revenue that will be raised will be small indeed, and incredibly small in relation to the total needed by government to acquire areas that need protection in the south west. In the two cape areas, and from Binningup to Mandurah, enormous areas of land require acquisition - to say nothing of the Ludlow and Vasse wetlands. It is the Government's responsibility to acquire them, and to the extent we are not able to acquire all of them we should allow a minor level of development as part of a quid pro quo for the landowners surrendering the major part of their landholdings to the state. Some of those proposals are under way in the south west.

Mr Omodei: Do you want landholders to be forced to give up their land?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Yes, in those regions where the natural appearance of the land is so important to the future of Western Australia and to the preservation of our environment estate we must do that. Those landowners who are sitting on pristine areas of the south west that are of significant environmental importance must recognise that they will not get approval for any major developments, and the sooner they start talking to the State Government about ways the state can acquire those holdings the better.

Mr Omodei: You have certainly had a change of heart since you lost rural areas.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I have not had a change of heart in relation to those matters at all. There is a general concern for the environment, but some environmental values are so high and so obvious that this House should not be wasting its time debating it. The Government has the responsibility and it should be out there making sure those areas are preserved from development and as far as possible brought into public ownership, or if they are not, at least subjected to some kind of control which prevents the environmental value of those areas being lost to posterity. I commend the amendment to the House.

MR MINSON (Greenough - Minister for the Environment) [8.15 pm]: The amendment moved by the Opposition contains two major parts. The first is the Creery wetlands, and the second is the stromatolites at Lake Clifton.

Areas A and C in the proposed development area of the Creery wetlands have never been in question. Area A was always agreed to by everybody as being suitable for

development, except in the later stage of the debate when a group of Aboriginal people claimed there was a sacred site on the area. Area C was never in question and it is of high conservation value. Consequently those two areas are not the subject of debate tonight, but area B is the subject of debate. It is very misleading for people to talk about anyone destroying or developing the Creery wetlands. It is an extensive system which is a whole lot bigger than area B and the proposed development area. We are not talking about the Creery wetlands but a very small part of the edge of Creery wetlands.

One of the speakers said decisions must be made about developments and what to conserve and what not to conserve. I found myself in that situation when considering the Creery wetlands. In concentrating on area B, I walked across it, drove around it, and flew over it. Area B has two distinct parts. One part was clearly degraded but, nevertheless, was very akin to area C and it should be included in the conservation estate. The other part of area B, adjacent to area A, was not only degraded it was in the words of someone who accompanied me -

Mrs Henderson: Was this the developer?

Mr MINSON: An adviser who was with me said the area was so dysfunctional as not to be considered as part of the wetlands at all. It is true that one might flip a coin to decide which way to go. I considered the best advice I had available to me, and I chose to draw a line that divided area B into two parts - but not equal parts. I took a lot of advice about what would happen to the Creery wetlands as a whole. I came out of this process convinced that by arriving at the agreement we have with the developer, the function of the entire wetlands will be enhanced. It is not very often that a government gets the opportunity to eat its cake and have it too. At Mandurah we are in a position to create a very attractive and pleasant place to live and also protect, through vermin proof fences, bird hides and boardwalks, the function of those wetlands.

I will digress and talk about foxes and cats. The biggest threat to protecting conservation of soft furry mammals and the like are foxes and cats, both of which are introduced species. I understand they abound in the Creery wetlands which are adjacent to an area of high density living where there are huge number of cats and their offspring that escape into the wetlands with devastating effect on the migratory birds.

Mrs Henderson: There are not very many there at the moment but there will be.

Mr MINSON: The member should not be stupid. Goodness gracious me! There are cats and foxes all over the Creery wetlands. That is a ridiculous statement. The houses about which the member is talking are a few hundred metres away, and to foxes and cats that is nothing. By removing the foxes and cats from that area -

Mrs Henderson: All you have to do is to build a fence at area B and you will protect all of the areas B and C.

Mr MINSON: I am saying that the part of area B to be developed was represented to me to be so dysfunctional as not to be for all practical purposes an important part of the wetlands. I took that advice and I stand by it. The member may or may not agree with it. I do not agree with her point of view. I have chosen what can be developed on environmental grounds.

Mrs Henderson: Did you look at the Environmental Protection Authority's original recommendations?

Mr MINSON: The EPA's recommendation was that we should buy it and that it would not be a bad idea. It is not an environmental decision, and such recommendations should not have been made by the EPA. The EPA should have given environmental advice and not told the Government to buy a piece of land. It can either be developed or not. I said to the EPA, "Give me your advice." It gave advice on the new proposal, which was the one which was eventually approved. I do not want again the sort of advice from the EPA that it originally gave.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Thomlie

has made a number of interjections without any comment from me whatsoever. Ultimately the Minister gets to the point where he is giving half a speech. We do not want that.

Mr MINSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I do not want my speech detracted from in that way.

The question is whether the spirit of Camba and Jamba can be complied with. It can, and it has been for me to make a sensible and informed decision about what part of area B can or cannot be developed and under what conditions. The conditions applied and the concessions from the developer will effectively mean the capacity of those wetlands for migratory birds will be enhanced. Only history will show me to be correct or otherwise. It is a decision made with the best of intentions and advice, and I stand by it. It was the right decision for the right reason. I intend to continue to make right decisions for right reasons.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr MINSON: A referendum is not an environmental decision.

Mrs Henderson: Of course it is.

Mr MINSON: Of course it is not.

Mrs Henderson: Are you saying the people do not have a right to a say?

Mr MINSON: Of course they have a right, but it is a planning issue.

Mrs Henderson: You will not listen.

Mr MINSON: I made an environmental decision.

Mrs Henderson: I understand that.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Thornlie will come to order. I formally call to order the member for Thornlie.

Mr MINSON: I will put this in perspective. It is nonsense to talk about referendums and the environment. If we are talking about the environment and proper balanced decisions made on the information available, I made a good, sensible and balanced environmental decision. If the people of Mandurah decide they do not want the area developed, it is fine; but they do that through the local processes.

Mrs Henderson: You will not listen.

Mr MINSON: I made an environmental and not a political decision. A political decision is one that comes from a referendum.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MINSON: I wish to place formally on the record that nobody is saying the people of Mandurah cannot decide through their local political process they do not want to develop. We do that all the time. That is fine. On my farm I have chosen to do certain things, and people say that they are not economic. I do not care because that is what I want to do. If people do not want this, that is fine. That was not the question asked. The question asked was, can it be done responsibly for environmental reasons, and the answer is yes.

Mrs Henderson: It is no, and you know it.

Mr MINSON: I will continue to make proper decisions.

Mrs Henderson: Not for environmental reasons.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Thornlie.

Mr MINSON: Before we leave this question of the Dawesville area, I will comment on monitoring. Clearly we have to monitor the changes to the Dawesville Cut, and they are being monitored in some detail. There is no end to the monitoring that could take place and no end to scientific study for its own sake. I am satisfied, having spoken to the

director of the Waterways Commission, that the amount of monitoring that we are doing is more than sufficient for the purpose that is required. If somebody else wishes to go in there and study for study's sake, they may go ahead. There are several universities in this state -

Mr Kobelke: Did you explain what the purposes are?

Mr MINSON: All of them are capable -

Mrs Henderson: You promised proper monitoring.

Mr MINSON: We are doing so.

Mrs Henderson: You are not.

Mr MINSON: Of course we are.

Mrs Henderson: You are not.

Mr Kobelke: Would you outline what that purpose is to be?

Mr MINSON: The purpose is to monitor what will happen to the vegetation, the fish, the tidal movement, and mosquitoes, which is of particular importance. Those are the sorts of things which will directly affect the local environment.

Mr Kobelke interjected.

Mr MINSON: The member asked a question and obviously wants an answer. I will not spend much time on it. We cannot reverse the Dawesville Cut other than by filling it in. The value of monitoring is that if we do a similar development we will know what happens.

I want to talk about Lake Clifton. The member for Thornlie was quite right when she said the Government would move to protect the stromatolites in Western Australia. The question of what to do needs to be considered somewhat carefully. When I became Minister for the Environment I initiated some action through the Department of Conservation and Land Management and said, "What are we doing about these matters?" I received a verbal report about three main areas of stromatolites at Lake Clifton, Hamelin Pool and Jurien, which not many people seem know about but it is well known to those living locally. To say "Do something" is fine, but the question is what to do and what is the most appropriate thing to do. The draft management plan was released after we had been nine months in government, despite an Opposition member stating that the previous government prepared it. If that were the case, the previous government would have released it. It has been released. It has finished its public comment period and its final formulation will take place in the next few months. The final plan will be released and will be put into action before the end of this year.

Mrs Henderson: What does it say about stromatolites?

Mr MINSON: The member will have to wait and see.

Mrs Henderson: Why doesn't the Minister tell us?

Mr MINSON: The member can get a copy and read it. I will not waste my time reading out management plans when they can be obtained from the library and the member can read them for herself.

Mrs Henderson: Just tell us.

Mr MINSON: The Hamelin Pool stromatolites have been there for a long time with people thundering all over them. A boardwalk is being installed and will be completed within a week. It was about half complete when I visited the site six weeks ago. A similar arrangement with appropriate fencing will be installed at Lake Clifton.

Mention has been made of the bores and nutrient load in the area. The bores were allowed for a very good reason. The town planning scheme for Mandurah had applied to this development where 25, 10 ha lots were allowed around the area of the lakes. A clearing restriction of 4 000 sq m per lot was put in place. Stock was controlled by fencing, and land was resumed for addition to the existing foreshore reserve, so the area

is being protected. Restricted land use activities obviate nutrient loading of groundwater, and water supply was originally provided from rainwater tanks only. It was realised that clearing 4 000 sq m would considerably alter the amount of transpiration taking place through the natural vegetation. Most members who have done any reading on the subject will realise that when bushland is cleared the watertable tends to rise. The Environmental Protection Authority, the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and the Water Authority of Western Australia were all consulted and calculated the amount that could be drawn from a bore to balance the amount of transpiration that was not taking place.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr MINSON: That is not nonsense. That is exactly what happened.

Mrs Henderson: One does not need to clear 4 000 sq m; it is up to them. That is the maximum they can clear, that is what I am saying. The amount of transpiration is not calculated on 4 000 sq m. Someone might clear only 500 sq m.

Mr MINSON: That is exactly right. The bores are monitored by WAWA and the EPA to make sure that the amount of water taken out is as near as possible to the amount that would have been lost by transpiration. The question of nutrient load was mentioned and I alluded to it. Restrictive land use activities obviates nutrient loading of groundwater. The Government departments and the CSIRO would have more collective wisdom than any number of Parliaments around the world, especially members on the other side of the House. The very sensible step has been taken to balance the amount of water coming out with the transpiration rate, and the amount of nutrient loading will be obviated.

Mrs Henderson: What did the EPA recommend?

Mr MINSON: This amendment has two basic aspects. It states something about the Creery wetlands and about the stromatolites at Lake Clifton. This amendment is patent nonsense. Firstly, the wetlands are protected. Secondly, the function of the wetlands will be enhanced and certainly will not be diminished. Thirdly, turning to Lake Clifton and the stromatolites, management plans are being finalised now. If it is so important, why did the Opposition not manage to do something in 10 years in government? Boardwalks, signage and measures for people control will be established and will all be available by the end of the year. I am sad that this nonsense is brought to this Parliament. I prefer to be home with my family rather than arguing this nonsense with people who do not know what they are talking about and make no effort to find out the facts.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (20)

Mr M. Barnett
Mr Brown
Mr Catania
Dr Constable
Dr Edwards
Dr Gallop
Mr Graham

Mrs Henderson
Mr Kobelke
Mr Marlborough
Mr McGinty
Mr Riebeling
Mr Ripper
Mrs Roberts

Mr D.L. Smith
Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Ms Warnock
Dr Watson
Mr Leahy (*Teller*)

Noes (27)

Mr Ainsworth
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr Blaikie
Mr Board
Mr Bradshaw
Mr Court
Mr Cowan
Mrs Edwardes
Dr Hames

Mr House
Mr Kierath
Mr Lewis
Mr Marshall
Mr McNee
Mr Minson
Mr Omodei
Mr Osborne
Mr Pental

Mr Prince
Mr Shave
Mr W. Smith
Mr Strickland
Mr Tubby
Dr Turnbull
Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Wiese
Mr Bloffwitch (*Teller*)

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MRS HENDERSON (Thornlie) [8.40 pm]: I will raise an issue which impinges on some of my constituents in their capacity as small business people and it relates to the distribution of milk. I hope the Minister for Primary Industry will not leave the House because my concern comes directly under his responsibility.

Mr House: If you are taking an interest in primary industry, I will stay.

Mrs HENDERSON: Recently I was visited by some of my constituents who have milk distribution businesses and I will confine my remarks to the situation facing a couple who have operated such a business in my electorate for 10 years. They have put a considerable amount of effort into their business and work seven days a week. They commence their milk round at about 4.30 am and work through until 6.00 or 7.00 pm either collecting or delivering milk and doing their accounts. They do not complain about it; they do it because they like being independent, small business people. It is their way of life. They told me that they purchased their milk licence at a cost of between \$80 000 and \$100 000. Therefore, it is reasonable for them to expect their asset will be enhanced and if they cease being milk distributors, they will be able to sell their licence.

When the Opposition was in government moves were made to deregulate the milk distribution business. The then government's intention was, rather than divide the whole of the metropolitan area into areas that were exclusively serviced by particular milk vendors, to enhance competition and allow distributors to compete against each other and to distribute milk within a wider area. It was envisaged that this would result in greater efficiencies within the system and reduce the price of milk to the consumer. No-one would object to that aim. However, there has been a major diversion from that aim and the scheme that is now being implemented will have the opposite effect to what was intended.

My constituents who, I repeat, purchased their livelihood for between \$80 000 and \$100 000 several years ago have been told that as of 1 July this year their licence will be worthless. If they want to distribute milk, they will have to enter into a contract with one of the dairies and they will be able to distribute milk only from that dairy. They will no longer be able to carry Brownes or Masters milk or yoghurt and orange juice from different companies. They will be restricted to carrying the produce from one dairy and that will be the dairy with which they will enter into a contract.

Mr House: Can I ask you a question?

Mrs HENDERSON: In a minute. I was told by the Speaker earlier this evening that I should not keep interrupting. Therefore, I will finish what I have to say and then the Minister can interrupt.

If a dairy does not choose to offer my constituents a contract, they will lose their investment. The unfair thing about this arrangement is that if my constituents do not get a contract, the business they built up can be distributed by a dairy to other milk vendors. In other words, my constituent's business, which has a financial value, can be taken from them and divided and given to other milk vendors. Anyone would say that is grossly unfair and flies in the face of everything that we consider to be reasonable.

We will go from the position of having a fleet of independent, small business people who deliver milk to one where those people will be under contract to dairies. They will be restricted in the brand of milk products they can deliver and they will not be given a contract if the area to which they deliver is not acceptable to the dairy.

My constituents' round comprises houses, a few small shops and one supermarket. From their round they make on an annual basis \$200 000 net profit, which is enough to give them a reasonable livelihood. Most people would consider that to be a reasonable living and return on the investment they made. However, the dairy has told them they do not have a viable round. They have been told that if they expect a contract from it, they will have to get rid of the one supermarket they deliver to because it is not giving contracts for one supermarket. They will have to find three or four more supermarkets or swap their one supermarket for more shops or houses. They deliver to 200 or 300 houses and

shops now and it is physically impossible for them to deliver to more houses to make up the value of the supermarket.

Mr Blaikie: What percentage of your constituents' business is home deliveries?

Mrs HENDERSON: Probably 75 per cent of their time is delivering to houses, but 75 per cent of their income comes from delivering to the supermarket and that is what makes their round viable. At the moment they deliver Brownes and Masters milk to the supermarket and they deliver whatever brand the householders require.

My constituents are highly respected by their customers. They are reliable and they deliver year in and year out. Under the new arrangement the dairy has told them that it will not give them a contract for one supermarket, four shops and the houses to which they deliver. They have been told that if they want a contract, they will have to swap with other milk vendors. They cannot physically service enough houses in 12 to 18 hours to earn the income they receive at the moment. No-one will give them other supermarkets because milk vendors are considered to be fortunate if they have supermarkets in their round. None of the milk vendors will give up his deliveries to shops. Therefore, my constituents face the possibility of losing their livelihood and they will get no compensation. The only way they will receive any compensation under the distribution adjustment assistance scheme is if they can sell their round. How can they sell their round? Whoever it is sold to will have the same problem. The dairy will not give them a contract. This is not deregulation, it is regulation by the dairies. The dairies will control everything; they will control who gets a contract, the brand they carry, and where they can deliver.

Another person in my electorate has been delivering milk and milk products to the country for 20 years. He delivers in his truck Brownes and Masters milk, yoghurt and other dairy products. However, he can no longer do that because he is not allowed to carry more than one brand in his truck under this arrangement. He has built up his business over 20 years by delivering milk products to small country towns. He will be out of a job because he must take half the amount of products he now takes to country towns. In future two trucks will deliver to every shop that he currently delivers to, one carrying Masters' products and one carrying Brownes' products. How can anyone say it is more efficient?

Mr Blaikie: At what time was household milk delivered?

Mrs HENDERSON: At the normal time it is delivered.

Mr Blaikie: At what time of day?

Mr Strickland: My milk is delivered between 3 o'clock and 5 o'clock in the morning.

Mr Blaikie: That is a milko.

Mrs HENDERSON: This person is a milko.

Mr Blaikie: And delivers in the afternoon?

Mrs HENDERSON: I cannot say, but it makes no difference. The customers are quite happy with the delivery time and not one of my constituents has complained about deliveries from this milk vendor. Presumably they would not have their milk delivered if they were not happy with the time it was delivered; they would go to the delicatessen or the supermarket to buy their milk, but they are not doing so.

Mr Blaikie interjected.

Mrs HENDERSON: There is no question about that. People currently have the choice and it can be delivered on their doorstep or they can go to the supermarket or the local shop. Many people buy their milk products from the supermarket because they are marginally cheaper. Under this new scheme people such as my constituent will have their livelihood taken from them and will receive no compensation unless they can sell their round. However, no-one will want to buy it. On 1 July a milk round now worth approximately \$200 000 will be worth nothing.

Mr Blaikie: I think the Minister will talk about this because he is a very reasonable Minister.

Mrs HENDERSON: In my view he is a reasonable person.

Mr House: He must have improved a lot lately. I reckon he is miserable and mean!

Mrs HENDERSON: I have talked to the Minister about this issue.

Mr House: We have been putting up with this deregulation in the bush but now it is happening in the city, people do not like it.

Mrs HENDERSON: That will be the day!

Mr House: It has been forced on the bush.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Johnson): I remind the member that she is talking to the Chair and not holding a private conversation in the Chamber.

Mrs HENDERSON: I know that you, Mr Acting Speaker, have a particular interest in this issue because my intelligence about the milk vendors is that they were particularly active in your neck of the woods prior to the last election with their concerns about the proposed deregulation. Many of them now recognise that they would have accepted deregulation on a fair and equal basis. They would even have accepted a cut in their margins, but they cannot cop the idea of being totally under the control of the dairies.

Mr Strickland: And their businesses stolen from them.

Mrs HENDERSON: Exactly. There is no question that their businesses and their goodwill will be stolen from them, and they will receive no recompense whatsoever. If the Government believes in this project, it should compensate these people for the total value of these milk rounds being appropriated by the dairies. The Queensland Government paid several millions of dollars in compensation to those people who lost their licences in that state. The people in Western Australia are being badly done by and will be left with nothing.

I am concerned particularly that small, independent people who have been in control of their lives will be under the thumb of the dairies. The dairies will dictate to the milk vendors that they must transport the products in a truck carrying the dairy's logo on the side, and must carry only that dairy's products. When one of my constituents asked the dairy how it could stop him buying the milk and delivering it to whomever he wanted, if the dairy would not give him a contract, he was told that his supply would be erratic and the prices charged would be prohibitive. That is disgraceful. In other words, the dairy said that if the vendor did not fit in with its contract system, it would charge him double and he could not be sure of obtaining supplies.

Mr House: Who said it?

Mrs HENDERSON: I will give that information to the Minister. The dairies are so confident of their position that they can say that openly to people who complain to them.

Mr House: I would like to know the name of the person.

Mrs HENDERSON: Masters Dairy told my constituent if he wants to buy its dairy products and does not have a contract, he will pay a prohibitive price and availability will be erratic.

Mr House: Do you know who said it?

Mrs HENDERSON: I am checking to see whether I have it in writing. It was said quite openly. This means these small, independent people who want to buy a product which should be freely available to them, will not have that opportunity. The dairies know they will be able to control the supply of milk and if vendors do not have a contract and deliver as directed by the dairy, they will not obtain supplies.

Mr Blaikie: When was it said?

Mrs HENDERSON: When my constituent rang the dairy within the last two weeks. The constituent asked what would happen if he did not have a contract. One of my

constituents has been told that his round is not viable, he will not be given a contract, and he should negotiate with someone else. He has put his round up for sale although he does not want to sell. He has worked hard all his life. He has a list of the people to whom he delivers milk. I have no doubt the dairy will enter into an agreement with the supermarkets and shops, and appropriate his business to give to someone else. The dairy does not have a list of the people to whom he delivers, and those deliveries will stop on 1 July. I have no doubt the dairy will put pressure on my constituents to get those lists and find out where the customers are. The dairy will then give them to someone else. Those customers are angry and upset about what is happening. They have a great deal of time and respect for the people who have delivered milk over the years, and are angry that the people who have worked hard will be deprived of their livelihood.

I compare this to a similar situation with the breweries some years ago. A certain brewery decided it would supply beer to particular hotels only and that people would have their licences taken away if they sold more than one brand of beer. It led to major litigation in the courts, and in the end massive compensation was paid to those people who were told the brewery could not dictate to them that they may sell only one brand of beer. If these people want to deliver two or three types of dairy products from two different dairies, they are entitled to do so, in the same way that anyone is entitled to go to a dairy, buy the milk they want and deliver it.

Mr Blaikie: If what you say is correct, and I doubt it, I would like to see Masters or any other dairy company stop a person from getting milk from an interstate supplier and delivering that. It happened in the beer industry.

Mrs HENDERSON: How can ordinary folk arrange for the interstate supply of milk? If the member doubts what I say, I will be happy to arrange for him to meet with my constituents.

Mr Blaikie: I will be delighted.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Johnson): Order! The member should direct her remarks to the Chair. She should not be having a private conversation with the member opposite.

Mrs HENDERSON: I will be happy to arrange for my constituents, those genuine, hardworking people, to meet with the member for Vasse and with the Minister, because I believe the Minister is receiving only one side of the story from the Dairy Industry Association. I do not believe the Minister understands the predicament that some milk vendors are in. If the Minister had an opportunity to hear first-hand from those people about what they put into their businesses over the years, how they will be deprived, and how much stress it puts on their families to know that on 1 July they will not have an income, he would be better informed. It is a frightening prospect for anyone, but to have a business taken away without compensation is robbery. There is no other word for it. I hope that the Minister will comment on this matter. I ask him to meet with my constituents, listen to their story and then investigate.

MRS ROBERTS (Glendalough) [9.01 pm]: In my Address-in-Reply contribution I wish to cover a number of areas including the nature and actions of this Government. During the by-election I suggested at a State Print rally that we had a government of hard right ideologues. I suggested that we had a government that did not care, a government of the old conservative, born to rule mentality which rules out such trifling thoughts as consultation with employees, residents or anyone other than mates of the Government. Since coming to this place I have discovered that I was far too kind.

State Print has two divisions, one of which is a highly successful commercial division which competes with private companies. It has won contracts from interstate. The other division deals with parliamentary and specialist printing jobs, and operates at a huge loss. Selling off State Print, which we could not confirm at the time, although expressions of interest had been called, will not benefit the taxpayers. Their taxes must be increased because the total printing bills will escalate. There is evidence that State Print, through competitive bidding, acts as a restraint on prices charged by private shops. Once State Print is out of the market, government departments will be at the mercy of private

companies. I ask this House to recall the Tasmanian experience where an independent review of that state's printing office came out against the idea of closing it down. Instead, the review proposed that the office be operated as a statutory body under a separate Act of Parliament. In the instance of State Print, the Government simply does not care. It did not consult with the people closest to the workplace who knew about business and who were on the Government's payroll. The Government was not interested in consulting with the wider community. It was interested in consulting only with its mates, those political reference points who are the Government's political supporters. This is a common trend that I have watched since this Government came to power.

Mr Lewis: What about your mates, Laurie Connell and the others?

Mrs ROBERTS: We have heard about the Neerabup concrete batching plant as well, have we not? It may be bitter medicine for the Minister, but he should listen.

Road trains were introduced in the outer metropolitan areas because the Road Transport Association wanted them - not the residents, the police, or the local councils. Swimming pool safety was watered down because the Swimming Pool and Spa Association wanted it, not the residents, and there was no consultation with safety or child care organisations. The Government looked after its mates in the charitable collections business. It looked after its mates in respect of the Perth City Council which was split because the Building Owners and Managers Association and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry wanted it, not the residents who will pay higher rates. The Government did not consult when it closed workplaces, when it rammed through draconian legislation, cut bus services, abolished the free water allowance, or moved to cut back on fire services. The Government failed to properly consult with retailers regarding the deregulation of shopping hours. It is now increasing water, sewerage and drainage rates without consultation, and it is increasing bus and train fares.

I said that I had called the Government hard right ideologues and accused the Government of having the born to rule mentality. I was mistaken. Others had depicted Government members as fascists, stamping on the rights of community members. Many claimed to have felt the jack boot of the Government as they lost their rights.

Mr Lewis: I think the member for Nollamara has written this speech for you. Only the names and dates have been changed to protect the innocent.

Mrs ROBERTS: That is a compliment. At first I thought my remarks were a little extreme, and that perhaps the term "fascists" was a little over the top; maybe it did not quite apply to this Government. So, I consulted the *Dictionary of Political Thought* by Roger Scruton. I learnt that the term "fascist" was from the Latin fasces which refers to a bundle of rods and a projecting axe head carried before the consuls as a sign of the state authority of Rome. It was adopted as a symbol of social unity. I thought the member for Geraldton might have ready his bundle of canes to whip all the juvenile offenders, under the political symbol of the axe. The axe seems to be wielded -

Mr Lewis: This is an extraordinary speech.

Mrs ROBERTS: I am glad the Minister appreciates it. There are two contenders to carry the axe. One is the Minister for Labour Relations and the other is the Premier. The name "fascist" was given by Mussolini to the movement which he led to power in 1922, but it is now in use more widely. Fascism is characterised by the following features, not all of which need to be present in any of its recognised instances: First, nationalism, and I think we could draw some interesting comparisons with the continual states' rights arguments presented in this House.

Mr Lewis: Aren't you proud of this nation?

Mrs ROBERTS: Yes, of the nation. We have seen a beat up of the states versus the nation issue by the Liberal Party. The second feature of fascism is the hostility to democracy. I have already noted a number of instances of that. Of course, the division of the Perth City Council demonstrated a blatant disregard for democracy. Another key feature is hostility to egalitarianism. Certainly there is hostility towards providing

adequate public infrastructure and providing maintenance of existing infrastructure. The hostility to egalitarianism, of course, is noted, by way of contrast, in the favouring of mates, and by elitism, which is typical of this Government.

There are two more features of fascism which members may need to note. The next is the cult of the leader and admiration for his special qualities. The cult of the leader is applying well to the Liberal Party in this state but that has not been the case in Canberra in recent years. However, we will see how the new leadership fares over there; we will see if they can adopt the same fascist approach.

The final feature - this one is particularly significant - is a respect for collective organisation and the love of the symbols associated with it, such as uniforms, parades and army discipline. In commenting upon this feature - I know it is a little embarrassing for government members - we have only to look at the appointment of Major General Jeffery as Governor, and Major General Taylor to report on SECWA.

Mr Lewis: It shows what you are.

Mrs ROBERTS: I am not reflecting on anyone's integrity.

Mr Lewis: You are so. It is despicable. You are picking on a person because he has a military background.

Mrs ROBERTS: This is no reflection whatsoever on either Governor Jeffery or Maj-Gen Taylor. I am simply making the point that one of the chief tenets of fascism is a respect for collective organisation associated with uniforms, parades and discipline. It is bitter medicine for government members to swallow.

Mr Lewis: Why are you making these statements?

Mr Blaikie: Why did Brian Burke appoint Hughie Edwards?

Mrs ROBERTS: Judging by the number of interjections that continue to come from those opposite, my statements are obviously hurting.

Mr Lewis: It shows that your ideology is in the extreme.

Mrs ROBERTS: The extreme in the case of the Minister for Planning is fascism. We have only to look at the kinds of comments made in this Parliament yesterday to see how proud members on the opposite side are of the achievements, military discipline, the description and qualifications of Major General Taylor. They include his active service in Korea; non-active service in other areas; and that he is a postgraduate of the technical staff officer course at the Royal Military College of Science in the United Kingdom. We were told that he served at Army headquarters in the operations research group in the Office of the Scientific Adviser.

Mr Strickland: You would not be quoting from *Hansard*, would you?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Johnson): Order! Is the member quoting from the record of *Hansard*?

Mrs ROBERTS: No. I am putting this in my own words.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! It sounded very much like the member was quoting from *Hansard*. I must remind her that she is not allowed to quote from the uncorrected record.

Mrs ROBERTS: It was not a direct quote.

Mr Minson: Paraphrasing is worse.

Mrs ROBERTS: We are told that he is not only a distinguished Western Australian but that he has had an impeccable military career. That is why he is looking at the problems which the State Energy Commission had last week.

Mr Strickland: He is experienced in logistics and in examining those sorts of things. That is the reason.

Mrs ROBERTS: He is clearly a figure much admired by those opposite.

Mr Catania: He is an experienced member of the Liberal Party.

Mrs ROBERTS: That is right.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Blaikie: How do you regard your colleague Graham Edwards?

Mr Bloffwitch: He is a fascist, too.

Mrs ROBERTS: This description of fascism is obviously causing some members opposite pain. It is cutting a little close to the bone. The ultimate doctrine contains little that is specific beyond an appeal to energy and action. Government members should listen to this and think of their federal colleagues in Canberra. It is, as one might say, a form of ideology but without specific content other than can be provided by admiration towards the leader.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs ROBERTS: This comment will also pain government members. One of the issues in which the fascist attitude was displayed was towards the Perth City Council.

Mr Lewis: You hark back to it. You will never get over that you got sacked when you were deputy mayor, will you?

Mrs ROBERTS: The Minister cannot even get his facts right. The comments that I am raising are of concern to the residents of Cambridge, as the member for Floreat and I can confirm. There is a Cambridge task force and a Cambridge advisory committee. I also went to a meeting of Wembley ratepayers last night. Those people are very concerned about the Perth City Council issue. It is not a dead issue. The Minister may like it to be a dead issue, and he may wish that it were dead; but it is a long way from being dead. Each of those groups has moved motions opposing the formation of the regional council and criticising the lack of autonomy. The shame of it is that the Government does not listen to the people. I have been in the community, listening to the Wembley ratepayers, attending meetings of the Cambridge task force and listening to my constituents, who have all raised these issues with me. These constituents do not want to be ripped off by the central city council, by the Government's mates in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Building Owners and Managers Association. This is still a very live issue. People in Cambridge last year were told that they would get all of the benefits of a smaller local council -

Mr Lewis: Why have you stopped telling us about the fascists? You must have lost your place.

Mrs ROBERTS: Any description of the Minister is one of a fascist. Any description of most of the Minister's actions is one of fascism. We have been through the features and he meets them all.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs ROBERTS: Perhaps members opposite should consider the false advertising in calling themselves "Liberals".

Mr Kierath: That is nearly as bad as you calling yourself a Labor member; you have never done a hard day's work in your life.

Mrs ROBERTS: That is typical of a Minister for Labour Relations who does nothing but castigate workers, of which I have been one.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs ROBERTS: The concerns that I raised last year in respect of the Perth City Council's split remain true to this day. The first thing that we questioned last year was the real motivation behind the split. It was not for the benefit of ratepayers.

Mr Lewis: We are back onto the Perth City Council again. You have a bit of a preoccupation with the Perth City Council.

Mrs ROBERTS: Over half of my electorate has a preoccupation with what is happening with the Perth City Council, the town of Cambridge and the town of Vincent.

The first question relates to motivation. The motivation was not to look after ratepayers; it was to look after the Government's mates in the central business district. The chief report that was presented to justify this breakup was titled "A Capital City for Western Australia". That is all the Government was about creating. Government members did not give a hoot about the people in the suburbs. From reading the introduction in the report and where it refers to a time for restructuring, it appears that the full emphasis is on the central business district. The report states -

It has become increasingly apparent that the time for change to the existing boundaries of the Perth City Council has now arrived.

The 'Heart' of the State is in trouble - vacant offices and shops, increasing blight and crime, exodus of executives and workers to the Eastern States and Regional Centres and declining property values are reasons for growing concern.

During the past three years there has been a net loss of more than 50,000 square metres of occupied office space.

At present, there is a 30% vacancy rate in rentable office space and there are approximately 250 empty shops within the Perth Central Area. In addition, there are more than 20 vacant building sites and many derelict historic buildings - not to mention blight, including graffiti, throughout the Central Area.

There is an urgent need for the State Government to become more involved in the Capital City of WA - not in the administration of more than 70,000 residents in suburban areas. Less than 10,000 people live within the Central Area.

The key point there is not necessarily what was said. Although I do not agree with all the statements there, I will acknowledge that some of them have some truth. But that is not the issue. The issue at hand is that the emphasis was on sorting things out for the CBD. Not even in a small way was it to look after people in the residential areas who had contributed rates over a period in excess of 130 years. There was a complete lack of consultation and democracy in the process. The chief problem that I raised at the time was what would happen to the assets of the City of Perth. At the time, "The 7.30 Report" ran a program on which I asked: What will happen to the City of Perth's assets? How will they be divided? What will happen to the endowment land funds? What will happen to the land at Mindarie? What will happen to the parking fund?

Many of those questions remain unanswered. The facts that emerged the other evening at a meeting I attended at the Floreat Forum, which was organised by the Cambridge task force -

Mr Lewis: I thought you organised it.

Mrs ROBERTS: No. Some of those who organised it were members of the Liberal Party. The meeting was attended by Commissioner Craig Lawrence, the city solicitor, who was obviously paid a couple of hundred dollars to attend, and other commissioners. We were shown an overhead that contained a circle divided into quarters. Mr Lawrence said that it was never intended that there be an equal distribution of assets to the towns and to the city. He said, "All that we were required to do under the City of Perth Restructuring Act was to set up the three towns, give them council offices, give them a share of plant and equipment and set them free." Meanwhile, the small city with fewer than 5 000 residents keeps the hundreds of millions of dollars of assets of the City of Perth. Commissioner Lawrence was asked, "What will happen to the land at Mindarie?" For members who are not aware, I will explain that the City of Perth together with the City of Wanneroo and the City of Stirling purchased a large property at Mindarie containing 400 ha. Only 80 ha is required for the purpose of a rubbish tip. Part of the site has already been zoned residential and plans have been drawn up for that purpose. The rest of the land will probably be used for that purpose in due course. People have

estimated the value of that land at more than \$30m. When Commissioner Lawrence was asked what would become of that money, he said, "Well, naturally that will come to the City of Perth. The towns will not get their hands on that."

Another interesting matter is that the Government appointed Commissioner Lawrence acts in secrecy. Getting information from the Perth City Council has become very difficult. When he presented a series of overheads the other night demonstrating the stage he had reached, after the flashy video for which the ratepayers have paid, one of the ratepayers asked, "Is it possible to get a copy of the overheads that you showed tonight? Could we have a copy of the overheads that explained how the regional council will operate?" He said, "No." I inform Commissioner Lawrence that, if he received a freedom of information request, he would probably have to part with those overheads.

Mr Kierath: He is not subject to freedom of information; even you know that.

Mrs ROBERTS: I know that local government is subject to freedom of information. The Minister for Labour Relations should know that. Perhaps Commissioner Lawrence should also know it. The attitude of the Liberal Government appointed commissioners is that they can flash a bit of information at the ratepayers and say, "This is the regional council; now you see it, now you don't. But you cannot get a copy of any of the information or any of the overheads."

Concern has been expressed about how the regional council will operate. Commissioner Lawrence explained at some length that each of the four towns would have equal voting rights. He does not know at this stage whether there will be one representative from each of the four towns or two, but he said that the representation would be equal. However, he did not explain something at the side of the overhead which I copied down and questioned him on later. On the side under the heading "Ownership of the regional council" he had listed: Town of Vincent, 15 per cent; Town of Cambridge, 15 per cent; Town of Shepperton, 15 per cent; and the little City of Perth, 55 per cent. One must ask how 70 000 ratepayers will receive a combined total of 45 per cent ownership and the little city with fewer than 10 000 ratepayers will receive 55 per cent. It hardly seems fair to me.

I asked that question of Commissioner Lawrence and the major part of his response was, "Well, of course we will be taking over the debt situation of the City of Perth." He commented on a number of occasions that the City of Perth had an \$11.6m debt. That is not a net debt. He actually said that it has borrowings of \$11.6m and that magnanimously the little City of Perth would take over that debt. If he had investigated that debt, he would have noted - or perhaps he knew all along and was not sharing it with the rest of us - that \$4m of that debt was parking fund debt and not part of municipal debt. Even if the debt is \$7m, one wonders what the big deal is in taking over a \$7m debt when the City of Perth will be getting millions of dollars from Mindarie and other property holdings and taking over almost all the assets of the City of Perth.

Mr Lewis: Was the parking fund a dedicated fund by Statute?

Mrs ROBERTS: Yes.

Mr Lewis: Don't you think it is responsible if they borrow from that they have to repay it?

Mrs ROBERTS: Of course, and that debt will be paid out of parking moneys. That is how it operates. A further matter of concern is that the process has been going on for seven months and the new towns, according to the Act, will be set up as of 1 July 1994. There are still too many questions which have not received proper consideration. When the commissioner was asked, "What have you done towards locating council offices?", he said, "I am going to refer that to the advisory committees. We have not been able to give that detailed thought yet because we have to carry out a process improvement study first so that we can sort out what staff each of the towns want. We do not know whether the towns will need 80, 120 or 200 staff." His thinking was that, because he did not know how many staff were needed, he could not ascertain what size building they would want. What chance is there of having proper offices established for those towns within a year?

None. What is more, what will the process improvement study achieve? It will definitely achieve the expenditure of more ratepayers' funds on further consultants. The City of Perth is already paying \$40 000 to Craig Lawrence and \$35 000 to the other four part time commissioners. On top of that, the ratepayers have to pay for the former lord mayor's chauffeur driven car and chauffeur, lunches, dining room and reimbursement of expenses.

Mr Lewis: That's happening to a lot of people.

Mrs ROBERTS: What a load of rubbish! On top of that, the friend of the Minister for Planning, Mr Ralph Fardon, is being paid a reasonably large sum per hour for, I believe, 20 hours a week.

Mr Lewis: A very competent person.

Mrs ROBERTS: He wrote the most incompetent report in the history of local government in this state. His figures were laughed at by the city treasurer and by anybody who had any knowledge of finance in local government.

Mr Lewis: That is why we hired him to manage Mindarie for you.

Mrs ROBERTS: This is not about personalities; it is about a blatant rip-off of suburban ratepayers. I am within my rights to speak up for ratepayers of West Leederville, Wembley, Mt Hawthorn, Leederville and North Perth. Some of the ratepayers in Perth, East Perth, Highgate, Mt Hawthorn and Leederville have been part of the City of Perth for many years and have made substantial contributions. There are still no answers for those ratepayers. They still do not know whether or not it is intended to turn Leederville oval into a depot.

Mr Lewis: He is a very competent officer and you know it.

Mrs ROBERTS: That is not what I heard. I heard that he received a sideways shift from being the Town Clerk of the City of Stirling. The Minister should get his facts straight.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Johnson): Order!

Mrs ROBERTS: The latest I have heard in this scenario is that the Government has plans, as announced by the Premier today, to buy the R & I building in the centre of the Treasury building. Although that sounds on the surface to be an attractive idea, the increasing impost will place a burden on families and pensioners. One must ask whether this state can afford it. The Government cries poor while the burden is placed on families by way of increases in bus and train fares. The Government should assess its priorities.

Several members interjected.

Mrs ROBERTS: It might be difficult for government members to comprehend, but I was approached by a pensioner last night who said that when she catches a bus to the city her husband does not accompany her any more because it costs a dollar and they are better off saving that money. If the Minister wants to talk about revitalising the city, he might consider not increasing those transport fares.

Mr Lewis interjected.

Mrs ROBERTS: That is certainly a long way from what I am saying. I am saying the Government should get its priorities right.

Amendment to Motion

Mrs ROBERTS: I move -

That the following words be added to the motion -

but this House regrets to inform His Excellency that the Government has failed to increase funding to the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board despite an ever increasing revenue flow but has instead opted to cut back on services, reduce staff and to decommission essential firefighting equipment.

These actions have resulted in unsafe work practices being forced upon firefighters. Safety crewing numbers have been reduced below the internationally accepted minimum standards. Response times and the potential for both loss of life and property have increased as State duty officers have been relieved of their duties.

In addition, the decommissioning of secondline firefighting equipment located in strategic areas such as near hospitals has increased the potential for a major disaster.

MR CATANIA (Balcatta) [9.32 pm]: I would like to speak on this amendment.

Mr Lewis: You have not been recognised.

Point of Order

Mr BLAIKIE: Mr Acting Speaker, have you received a properly signed amendment?

The ACTING SPEAKER: I have received a signed copy.

Debate Resumed

Mr CATANIA: In speaking to this amendment -

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr CATANIA: Members opposite should have the good grace to listen and learn about the Fire Brigade. It is very important, especially for the member for Riverton. Before being elected this Government had, as central to its platform, security for the people of Western Australia in the form of law and order and emergency services.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I ask members not to interject. The member has only just started his seconding of the amendment. I ask members on the right to desist at this early stage and when they do interject they should do so one at a time.

Mr Kierath: He should have moved the amendment.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr House: You interject on more people in this Chamber than most other members.

Mr CATANIA: It is interesting to hear government members interjecting on a very important amendment.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member has not formally seconded the amendment; he should do so.

Mr CATANIA: Thank you Mr Acting Speaker; I formally second it. It is interesting that government members interject on debate on an amendment in relation to a very important matter. Funding for the Fire Brigade is such that today it cannot offer the services or provide the security for the Western Australian community it wishes. It is interesting that a government that had security as central to its platform before the last election should act in this way. It is placing a low priority on the funding of the fire brigades of this state. It is disappointing, hypocritical and callous to the Western Australian community. It has not learnt anything from the devastation which occurred in New South Wales. If New South Wales did not have the professional men and women who fought those fires and the well trained personnel to support them, the disaster would have been much more serious. It is sad, but predictable. I have seen this not only in the Fire Brigade but also in the Police Force. It is something of which the Government must stand accused.

I will direct my comments tonight to three areas - the metropolitan area, the outer metropolitan area and country areas, and examine what effect the lack of funding has had on the firefighting units of Western Australia. Earlier this year, the Industrial Relations Commission brought down a decision giving the appropriate salary levels to the professional firefighting personnel of Western Australia. The increases were to be

phased in over the next year. What was the reaction of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board to this decision? It did not ask the Government for extra funds; it knew the Minister would not give them. Even if he had wanted to give the funds to this important security unit, he knew his colleagues in Cabinet would refuse them. What did the Fire Brigades Board do? It did not try to persuade the Government to provide the funds.

Mr Wiese: You do not know what the hell you are talking about. You are ignorant.

Mr CATANIA: I am glad the Minister is in the Chamber and that he is talking about ignorance, because it is very thick with him.

Mr House interjected.

Mr CATANIA: What does the Minister damned well think he did? When members opposite talk about ignorance, both the Minister for Primary Industry and the Minister for Police can go in the same sack; both of them are thick in it.

Mr House: You can dish it out, but you can't take it.

Mr CATANIA: I can take it and I can dish it out.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr House: You are pitiful.

Mr CATANIA: It is pitiful the way the Minister and his colleague have addressed the matter. The Government has not said it will give the firefighters of this state extra money because \$3.5m is required to pay those extra wages. It has told the Fire Brigades Board to make ends meet.

Mr Wiese interjected.

Mr CATANIA: Has the Minister said anything different or should I quote from articles in the newspaper?

Mr Lewis: Is that your best reference point?

Mr CATANIA: It is here; it is the Minister's statement, quoted. It states that the board must work within its budget. Is that correct? Is that what my ignorance says, or is it the ignorance and stupidity of the Minister?

Mr Wiese: That is exactly what the board has done.

Mr CATANIA: An amount of \$3.5m is required, 75 per cent of which would have come from the insurance council; 12.5 per cent would have come from local government; and 12.5 per cent, or approximately \$400 000, would have been contributed by this Government. What does the Minister do? He tells the Fire Brigades Board that it must work within a budget. The Fire Brigades Board, knowing that it gets no support from its Minister or this Government, says that it must reduce the level of services rather than ask for extra funds. This results in the taking away of appliances and putting them off line. That means that appliances which are on active duty are put off active duty, unable to react to any emergency, to save funds. This is the reaction of the Fire Brigades Board.

The second action which has occurred is the decommissioning of second line appliances. The Minister may think I am ignorant of the situation, but I have a list of appliances that have been decommissioned at various times, on various days, in various weeks, in various months. I will supply that list to the Minister if he does not already have it and is ignorant of his own portfolio. The second line appliances are specific appliances placed at strategically located fire stations to cater for emergencies which may occur at hospitals. I point to the Fremantle station, which services the Fremantle Hospital. The residents of hospitals cannot react to a fire as quickly as healthy people. This decommissioning is occurring at Fremantle and also at Daglish, which services Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, and the Hollywood Hospital. The regular decommissioning of these appliances is occurring so that they cannot be used by the Fire Brigade. This reduces costs, but at what risk to the community and the firefighters? The Minister agrees with this reaction of the board to

put appliances off line and decommission appliances that are required in emergency services. He has not lifted a finger to supply the required funds for the Fire Brigade.

The third point I put forward is a letter given to me by one of my constituents who was on the recruiting program of the Fire Brigades Board. Owing to the lack of funds that would result from the industrial relations decision to increase the salaries of professional firefighters, the board stated that no more recruitment would take place. The letter, signed by the director of human resources of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board, states -

Thank you for applying to become a firefighter. However, since we received your application, the WA Industrial Commission brought down a decision on the 1 February approving a substantial increase for existing permanent firefighters.

This wage increase will impose major cost imposts on the Brigade and as a result the Board has had to review all its programmes, including the proposed intake of trainee firefighters in May 1994.

The letter goes on to state, with the agreement of the Minister, that the board will no longer recruit people to train as firefighters to help in the security of this state. The Minister has not lifted a finger to help the firefighters and the security of Western Australia. That matter was central to the Government's platform for election to the Treasury benches of this state.

I now turn to the outer metropolitan area, particularly to the hills area which is potentially more vulnerable than many other areas. I, and I am sure other members of this place, have been to the hills area during the summer months. I have visited the Parkerville fire station in the Mundaring Shire where the firefighters complained bitterly about their lack of equipment and the age of their existing equipment. Speakers from local government, the volunteer firefighters' organisation and other members of the community stated at a display that the equipment was antiquated. I can see Government members sitting here tonight who were present at that display. I was so disgusted that I had a photo taken with one of the pieces of equipment that was 40 years old and was due to be decommissioned the following week.

Mr Taylor: It was as old as you!

Mr CATANIA: It was nearly as old as I! The piece of equipment was a water carrying appliance which could not serve the area. Volunteer and professional firefighters need assistance, and the Government must take responsibility for that and provide the funds to ensure that the hills are not the cause of a major catastrophe in the event of a fire. The area is primed for such a disaster. The firefighters do not have the time or the resources in the months leading up to summer to ensure that the area is safe. This important issue of security for the people of Western Australia is being neglected by this Government.

Mr Wiese: Do you know who is funding it?

Mr CATANIA: I do not have time to listen to the Minister. He has not said anything sensible yet, and I do not believe he will.

In country areas the Fire Brigades Board is allowing the abandonment of safety crewing, which is an internationally recognised requirement. It usually involves four firefighters. When attending a fire, two go inside and two remain outside for backup. This internationally accepted crewing procedure has now been abandoned by the Fire Brigades Board owing to a lack of funding, with the assent of this Government and the Minister. The regional centres of Geraldton, Bunbury, Kalgoorlie and Albany should be concerned. We cannot have, as has been suggested, volunteers backing up the professionals because often the volunteers do not have the necessary equipment or training. This move will achieve a reduction in the cost to the Fire Brigades Board. It will achieve a saving, but the real cost is that it will put at risk the safety of the community and the lives of firefighters.

I can point to a number of country areas, such as Albany, where the amount of firefighting equipment and appliances will be halved. Articles in various newspapers

state that both professional and volunteer fire brigades in country areas are concerned that their appliances will be decommissioned or retired because they are old and worn out. This Government, through this Minister, is not providing the appropriate support to ensure that people in country areas have security. What is the reaction to that situation? The reaction of a member of the Liberal Party, Geoff Prosser, the member of the House of Representatives for the south west, who I believe has now been promoted to the shadow ministry, is that the fire brigades lack resources and equipment and that the Government should support the firefighters of this State - something which the Government either does not know how to do or does not have any inclination to do.

To illustrate the type of reaction that we can expect from this Minister, I turn to a media statement by the Minister for Emergency Services, dated 12 May 1994, which states -

Training for volunteer bush fire fighters received a major boost today.

Emergency Services Minister Bob Wiese was presented with a cheque for \$7,500 by the Chief State Manager of Westpac, Mr Peter O'Reilly.

That would probably buy the hose to put out a garden fire! I do not want to downgrade that donation by Westpac, but the only funding which firefighters have received from this Government is a cheque from a private institute. In the last state Budget, the funding for the Fire Brigades Board was reduced by \$200 000. That demonstrates the commitment of this Government to the firefighters of Western Australia and to the security of Western Australians. The coalition parties promised before the last election to provide a secure community for Western Australians. Members opposite are hypocritical and callous. That is the only conclusion one can draw from the way in which they have treated the Police Force and the emergency services of Western Australia.

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Leader of the Opposition) [9.53 pm]: Last week, I attended a retirement dinner for firefighters held at Burswood Resort. That function is held annually, and this time 40 firefighters were about to retire. That is the largest number to retire for many years. Almost all of the officers who spoke at that function said that they had been driven into retirement by what was happening in the Fire Brigade today.

Mr Lewis: By the superannuation laws.

Mr TAYLOR: They know that they have been left out in the cold by this Government. We have the extraordinary situation, as with the Police Force, where one of the senior officers of the Fire Brigade has retired and another has announced his retirement. Those officers, Ron Sargent and Max Castlehow, were outstanding and good leaders of the Fire Brigade in Western Australia.

Mr Lewis: They are going because of the superannuation laws.

Mr TAYLOR: That is not the point I am making now. People in senior positions in the Fire Brigade, as in the Police Force, have to be replaced as expeditiously as possible, and I urge the Minister to do that, otherwise the problems that we are now seeing in the Fire Brigade will create even more difficulties for the Minister.

I turn now to the disgraceful situation where fire officers in Western Australia have rightly obtained significant improvements in their working conditions and increases in their wages, yet have been told by the Government that if they want to see those wage increases come through, they have to find the costs involved within their budget. The consequence is that earlier this year, a range of measures was put forward to save money in fire services in Western Australia. The Secretary of the Fire Brigade Employees Union said in one of his reports that -

The lack of government support for the Western Australia Fire and Rescue Service has resulted in appliances being decommissioned on a regular basis at Fremantle, Daglish, Welshpool and to a lesser extent Perth. It has also seen ongoing reductions in Safety Crewing levels in the country. . . . The fact remains the government has not, as yet accepted the decision of the Commission it has also declined to accept its obligations to the community.

The critical issue with which we are dealing tonight is that the Government has declined to accept its obligations to the community. I understand that when those savings were proposed, the Minister said publicly and in letters that he did not approve of those measures and that he wanted the chief officers to report to him about whether they were acceptable in regard to safety; and, if not, something should be done. However, nothing has been done, and we are seeing now throughout Western Australia a range of proposals that is reducing the effectiveness and efficiency of our fire services. More importantly, the Government is also putting at risk the lives of firefighters and the lives and property of members of the community. That is not good enough.

We have the extraordinary situation where in the late 1980s, we accepted, when in government, a position of safety crewing whereby when firefighters attended a major fire, two people were required to wear breathing apparatus and two people were to be on stand-by to assist the two people who were inside the premises should something go wrong. It seemed to me as Minister at the time that not only was that eminently sensible, but also it was absolutely essential. Most fires these days involve toxic and, in some cases, deadly fumes that are emitted from the things that are burning inside the property. Therefore, it is essential that firefighters wear breathing apparatus. Earlier this year, there was a tragic situation in Queensland where two firefighters who went into a burning building became disorientated, lost their way, and died before they could be rescued. We have a situation in the major country towns of Western Australia, such as in my electorate of Kalgoorlie, in Albany, Geraldton, Bunbury, Northam -

Mr Cowan: Mt Walker.

Mr TAYLOR: I do not know about that. Firefighters are being told by their brigades that if they attend a fire and safety crewing is not in place, they should not go into the building. However, no firefighter will stand outside on the pavement when a life is at risk. It is not in a firefighter's nature to do that. Firefighters will choose to go into a fire to save a life or take people from danger. They will enter buildings in circumstances where a backup is not available. In this state - I hope it will not happen - someone may well be injured or killed, and then fingers will be pointed in every direction searching for those responsible. Also, a fire officer may be injured and he could be told, "You're not covered because you were told by the upper echelons of the brigade not to go into a fire in those circumstances. You broke the rules and it is your responsibility." That is not acceptable.

In my electorate of Kalgoorlie in June 1993 the station officer in charge found it necessary to make a public statement that "local firefighters are sick and are no longer being replaced by relief officers from Perth which leaves three instead of four officers to operate each of the two mobile rescue units". The response from Perth was that these comments were part of an industrial campaign. The senior officer in Perth said that the relief officers were no longer offered because the brigade had been told by Treasury not to overspend its budget. The senior officer also said that in no way would firefighters' lives be placed in danger; therefore, firefighters were not allowed to enter a fire with breathing apparatus until backup had arrived. If backup has not arrived, the firefighters cannot enter a fire. Members should put themselves in the place of the firefighter standing on the pavement and being told that someone may be inside a burning house. A firefighter will not say, "I will not go in until backup has arrived" - no firefighter would. They would place their lives and safety at risk.

The safety of these officers is being placed at risk on the altar of saving a few dollars at a time when the Government is flush with funds with \$135m additional revenue entering its coffers. I am told that the cost of the pay rise is estimated at \$4m, maybe less. When the Minister was asked about this issue in February of this year he said, "I am adamant that public safety should not be jeopardised by the proposal to make up the funding."

Mr Wiese: That is right.

Mr TAYLOR: The Minister is hearing tonight that public and firefighter safety is being jeopardised. Even today in Kalgoorlie they are operating one man short. The manning level should be 19 officers, and the board says it will replace the fireman who retired on

14 November 1993. However, the brigade will not send a relief officer from Perth for officers on long service, annual and sick leave and workers' compensation. Therefore, the shifts in Kalgoorlie are operating with three instead of four men. I hope the Minister can find out whether it is correct, as I was told, that the officers were instructed to attend only large property fires when outside normal working hours. Since July 1991, 374 days have involved shifts of three officers in Kalgoorlie. That is improper. It is not the way to run a fire service in Western Australia.

I was in Albany the other day and I made a point of meeting volunteer and permanent officers at their request. I am sure the Minister's colleague has made the point clearly to him that the proposal to save funds by reducing the availability of appliances in Albany is unacceptable. The suggestion made by the Fire Brigade was that the D1610 major tanker used by the volunteer firefighters be taken out of service.

Mr Wiese: Are you aware that Albany has one more tanker than any other in the state?

Mr TAYLOR: It has four; I am well aware of that. However, the board is telling officers in Albany that this appliance is hardly ever used. I am told that over the past 12 months the appliance has been used very effectively at 24 incidents. These included incidents at Albany Senior High School, the Cooperative Bulk Handling Ltd silo, a property fire, the Shell depot, three fires at Mt Melville and two fires at Mt Clarence. If the vehicle had not been available for an incident at Mt Clarence, undoubtedly homes would have been destroyed.

I have a great deal to do with the volunteer firefighters. They do not usually get angry. They are good ordinary blokes, but they became very angry. They are saying to me, "If you take away our appliances, you take away our opportunity to deal effectively with fires." They also say, "If you take away the appliances, find some new volunteers." This is the sort of issue in which the Minister should intervene. He should go to Albany and talk to the people involved. He should go to the brigade and say, "Look, I'm sorry, but this is the position." I recall many years ago when Gordon Hill was Minister for Emergency Services and a problem arose with a particular appliance which was inadequate for firefighting at Kalgoorlie. In some cases the water supply was not available or was poor. After Gordon Hill saw that the problem was a major danger, a 4 000 litre water supply vehicle was provided as a first strike appliance. This occurred because the Minister put his foot down and told the brigade to do something about it. The same situation exists in Geraldton where two firefighters are performing duties when four should be on a shift. It is totally inappropriate. I am told that the Geraldton service received 300 calls this year, which is a 25 per cent increase on last year.

It may be said that we can rely on volunteers to back up these officers, and in most cases the volunteers are more than happy to do that. However, delays arise in calling out volunteers. Anyway, people paying insurance premiums, and local authorities making contributions to the Fire Brigade, expect a return for their money; they are receiving less than that currently. They are receiving a less than appropriate return for the services required for firefighting throughout Western Australia.

During the Glendalough by-election campaign we pointed out that the Fire Brigade was forcing staff reductions at fire stations throughout Western Australia in an attempt to save \$4m, which related to a pay rise. At that time the Daglish station was under threat regarding officers available and the withdrawal of firefighting appliances. That station covers approximately 48 nursing homes, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and the Hollywood Repatriation Hospital. These issues cannot be ignored. Sadly, nobody will take real notice of these issues until something disastrous happens. That is when the fingers are pointed and accusations made. The Minister for Police is in a difficult position because he has responsibility without power, but at least as Minister for Emergency Services he has the responsibility and the power to influence this sort of decision making process. In February the Minister said he would not allow a situation to occur where lives were put at risk or the public was endangered. The Minister must stand by that statement.

The Minister surely must be aware, even from his own members, that public safety and

the safety of fire officers is being jeopardised; that a focus on withdrawing appliances, on not replacing people on leave, on sending people out on the road where they do not have the proper backup, is not on. The Fire Brigade must address these issues and, as Minister, Mr Wiese must put his foot down and say to the board, in particular, that its stance is unacceptable. As the Minister, Mr Wiese has the responsibility to find additional funds. We have only one month to the end of financial year, but I hope in the intervening period the Minister will be able at least to find the shortfall in funds to get through this month. The Minister must recognise that in the coming financial year he has no choice but to make adequate funds available to the fire service in Western Australia to ensure safe crewing and that all proper appliances are made available to firefighters. That is the responsibility Mr Wiese must accept as Minister for Emergency Services in Western Australia.

MR MARLBOROUGH (Peel) [10.11 pm]: I draw to the attention of the Minister for Emergency Services a matter which has a lot to do with the policy of governments. I am not blaming this Government for this particular incident, other than to say it has focused my attention on an anomaly which cannot continue any longer - that is, the lack of coverage for volunteer firefighters if they are unfortunate enough to die while fighting a fire, and the cause of that death cannot be directly attributed to a work related injury. Let us consider the seriousness of that situation, which we have presently in Western Australia.

Few people would realise that a large part of the metropolitan area - my electorate is a case - relies on the volunteer fire service. While we were in government we initiated a permanent professional fire station in Dixon Road, Rockingham. If one looks at the whole Kwinana industrial strip, one sees that up until that time, firefighting in Rockingham, Kwinana, Jandakot, Casuarina, and the Wattleup region was carried out by the volunteer firefighting service.

Mr Kierath: What a fantastic job they do, too.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: They do a magnificent job. The member for Riverton would know because of his close affinity with that area, both from living there and as a member on the local council. Over the past five summers there have been at least two very serious fires that have surrounded the town of Kwinana and gone over into the Wellard and Casuarina areas, which have come close to injuring people, and have certainly caused major damage to property. I can recall four years ago two brothers, who are still with the volunteer fire service, came very close to losing their lives.

I want to bring to the attention of the Minister the case of John Wake, a volunteer firefighter who died last year while fighting a fire in the Kwinana region. John Wake had given 27 years to the volunteer firefighting service. He had held all the positions within that fire service at a local level. He had been captain of the Kwinana volunteer fire brigade. He was a life member of the service. While fighting that fire in dangerous circumstances in the Kwinana industrial area he dropped dead. He was 60 years of age. The end result of Mr Wake's death was that there was no compensation for the family - none whatever. I am advised by Captain Geoff Wardby, captain of the Kwinana volunteer fire brigade unit, who is also the deputy mayor of Kwinana and has a full time job as supervisor at Alcoa of Australia Ltd, that none of the volunteer firefighters in Kwinana and Rockingham were aware that other than workers' compensation they had no coverage at all if they died on the job from natural causes. I do not think that governments should allow that to continue any longer. We must recognise that these people provide a service to the community over and above the normal call of duty. We must recognise that by doing so they save this Government, and all governments, a fortune in wages and time. It is a major saving to the State Government. Having brought this to the Minister's attention, it is urgent that we make the families of these volunteers feel secure in the knowledge that a compassionate State Government will address this issue immediately and will, if necessary, initiate a sickness and death scheme so that regardless of the circumstances, when these people are called out in a voluntary capacity they have safely tucked away in the back of their minds that if something untoward happens to them - it would not necessarily be linked to a workers' compensation claim -

at least their families will be properly and adequately looked after. Mrs Wake has not only lost a husband of some 38 years and a father to her children but she has received no form of compensation.

The volunteer firefighting system throughout Western Australia does not have a process of medical examination. I am led to believe, whether one is a volunteer in a country town or in the metropolitan area, there is no requirement for passing a medical examination. The closest they get is a conscientious captain who may ask his volunteers whether they feel well or fit. Under the present legislation voluntary firefighters do not require a medical clearance to say they are fit for the task.

The Minister should put in place a process by which these people can have some medical clearance. The Minister probably does not need to be told this, but I suggest that when he considers that medical clearance, it does not need to be the sort of medical clearance that is necessary to fight a war. We are talking about all sorts of different circumstances throughout this great state of ours where, in many instances, volunteers are very hard to find. However, a form of medical clearance is needed as part of an overall package of care that should be funded in this coming Budget.

I know it is late notice, but the Minister cannot allow a situation this coming summer where another John Wake who has finished shift work at Alcoa, is called out at seven o'clock at night to fight a fire at Kwinana, gets down to the Kwinana fire brigade headquarters in the middle of town just off Gilmore Avenue, jumps on a fire tender to go that fire, and then starts pulling out a hose and getting as close to the blaze as he can because in many instances he has fairly inadequate equipment. That is a fairly stressful situation, depending obviously on the type of fire they are fighting, even for a person with 27 years' experience.

Mr Wiese: It would be most inappropriate to blame the lack of, or inappropriate, equipment. It is the same there as for the permanent firefighters. That had nothing to do with it.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I am not suggesting that in his death it did.

Mr Wiese: You did make that most unfortunate implication.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: That was not my intention. It was my intention to use this example to highlight to the Minister circumstances which occur all over the state where there are different levels of the quality of equipment and resources for fighting fires. This should not be restricted to volunteer firefighters or volunteers in state emergency services or any other volunteer groups required by the state to provide a service. It is necessary to look at the system by which families are cared for, and not just financially. There should be an officer or a properly qualified person within the executive office of the Western Australian Fire Brigade who can sit with the family and discuss those things which may be concerning them in a kind and compassionate way. In these circumstances all that happened was that Mrs Wake simply received a letter from the board. The board sent a letter to Captain Warby and to Mrs Wake informing her the board's insurer would not approve the claim because the heart attack was not due to natural causes and no post mortem was conducted.

Mr Wiese: You are aware that there are counsellors within the WAFB and within the volunteers who are specially trained to counsel firefighters in the rural and metropolitan areas.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I am glad the Minister pointed that out. If they are there, the John Wake case might indicate they are not being used for the voluntary service.

Mr Wiese: There are volunteers trained for that role. I accept what you are saying, that there has been a fall down there. Those people go to the metropolitan area and have special training in counselling for the dreadful situations they have to deal with.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Kwinana-Rockingham is part of the metropolitan area. It is not good enough for a deceased's wife in this instance to receive simply a letter from the fire brigade. Captain Warby tells me that Mrs Wake has had no official contact from the

offices of the Fire Brigade other than in writing. That should be rectified. I suggest it is not too late to rectify that situation and that some appropriate recognition of what John Wake provided to this state as a volunteer for 27 years would not go astray.

Mr Marshall: How do you stop a person like John Wake from doing the activities he did? Are you suggesting there is an age limit of 55 years? There are some people to whom you could say, "Medically you should not keep doing this," but they will do it anyway.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I thought I covered that area earlier.

Mr Marshall: I have been here the whole time.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I thought I had covered it adequately by suggesting to the Minister a medical examination should be carried out on a regular basis through legislation which stated that if a person does not pass he should not do the work. It is a case of "Thanks for the offer, but no thanks". It is far better that they be told. Some people feel very well, and it is not until a medical examination is carried out that they realise they have a heart condition or whatever. So it is far better they are told and stay alive than lose their life on a job.

Mr Wiese: I do not know whether you are aware of the circumstances, but I need to explain to you and the House that Mr Wake had previously had a bypass operation.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I knew that but was not going to say it. Now the Minister has raised it; I did not think it important to the overall point I was making.

Mr Wiese: To give the House the real context of what you are saying it should be aware of all the circumstances and not part of them.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Where we beg to differ is this: Regardless of whether he had a history of heart problems, which highlights the necessity for a procedure which would not have allowed him to carry on in a volunteer capacity, in the circumstances in which he died there is no financial coverage whatsoever, which is not a proper recognition of the work these people do. Overall it seems a dollars and cents question. The volunteers represent a major saving to the state. We have all heard it said many times that if one puts a dollar into a voluntary organisation one can multiply by five the benefit we get back in the community, and possibly more in the case of an organisation such as the volunteer fire brigade. I will not go on further but just commend this to the Minister, and maybe this evening he might like to assure the House. I know he is aware of the case. There has been written correspondence, and he may be able to indicate the willingness on the part of the Government to look at this matter as a trigger to bring into action this financial year an insurance coverage for people in these circumstances.

Mr Marshall: He would not get insurance.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Mr Wake would not have been in the service if he had had a medical. I am speaking of an overall insurance policy that covers these sorts of circumstances which may happen in the future and that will, I can assure the Minister, put to rest a great deal of concern in the volunteers' minds, who suddenly discovered they did not have the coverage they thought they had. It is not good enough to say to those volunteers, "If you want that sort of coverage, you go out and get it yourselves." That is not the answer. That is not demonstrating our bona fides as governments running this state, that we recognise the inputs and benefits they give to the state when carrying out their jobs.

MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell) [10.29 pm]: The fires which occurred on the east coast of Australia last year and the immediate vision of them that we had as a result of the wonders of television and communications very much demonstrated the enormous debt all of us owe to those involved in fire fighting and the fact that if firefighters are properly resourced and supported they can do an enormous job in defending the safety and the property of the public at large. Considering the real threat that existed, the valuable job they performed, and the television coverage given to it, firefighting services should have been the flavour of the month with government support.

Mr Shave: What did your government do after the South Australian bushfires?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I want to deal with the situation now.

Mr Shave: The member has a poor memory.

Mr D.L. SMITH: It is not a question of having a poor memory. I want to deal with what this Government did, which was criminal. Those members of Cabinet and people like the member who support them acted criminally in deliberately preventing our firefighters from doing their job. It was done to demonstrate their toughness when it comes to pay rises in the public sector. It is nothing more than a philosophical view of how the public sector should be run, with the result that the safety of Western Australians is being sacrificed.

Mr Shave: There is no money, you lost it all.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The member for Melville states there is no money. Is he not aware that the state Budget is \$120m in surplus?

Mr Kierath: It is being used to repay the debt of the Opposition when in government.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Government's philosophical view of debt is more important than the safety of Western Australians and the working conditions and morale of those whose job it is to save the public when a risk from fire occurs.

Mr Kierath: Has the member apologised for the Opposition's actions in government?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Earlier in this reply debate I spoke about the Jonah representing SECWA, the Minister for Energy, the Leader of the House, blackout Barnett. When it comes to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, he reminds me of Pontius Pilate who made the plea which was absolutely ineffective in saving Christ. When the plea was not heard, he washed his hands of the issue and took no responsibility for it.

Mr Wiese: That reminds me of the last Labor government in this state.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I hope the Minister will tell us something about the decision making processes within this Cabinet. Why is it that he persistently fails to obtain the support of Cabinet for his portfolio responsibilities? Is it because he is a National Party Minister? Is there a problem for all National Party Ministers in Cabinet?

Mr Wiese: We have to sit here and listen to this sort of garbage.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Once upon a time people in the country knew what the National Party stood for and it was very strong. In 15 months the National Party vote in state politics in Western Australia has been halved.

Mr Shave: How is the Labor Party vote going?

Mr D.L. SMITH: It is on the increase. As people feel the effect -

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mitchell will resume his seat. Earlier this evening the Speaker made it very clear about the level of interjections, and if he were in this chair what has been going on for the last 10 minutes would not have been tolerated at all. I am not tolerating that now. I will not allow a shouting match across the Chamber. I ask members to cooperate.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The National Party vote in this state has halved since the last election for two reasons: One is that the National Party Ministers are dryer and less interested in protecting country interests than any of the Liberal Ministers. It is either that or they are being rolled in Cabinet because of their inability to advance any of their electorates' needs and their inability to advance the traditional concerns of the National Party. Nowhere is there more evidence of an ineffective National Party Minister than the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

Let us look at the origins of the amendment before us. On 11 February 1994 *The West Australian* ran the heading "Brigade tipped to cut staff over pay" -

The WA Fire Brigade may cut its work force by 10 per cent and reduce the number of fire engines in some suburban stations so it can pay for a big wage rise for fire fighters.

We all know what should happen when a Minister's agency is responsible for that sort of problem. The Minister is expected to go to Cabinet, Treasury and the Premier, explaining an unexpected pay rise and seeking an increase in his budget allocation, commonly called applying for an excess.

Mr Wiese: Does he then go to the insurance companies and ask them to do the same?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Another article in *The West Australian* of 15 March 1994 titled "100 fires probed amid job cut fear" states -

"Budget cuts and inadequate resources are putting the lives of firefighters and the community under serious risk," he said.

"It is sheer lunacy.

A spokesman for Police and Emergency Services Minister Bob Wiese said Cabinet had discussed WA's big number of fires yesterday and had asked Mr Wiese to make a formal submission next week.

What was he going to make a formal submission to Cabinet about the following week? Was it to say there were too many bushfires in Western Australia and something needed to be done about it? Was it because of so many bushfires that a real danger and risk resulted from these job cuts, and he was going to Cabinet to explain that and seek extra resources? In March I presume the Minister did what his office said he was going to do - that is, go to Cabinet with a submission to deal with the crisis. Two and a half months later the Opposition wants to know what Cabinet's response was to the Minister's approach and submission. What was the Minister's submission? What did he ask for and what did he get?

Mr Wiese: Is the member reading the whole of the article or trying to mislead Parliament?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I will read the whole article -

State Government plans to axe 84 firefighting jobs could put the lives of the public and firefighters at grave risk, United Fire Fighters Union secretary Milton Kirk said yesterday.

His warning came as a police arson squad spokesman said that up to 40 officers were investigating about 100 fires in the metropolitan area during the past month.

Mr Kirk said WA faced a NSW-type bushfire type disaster unless there were increases in fire fighting manpower and equipment.

Firefighters at last weekend's Walliston bushfire had worked up to seven hours without relief or refreshment.

"Budget cuts and inadequate resources are putting the lives of firefighters and the community under serious risk," he said.

"It is sheer lunacy.

A spokesman for Police and Emergency Services Minister Bob Wiese said Cabinet had discussed WA's big number of fires yesterday and had asked Mr Wiese to make a formal submission next week.

Arson squad Det-Sgt George Putland said police believed several people had lit fires. He urged residents in high-risk areas to watch for strangers in vehicles parked near bush.

The article goes on to outline what the police were doing. Further on the article reads -

Fire brigade officers backed police calls for more public vigilance to halt this year's record number of deliberately-lit fires.

It then outlined what they needed in that respect. The article then states -

Brigade media liaison officer Rob Cox said there had been about 1900 WA bushfires this year, including 40 big ones.

Between 70 and 90 per cent of them had been deliberately lit, he said.

Mr Cox said extensive media coverage of the NSW fires had contributed to WA's problem.

I have not excluded anything relating to what the Minister's office said about the Minister going to Cabinet. The Opposition wants the Minister to explain the details of the submission he took to Cabinet and its response. I believe that the Minister was simply rolled in Cabinet in the same way he and his National Party brethren have been consistently rolled in Cabinet since this Government was elected. Whatever the Minister asked for he did not get, but the Opposition wants to know what he asked for and what he thinks he was given. This is not the only example I can give relating to firefighting. The Minister knows that immediately after the fires in the east nearly all the volunteer fire brigades in Western Australia expressed concern about the condition of their equipment. The Minister knows that they met him and most of them and the local authorities wrote to him. He also knows that he made reassuring sounds to them about how he would go to Cabinet to get the extra funds allocated for their equipment needs. What did they get? Again, I invite the Minister to take the opportunity of this debate to tell the House what he actually took to Cabinet and what was the response from his Cabinet colleagues. I suspect he was told that the equipment needs of volunteer fire brigades is a local government responsibility and the State Government will continue only the Lotteries Commission funded program which was initiated by the previous government.

Another response the Minister received from Cabinet was to initiate a review of the Bush Fires Act, which he has been advertising in recent days. One of the terms of reference of that review is the functions, roles and responsibilities of the board and local government in fire prevention and suppression. The Minister can correct me when he responds to this debate, but I am sure that all he got when he went to Cabinet with a submission to improve the equipment needs of volunteer fire brigades was that it was a local government responsibility. His political response was that he did not get any assistance from Cabinet, but he will set up a committee of inquiry so that he can make reassuring noises to volunteer fire brigades and tell them after the inquiry that the equipment needs will be reviewed. He will do that in the knowledge that this year's Budget is already set and that any review he undertakes is not likely to be implemented for some time. Considering the normal response the Minister receives from Cabinet when he is seeking funding for the portfolios which come under his responsibility it is possible that the Minister will not receive any funding at all.

I ask the Minister why he has not responded to some of the comments that have been made in the media. If Fire Brigade officers make public statements in the Press about the safety of people in Bunbury and the fact that their department is understaffed and under-resourced, surely he should respond through the media to those allegations. He might have said that the allegations were exaggerated or untrue. As far as I am aware, and in spite of the statements of the officer in charge at Bunbury, the Minister has not responded. In response to the Bunbury situation the union said that lives and property might be put at risk as a direct result of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board's instructions not to maintain crew levels -

Mr Kierath: What is your source of information?

Mr D.L. SMITH: My source of information is from the newspaper and speaking to the staff at Bunbury about the situation. I have no doubt at all that the Minister for Labour Relations was responsible for the dry response given to the union about pay rises. However, I want to know why the Minister for Emergency Services has not responded to the allegations which have been made. Why does he allow statements to be made by the operational staff that they are understaffed and under-resourced and that people on leave are not being replaced? Why has not the Minister responded to the union's comments? It is reported in the Press that Mr Kirk said that crew levels have been allowed to fall below accepted safety standards.

In *The West Australian* of 13 March 1994 there was a warning of what would happen in Bunbury because on this occasion the union said -

In Bunbury the crew levels have been below accepted safety levels every day since February 20 . . .

That is for 21 days. What was the reason that the staff levels at Bunbury were below an accepted level between 20 February and 13 March? Is it not true that they have continued to be understaffed almost constantly since that date? Why is that situation allowed to continue; why are the staff at Bunbury who are on annual leave not being replaced; and what does the Minister expect the staff to do under these circumstances? The staff are sworn to protect the community. As good firefighters that is their duty. I have no doubt that there are civil minded officers who are not taking annual leave because they do not want the public to be put at risk because they know they will not be replaced while they are on leave.

Why did the Minister not receive the money when he went to Cabinet in March; why did he not receive money to upgrade the volunteer fire brigades' equipment; and why has the Minister not responded to any of the allegations made in country newspapers about the dangerous situation created by this Government? How can members on the front bench, in the knowledge that there are surplus funds of \$120m this year, say that reducing debt is more important than protecting the community? Is this an example of this Government at work? Reduction in debt and philosophical views about how the state should be run and whether workers should be given wage rises, regardless of whether they are in the public or private sector, completely dominate this Government. It is adopting an immoral stance. Simply because these people were granted a wage rise they were told that they would have to pay the consequences through the loss of 84 jobs and by putting the safety of Western Australians at risk.

The allegations which have been made are serious and the Minister has a responsibility to explain why he failed to persuade Cabinet that it should not allow the prevailing situation to continue. What happened when he went to Cabinet in March; what happened when he went to Cabinet seeking funds to improve firefighting equipment; and when will the situation at Bunbury be rectified?

MR WIESE (Wagin - Minister for Emergency Services) [10.50 pm]: A helluva lot of bull-dust has been spoken in this House tonight, and that in the last 20 minutes was probably a classic example of the comments we have been hearing in relation to these issues from the opposition side of the House. I deal first with the matters raised by the member for Peel, whose concerns were genuine and should be addressed by me in response to the comments made on this proposed amendment.

We were told during the debate that Mr Wake had died while attending a fire. I understand it was a hazard reduction burn, but he was certainly working as a volunteer and died of a heart condition while performing that role. As I indicated by interjection, the matter is not as simple as indicated by the member for Peel because, unfortunately, unknown to most people, Mr Wake had had a coronary bypass operation prior to the incident. The event that occurred was most unfortunate and was possibly precipitated by the fact that he was engaged in volunteer firefighting activity. The matter of compensation in this case has been taken up by me. I have not received any correspondence on the matter but I was made aware of the situation about two weeks ago when I met people from the WA Volunteer Fire Brigades Association. I told them I would take up the matter, and I believe there is a chance that compensation will be paid, although I am not making any promises along those lines. A similar event occurred in the Donnybrook area earlier in the year and I understand that compensation has been paid in that case. If it was possible in that case, it should be possible in Mr Wake's case also. I am following it through and will advise the member of the results.

Mr Marlborough: You said you have not received any correspondence. I wonder whether something is going wrong in your office because I have in front of me a note that the Mayor of Kwinana, John Slinger, wrote to you on 28 April. I see from my notes that a letter was sent from Captain Geoff Waudby from the volunteer fire brigade.

Mr WIESE: I am not aware of that, but I will follow it up. I am aware of it via the volunteer association meeting. I am 99 per cent sure that those letters have not come

across my desk. The other matter raised by the member for Peel, which relates directly to this matter, is the need for some medical check. I believe this incident highlights the need for something of this nature, and the matter will be considered. However, we must be very careful that by going down that path we do not introduce health requirements that will discourage volunteers from taking part in these organisations and performing their role, which is so essential. I thank the member for Peel for raising that matter.

Mr Marlborough: What about the third issue of sickness and death policies outside compensation?

Mr WIESE: I will follow through the rest before pursuing that line. I am not sure it is a sensible way to go. They have coverage under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act as volunteers -

Mr Marlborough: Are you suggesting the workers' compensation Act can be used to cover a death in those circumstances?

Mr WIESE: That is my understanding. The coverage is there in this case and the same applies to the bush fire brigade.

Mr Marlborough: Are you saying that a precedent has already been set in a similar incident at Collie?

Mr WIESE: The difference is that the incident in Collie involved the bush fire brigade and this case involves the volunteer fire brigade. Otherwise the incidents are very similar.

Mr Marlborough: Are you pursuing the issue of the use of workers' compensation for appropriate coverage?

Mr WIESE: We are investigating whether workers' compensation can be made to this person. In relation to some of the other matters raised, I think we need first of all to straighten out some of the comments. In many cases the statements made in this House tonight were totally and absolutely false. Following the pay increase granted to the permanent fire brigade officers, a substantial hole was left in Fire Brigades Board's 1993-94 budget allocation, despite the fact that the Fire Brigades Board had made a funding allocation of \$750 000 to cover any potential wage rises resulting from a decision by the industrial court. The wage rise was far above expectation and certainly left the board in a very tricky financial situation. As a result, the board set out to develop a means of handling the financial situation with which it was faced. It made a proposal which would have entailed decommissioning three fire fighting appliances from Fremantle, Daglish, and Welshpool, and some subsequent changes. One of those subsequent changes was to postpone the recruitment of new members into the fire brigade. That proposal was brought to me and given preliminary approval, pending guarantees that it would not affect the safety of firefighters or the community.

A week later I was approached by the chief officer of the Western Australian Fire Brigade, Max Castlehow, who indicated he was concerned that going down the path recommended by the board would put at risk either public safety or the fire brigade members themselves, in the event of an emergency in which the whole brigade in the metropolitan area was stretched to the limit. Immediately I became aware of Mr Castlehow's concerns, I instructed the board not to proceed with its proposal. I asked the board to put forward a further proposal that would address its financial problems in such a way as not to jeopardise the safety of the public of Western Australia, the metropolitan area or the firefighters concerned. I said that original proposal was not to go ahead and I wanted the board to suggest measures to address the problem, which measures should be developed in conjunction with the Fire Brigade Employees Union. In total contradiction of the comments made in this House by members opposite, the reality is that I called a halt to the board's proposal and asked it to develop further proposals which would in no way jeopardise the safety of anyone concerned.

Mr Taylor: It is not the situation. That is our point. It is not the situation in Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, Bunbury or Albany. They are four examples where the numbers are not being pruned in the way they should be.

Mr WIESE: I will address that situation. I have outlined the situation that the Fire Brigades Board was told to deal with, and it has dealt with that situation in a very adequate manner. It has consulted the Fire Brigades Employees Union.

Mr Taylor: You have been misled.

Mr WIESE: I must acknowledge that for the first time in a long time the board and the union have addressed the problem as a group. The problem had the potential to impact on union members. As a result of discussions and negotiations over a couple of months, they have come to me with proposals that will result in a saving of almost \$1m in the operations of the Fire Brigade. I give both sides full praise and acknowledgement for the way they have acted. As a result of the measures that have been adopted the budget for the Fire Brigade in 1993-94 will come in on target. The brigade will not face an overrun. Credit must be given to the board and to the brigade members for the way in which that situation has been reached. I acknowledge that as a result of some measures at times officers have not been replaced, especially in country areas but also in the metropolitan area. I will inform the House about how fire stations are manned.

The Albany, Geraldton and Bunbury stations have 15 permanent firefighters. Those numbers cover the shifts and include two relief firefighters. We have built into the manning levels relief firefighters to address the situation when officers are on sick leave, recreation leave or long service leave. At times the numbers have dropped to three. If the numbers drop to two - and that has happened - either officers are called back on duty and paid overtime or, ideally, the station officer is instructed to call in volunteers to ensure safety manning levels. In each station, volunteer fire brigade members work alongside the permanent officers. Between 10 and 20 volunteer members are available on call. I understand that in many cases the fire officer has not called in these volunteers because the permanent officers are running an industrial campaign against the board. It appears they are using the volunteer firefighters as pawns in that campaign. The station officers would prefer to jeopardise the safety of the permanent officers rather than call in volunteers to make up the manning levels in those situations. It is absolutely deplorable. I hope that at some stage commonsense will prevail and the permanent officers will cease their industrial campaign and utilise the services of the available volunteers who are trained to carry out that sort of work. Some of the statements that have been made in this House are simply not true.

I turn now to the comments by the member for Balcatta, many of which were absolute nonsense, and that is being charitable. He said that wage increases are to be phased in over the next year. That is not the case. Wages were backdated by something like six months, so the impact was not just wages from the date of the increase recommended by the Industrial Relations Commission. The back payment of wages had a substantial impact, so the argument put forward by the member for Balcatta was wrong. I told the Fire Brigades Board that its responsibility is to work within its budget. I have not said that it should reduce services. It is nonsense for the member for Balcatta to make such comments. As I said earlier, I told the board that it must not reduce its services and it must not jeopardise the safety either of the general public or the firefighters.

The member for Balcatta also said that I or the board - I am not sure which - said that there would be no more recruitment. I have explained that recruitment was put on hold, and it now gives me pleasure to tell the House that at this moment the board is calling for recruits to attend a school which will start either in late August or early September. Again, the comments by the member for Balcatta are nonsense.

I wish to deal with a couple of other matters, one of which relates to a lack of equipment, especially in the hills area. I said that the member for Balcatta was ignorant, because he was certainly acting as though he was ignorant. Members should realise that all through the hills area we are dealing with bush fire brigades, not permanent fire brigades. There is one volunteer fire brigade in the area, but the bush fire brigades are funded totally by the local government authority. Those brigades receive nothing from the Government, and they never have. While the member for Mitchell was speaking, I indicated that for the first time funding will be made available in the Budget to upgrade the equipment for the bush fire brigades. That is another substantial achievement by this Government.

Mr Taylor: What about the safety in the ordinary Fire Brigade? That will go a long way. And what about safety manning?

Mr WIESE: Safety manning is operating.

Dr Gallop: It is not operating in my district.

Mr WIESE: It has not changed.

Mr Taylor: It has changed dramatically.

Mr WIESE: For the first time, funding will be made available to the bush fire brigades, and that is a great achievement. As to a Budget announcement or asking the Treasury to provide extra funding to deal with the shortfall in funds for the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board, members should appreciate the real situation. If I were to go to Cabinet and recommend that we accept the totality of the wage rise foisted upon us by the Industrial Relations Commission, it would be easy for the Government to pick up one-eighth of the funding. If I recommended that situation, local government and the insurance industry would have to pick up the other seven-eighths. I did not make the easy decision just to get our one-eighth share from the Government and let the community pick up rest. I made the hard decision and said to the board, "You go back in there and negotiate a solution which will not impact on the whole, wide community." I acknowledge and sing the praises of the board, because that is exactly what it has done.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (19)

Mr M. Barnett
Mr Brown
Mr Catania
Dr Gallop
Mr Graham
Mrs Hallahan
Mrs Henderson

Mr Kobelke
Mr Marlborough
Mr McGinty
Mr Riebeling
Mr Ripper
Mrs Roberts
Mr D.L. Smith

Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Ms Warnock
Dr Watson
Mr Leahy (*Teller*)

Noes (26)

Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr Blaikie
Mr Board
Mr Bradshaw
Dr Constable
Mr Court
Mr Cowan
Mrs Edwardes
Mr House

Mr Johnson
Mr Kierath
Mr Lewis
Mr Marshall
Mr McNee
Mr Minson
Mr Omodei
Mr Osborne
Mr Pandal

Mr Prince
Mr W. Smith
Mr Strickland
Mr Tubby
Dr Turnbull
Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Wiese
Mr Bloffwitch (*Teller*)

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell) [11.14 pm]: Members will be pleased to know that an arrangement has been made behind the Chair that, although I am the last speaker from this side of the House in the debate on the Address-in-Reply, I will not be moving any amendment. This debate is meant to be in relation to the address given to the Legislative Council at the opening of Parliament by the Governor. I will start my speech by going to the end of the Governor's speech, to the section under the heading of "Conclusion". The Governor seems to have added a few comments of his own to a speech which, no doubt, was prepared by the Ministry of Premier and Cabinet for him. The address says -

Since becoming Governor, I have had the opportunity to travel some of the state's enormous distances and to meet its cheerful, self-reliant and friendly people. I was reminded at first-hand of a truth too often forgotten; that is, the most important resource is our people.

From what I have seen and those I have met, I have nothing but confidence for Western Australia's future. By working together under the guidance and management of a caring and principled Parliament, Western Australians will achieve great things in the years ahead.

I have to say that despite my great respect for the member for Pilbara, I did not entirely agree with his remarks about the ability of the Governor to speak out on some matters that may be of concern to the Governor and on which he believes he should be giving leadership. The speech of the member for Pilbara was timely. There are some restrictions in terms of what the Governor should be saying. He has to remember that at this time he is the Queen's representative and to that extent what he says as the Queen's representative has to be said in the context of his having that responsibility.

However, I was intrigued as to why in his address he referred to a caring and principled Parliament and not to a caring and principled Executive. Was it that he was just talking to the Parliament or does he not regard the qualities required by Executive Government as being the same in terms of being principled? It is timely, less than a month since the opening of Parliament, to look at whether we have a principled Parliament.

When we talk about a principled Parliament, we could have two approaches to the issue. We could look at the constitutional and electoral base of the Parliament and ask whether it is a Parliament that is based on real democratic principles. We all know that our Parliament is not based on proper democratic principles. To that extent it is a very unprincipled Parliament. We know that the conservative forces in this state have maintained continuous control of this Parliament through having a gerrymandered Legislative Council since 1890. There is no way that this Parliament can claim to be principled while the gerrymander continues to exist. The second approach is whether this Parliament, in terms of its responsibilities to the people of Western Australia as partly identified by the royal commission, is really discharging its duties in a principled way. We have to look no further than the editorial in *The West Australian* newspaper - a newspaper that is no friend of the Opposition in this state - of 2 June to see whether it believes that this Government and this Parliament is acting in an principled way. In part, the editorial states -

The king hit delivered yesterday to the WA royal commission's key recommendations on political reform is an indelible blot on an already tarnished record.

By restricting investigations of the proposed Commission on Government to matters of corruption, it has knocked out many of the terms of reference that COG was expected to examine and which the royal commission said should be looked at as part of an overhaul of the State's political, parliamentary and administrative institutions.

In the process, the Government has made a mockery of the Parliament's committee system. Government MPs who control the legislation committee which called for changes to the contentious COG clause have been told to act like party hacks and toe the line.

Later, it states -

This decision ignores the royal commission's grave assessment that many of the era's shameful events could be repeated unless sweeping changes were made to WA's institutions, laws and practices.

It goes on to talk about the fact that this Government is not serious about any of the reforms that are required to make this Parliament the proper place that it should be.

The Governor was right in identifying the people of Western Australia as being our most important resource. He was also right in saying that we ought to have confidence in the future of Western Australia because of the people who live here. However, as *The West Australian* has made clear, if we claim to be the representatives of the people in the Parliament, we are very much failing in our duty and we are not a principled Parliament. We have not heeded the warnings of the Commission on Government. We have

confirmed that we as parliamentarians and this Government believe that Parliament should be nothing more than the party hack of the Government of the day; that we should do its bidding and not observe our primary responsibility of good government for the people of Western Australia, who should be our real masters and who are our best resource if we require guidance on how we should be behaving as a principled Parliament.

There is a real malaise with the Government of the day. It takes some time to get used to Opposition, if one ever does. It is a frustrating and, in many respects, demeaning experience because of the way in which this Parliament is used by the Government, which does not believe that the Parliament has precedence over the Executive. It becomes frustrating when a member tries to do his best to serve his electorate and cannot get issues before the Parliament in a way that they deserve and cannot get the Government to heed the real needs and aspirations of the people of Western Australia as reflected in his own electorate.

Mr Omodei: How many times have you been rejected on approaching a Minister?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I have felt an enormous frustration in a number of respects. Firstly, when one goes for election, one honestly believes that the promises that are made to the electorate are the basis upon which people make their political decisions. If we had the integrity that a principled Parliament should have, each of us who is elected on the basis of promises should be willing to honour those promises. The sad fact is that, in respect of every major promise made to the people of the south west and to the people of Bunbury, the Government has failed to deliver. I will outline some of those promises.

A promise was made that a regional south west Minister would be retained in the incoming Government. That promise was abrogated almost immediately on the election of the Government. The then Opposition - now the Government - was committed to a privately owned and operated 600 megawatt coal fired power station. That promise was immediately abrogated and replaced with a 300 megawatt publicly owned and publicly funded power station. We were promised that the \$48m regional hospital would proceed as planned and designed by the previous Government.

That promise has been abrogated. Today in Bunbury we learnt that we are to have simply a hospital with 100 beds as against the 120 beds in the previous public hospital and that it will have an accident emergency service and intensive care beds, but beyond that there is no guarantee that the hospital will have any services of its own. All the other services to be provided in that hospital will be available for tender to private enterprise. That is a very far cry from a Government built and operated hospital to provide the quality of service that we should have in Bunbury. Yet the Government takes pride in the fact that it will cut health expenditure in Bunbury and the cost of the hospital, and then it talks in a glib, rhetorical way as though it is providing some new and additional services as a result of the savings that it will make. As far as I can see from the report today, there is not one new service that was not going to be provided in the previously promised hospital.

Again, where is the principle and morality of a Government that goes to the people of Bunbury and Mitchell on the promise of providing that publicly owned and operated fully equipped hospital and then decides to renege on the promise in the way that it has? Instead of the hospital being opened about now, as it would have been had the promise been honoured, we are told today that negotiations will now start on the design of the hospital and the provision of the various services in the hospital.

Those sorts of broken promises by themselves are one thing, but there has also been a tradition that commitments made by previous governments and Ministers upon which people have acted will be honoured. Time and time again with this Government in respect of Bunbury and its region commitments made by previous Ministers are being dishonoured. I will outline for the information of the House two small examples that demonstrate the meanness and the unprincipled conduct of this Government.

As the Minister for the South-West, I made a commitment that I would provide \$10 000

for the Bunbury Repertory Club to enable it to put in a new floor and provide some new seating in its local theatre. As a result of that undertaking, that club spent \$9 500 on the work. I believe that \$5 000 was provided just after I left office and the club provided the receipts to the South West Development Authority only to be told that that commitment would not be met. An amount of \$4 000 to a Government with a Budget of \$6b is not a great amount of money, but an explanation is required when a small community organisation acting in good faith on the commitment of a Minister of the day to go ahead and spend that money finds that it cannot recoup it from the incoming Government. The Government of the day needs to examine its conscience as to whether it has acted in a principled and an honourable way.

Mr Omodei: Have you approached the Minister about it? I don't think you have approached any Ministers.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I was not informed that the club had been refused that money until I happened to be sitting next to its president at the Bunbury City Council dinner last weekend. I noticed that the Minister for Local Government was not at that dinner.

Mr Omodei: When was that?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Saturday.

Mr Omodei: I had a family commitment.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Minister had a commitment that was too important to allow him to travel to Bunbury.

Mr Omodei: I had a family commitment and nothing is more important to me than family commitments.

Mr D.L. SMITH: We all believe that, but we all know we have an obligation to discharge our duties. That is what we are paid for in a way. In the oath of undertaking we are sworn in as Ministers and we know our families suffer as a result. However, I am more concerned at the harm done to that local theatre group.

The second situation I want to identify is the Australind senior citizens centre. They have been trying for a number of years to build a centre for themselves at Australind. They obtained some grants from the Lotteries Commission and support from their local authority and undertook their own fund raising. However, again they had a commitment from me, as the Minister, with the approval of the Premier of the day to contribute \$50 000 to their project. With the change of Government they were told that commitment no longer stood and they could have \$10 000 rather than the \$50 000. As a result they must redesign their building to accommodate the shortfall in funding. I know we play hard-ball politics, but the tradition was that if commitments of that kind were given by previous governments which the organisations concerned had acted on in good faith, the incoming government would honour those commitments. I find it immoral that an incoming government should simply say that it does not have to honour that even though an amount was promised by the previous government.

If we did that in relation to some of the state and business agreements we enter into, we would rapidly find that businesses would stop dealing with us. With a change of government they expect that previous state agreements will be adhered to. I believe that the small community organisations in Western Australia, such as the Bunbury Repertory Club and the Australind senior citizens, should not be treated any more adversely than we would treat businesses dealing with us as a government. I do not believe that this Executive Government can claim to be acting in a principled way when it is so small minded.

Mr C.J. Barnett: There is a major distinction between a formal commitment and a promise. In my own portfolios I have had to distinguish between the two on numerous occasions.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I have no problem with that in terms of a generalised promise. However, where a specific proposition is put to the Minister and is committed to in writing, as was done in both cases, and it is not honoured I have grave concern about the

principles of the government involved. I am sure that neither the repertory club nor the Australind senior citizens would have the bad grace to express their view to the government of the day. Nonetheless, I express it in the strongest possible terms.

The other frustration I have suffered in opposition is that I have had to recast some of my views of what impacts on people and what they regard as valuable. Without being too pious, I thought I entered Parliament to ensure that ordinary people retained some equality of opportunity in the community, in decision making and in having bargaining power with their employers and that we could afford to properly protect it. We should also be able to ensure that those who become ill or are injured by various means will be provided with a level of protection. I must confess that I am amazed there has been so little public reaction to the very extreme measures which appear to be nothing more than philosophical concepts of this Government. Quite frankly, in terms of whether I have been able to honour the commitment I felt I was making when I was first elected, I have been a failure. If I feel some angst at WA Inc, it is not the angst people may expect; it is the angst brought about by knowing that the concepts of WA Inc had much to do with the change of government and the loss of protection for the people of Western Australia that I thought I was going into Parliament to safeguard. As I was part of the government of the day I must accept responsibility for the loss of many of those things that the people of Western Australia should have been entitled to regard as their proper and democratic rights.

Mr Omodei: Why did you not admit that before the last election?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I very much worry for the character of our country. Under the kind of government we have in this state and the Kennett Government in Victoria - it seems to be continuing in South Australia and certainly in Tasmania - we are irretrievably changing the character of our nation. No longer are we a community of mates who looked out for each other and shared the wealth or benefits we might have accrued from our experience in this country. We have become a selfish, numbers driven community that determines what we wish to do only by the dollar. We have reached the stage where quality of life, qualities of service and the opportunity for people to prosper are lost in the belief that everything must be dominated by somehow being competitive with whatever overseas country we wish to compare ourselves.

We used to pride ourselves on being different on the basis that we had institutions, a democracy and wage and legal systems which were different in character and kind to the rest of the world. We were brave enough to say that we had the best there was and I believe we did. This ideologically driven conservative government is simply dragging us down where the only consideration seems to be how money can be saved, irrespective of the impact on the quality of service and how we can change the bargaining powers within our communities so that those who do not have capital are simply the play things of those who do. People may regard that as a language of the thirties that has no place in our society today.

Mr Kierath: You are in a time warp.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I can only say that if that is the case, I am in a time warp and perhaps I should be considering my future in Parliament. I do not believe I can commit myself to that kind of country, government or Parliament.

If that was not bad enough, look at the way we approach our Aboriginal people in this country. We used to look at apartheid in South Africa and say that we were more principled. That was fine when the legal system said that our Aboriginal people had no real claim or place in our society. We seem to forget how long it was before we made them citizens or before we gave them the right to vote. However, lo and behold we congratulate ourselves for giving them the status of citizens, but the moment our highest legal institution in the land, the High Court, finds that those people have rights to property which none of us expected, in terms of past legal decisions, the response of our community and of this Parliament is that no matter what the High Court rules, Aboriginal people cannot claim their land rights. We are going to take it away without compensation or regard for whatever legal rights one is found to have. I cannot believe

that in terms of any international obligations to which the state says it adheres, and any of the democratic and humanitarian principles to which it used to aspire, that action can in any way be justified. If the Governor wants to show leadership, as the previous Governor Sir Francis Burt did on the Aboriginal issue, this is one issue upon which I would welcome the opportunity to hear the Governor's views about the conduct of this State Government in relation to the expropriation of the rights of the Queen's subjects - the Aboriginal people - in this state.

For a conservative government, this Government seems to have turned itself on its head. The conservatives used to be those who safeguarded institutions in our community. This State Government and State Parliament have sought to denigrate the institution of the High Court and to denigrate even the concept of this country, Australia. There are times in this Parliament when I feel that the Government is telling us that it is more important to be Western Australian than Australian. I say in this Parliament, on the basis that it may be a principled place one day, that I am an Australian first, and a Western Australian second. I will do nothing to interfere with our federation and the way in which it operates.

Mr Kierath: That is a bad case of sour grapes.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Minister may call it sour grapes, but I think the Governor, who as an Australian army officer fought in Vietnam for this country, would recognise with me that our federation is more important than someone's view of state rights and responsibility that somehow should take precedence over our nationality and our national responsibilities.

Mr Prince: Try saying that to Mr Keating.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I am more than happy to say that to Mr Keating, but I am in this Parliament addressing the Governor in reply. As a parliamentarian I say to the Governor that I do not believe this is a principled Parliament; I do not think it is a principled Executive. In this state we have lost sight of our principles. Despite what the member for Pilbara said, it is time the Governor spoke up on behalf of the people whom he regards as our best resource. He should be speaking up especially for those who are most disadvantaged. I hope he acknowledges - I am sure he does - that the Aboriginal people of this state are as much the Queen's subjects as anyone else.

Mr Omodei: Is that why you are shifting them backwards and forwards across the borders?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I do not want to respond to the Minister for Local Government.

Mr Omodei: You don't understand that comment.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Minister may say what he likes. All I can say is that after 15 months in this Parliament under this Executive I am not proud to be part of it.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ainsworth): Order!

Mr Omodei: You should resign.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I give serious consideration to the question of resignation because that is how sick and tired I am of the amoral conduct of this Government.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-Reply thus adopted.

House adjourned at 11.44 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

RED MUD - USE AS A SOIL AMENDING AGENT
Alcoa, Indemnity for Liability

9. Mr PENDAL to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Does the Minister or his department or agencies have a view about the suitability of "red mud", a by-product of bauxite, for use as a soil binding/amending agent?
- (2) If so, what is it?
- (3) Is it correct that Alcoa, the owner of the red mud, will not activate use of this agent without some form of indemnity?
- (4) Will the Minister investigate the offering of such an indemnity?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1)-(2) In February of this year I issued formal environmental approval for a proposal by the Department of Agriculture to facilitate the broad scale use of red mud as a soil amending agent.
- (3)-(4) It was known during the assessment of the above proposal that Alcoa was concerned to have an appropriate indemnity before making the red mud widely available for this purpose. I understand that the Department of Agriculture is investigating the questions of an indemnity for consequent liability.

MARANDOO IRON ORE PROJECT - CHANGES

13. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Resources Development:

- (1) Have items of fixed plant been omitted from the original layout of the Marandoo project?
- (2) If so what are those items of fixed plant?
- (3) Has the approved proposal to mine been amended since 6 February 1993?
- (4) If so in what way has the proposal been amended?
- (5) What has caused the estimated cost of the project to be downgraded from \$500m to \$300m?
- (6) Has the Government been advised of the reported downgrading?
- (7) If so -
 - (a) who in the Government was advised;
 - (b) on what date was the Government advised;
 - (c) on what date was the Minister personally advised;
 - (d) who advised the Minister?
- (8) If not, why not?
- (9) What actions, if any, have been taken by the Minister as a result of the changes to the project?
- (10) What actions, if any, have been taken by the Minister's department as a result of the changes to the project?
- (11) Has the estimated operational work force for the project been revised from 350 down to 240?
- (12) If so, why?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) Tertiary crusher, stacker, reclaimer, in-plant stockpile, associated earthworks and materials handling facilities.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Amendments to mine design parameters, planned pre-production developments, explosives storage, plant (as described above) and work force.
- (5) Costs for the project have been reduced because of simplifications to the process flow line. These simplifications follow a detailed process design of the project made in the light of operational experience from the Brockman 2 Detritals project and the results of infill drilling. The changes will not impact on mining output capacity, which remains at 12 Mtpa, but the plant design will be simpler and more flexible and has fewer component parts. It will be a world class operation. The capital cost has reduced to an estimated \$365m and not \$300m as indicated in the question.
- (6) Yes.
- (7) (a) The first formal advice to Government of changes to project design was to the previous Minister for State Development, now the Leader of the Opposition, in a letter from Mr I. Williams of Hamersley Iron dated 8 October 1992. This letter sought amendments to the project proposals, including the omission of the Marandoo secondary crusher stockpile, and advised of the review of product handling arrangements. These changes, resulting in part of the reduction in capital cost, were approved on 12 October 1992 by the Minister for State Development. I was informally advised of further changes to the design of the Marandoo project on 3 March 1993 by Mr T. Finucane of Hamersley Iron. Government was formally advised of these changes by way of a letter from Mr B. Bent of Hamersley Iron to me, dated 29 April 1993, seeking approval for the proposed changes.
- (b)-(d) Refer to 7(a).
- (8) Not applicable.
- (9) Referral of the proposed changes of 29 April 1993 to the Minister for the Environment and, subsequent to advice from that Minister, approval of the proposed changes pursuant to the provisions of the Iron Ore (Hamersley Range) Agreement Act.
- (10) None.
- (11) Yes.
- (12) Because of the increased efficiencies of the amended project.

COURTS - KALGOORLIE COURTHOUSE, FEASIBILITY STUDY

14. Mr TAYLOR to the Attorney General;

- (1) Has a feasibility study of the Kalgoorlie Courthouse been undertaken as per the Attorney General's letter of 12 July 1993?
- (2) If yes, what was the outcome of this study?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(3) An item "Statewide Feasibility Study of Accommodation" covering this study has been included in capital works program proposals 1994-95 to 1996-97.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES - CHAIRMAN; MEMBERSHIP

19. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

- (1) Who is the Chairman of the Commercial Tribunal of Western Australia?
- (2) What is the term of the appointment of the chairman?
- (3) Who are the committee members of the Commercial Tribunal of Western Australia?
- (4) What are the terms of appointment of each member?
- (5) By whom was each person nominated?
- (6) What remuneration was paid to each member and the chairman?
- (7) When was each member first appointed?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Vacant.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The tribunal consists of a chairman, one or more deputy chairmen, and various panels. Ms Pamela Hogan is currently the sole deputy chairman.
- (4) Ms Hogan's term of appointment is 10 June 1991 to 9 June 1994.
- (5) Records available to the Ministry of Justice from the former Ministry of Consumer Affairs do not indicate who nominated Ms Hogan.
- (6) Remuneration this financial year (that is, 1 July 1993 to 10 May 1994) to Ms Hogan is \$37 958.66.
- (7) Ms Hogan was first appointed on 10 June 1991.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES - CHAIRMAN; MEMBERSHIP

20. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

- (1) Who is the Chairman of the Guardianship and Administration Board?
- (2) What is the term of the appointment of the chairman?
- (3) Who are the committee members of the Guardianship and Administration Board?
- (4) What are the terms of appointment of each member?
- (5) By whom was each person nominated?
- (6) What remuneration was paid to each member and the chairman?
- (7) When was each member first appointed?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) His Honour Mr Justice Robert David Nicholson.
- (2) Five years.
- (3) Mr William Bryant, Mr Keith Chapman, Ms Felicity Child, Rev Canon Leslie Goode, Ms Catherine Hill, Mr John James, Dr Gwen Leavesley, Mr Erick Leipoldt, Dr Alan McCutcheon, Ms Jo Stanton.

(4),(7)

Mr Justice Nicholson	5 years from 21 July 1992
Mr Bryant	5 years from 10 December 1992
Mr Chapman	3 years from 21 July 1992
Ms Child	3 years from 13 October 1992
Rev Goode	3 years from 21 July 1992
Ms Hill	2 years from 13 October 1992
Mr James	3 years from 13 October 1992

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| Dr Leavesley | 2 years from 13 October 1992 |
| Mr Leipoldt | 2 years from 13 October 1992 |
| Dr McCutcheon | 3 years from 21 July 1992 |
| Ms Stanton | 3 years from 21 July 1992 |
- (5) Chairperson Chief Judge
 Deputy Chairperson Under Secretary for Law
 Part-time members Relevant selection panels
- (6) Board members who are public servants do not receive remuneration.
 Other members - \$230 per day; \$115 per half day.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES - CHAIRMAN; MEMBERSHIP

22. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

- (1) Who is the Chairman of the Legal Contribution Trust?
- (2) What is the term of the appointment of the chairman?
- (3) Who are the committee members of the Legal Contribution Trust?
- (4) What are the terms of appointment of each member?
- (5) By whom was each person nominated?
- (6) What remuneration was paid to each member and the chairman?
- (7) When was each member first appointed?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Mr M.A. Lewis.
- (2) Term not fixed.
- (3) Miss D.D. Newman and Mr R.I. Viner QC.
- (4) Term not fixed.
- (5) Mr M.A. Lewis Law Society
 Miss D.D. Newman Attorney General
 Mr R.I. Viner QC Legal Practice Board
- (6) None.
- (7) Mr M.A. Lewis - 1991
 Miss D.D. Newman - 1984
 Mr R.I. Viner QC - 1989

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES - CHAIRMAN; MEMBERSHIP

23. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

- (1) Who is the Chairman of the Prison Officers Appeal Tribunal?
- (2) What is the term of the appointment of the chairman?
- (3) Who are the committee members of the Prison Officers Appeal Tribunal?
- (4) What are the terms of appointment of each member?
- (5) By whom was each person nominated?
- (6) What remuneration was paid to each member and the chairman?
- (7) When was each member first appointed?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Mr R.B. Lawrence, Stipendiary Magistrate.
- (2) Three years.
- (3) Mr A. Tapscott - WA Prison Officers Union
 Mr E. Sievers - Ministry of Justice

- (4) Three years.
- (5) Mr Lawrence appointed by the Governor
Mr Tapscott appointed by ballot of members of the WA Prison Officers Union
Mr Sievers appointed by the Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Justice.
- (6) Nil.
- (7) Mr Lawrence - 1 July 1991
Mr Tapscott - 24 June 1992
Mr Sievers - 16 June 1986 (reappointed on 2 October 1989 and 2 September 1991).

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES - CHAIRMAN; MEMBERSHIP

24. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

- (1) Who is the Chairman of the Western Australian Financial Institutions Authority (WAFIA) Board?
- (2) What is the term of the appointment of the chairman?
- (3) Who are the committee members of the Western Australian Financial Institutions Authority Board?
- (4) What are the terms of appointment of each member?
- (5) By whom was each person nominated?
- (6) What remuneration was paid to each member and the chairman?
- (7) When was each member first appointed?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

(1)-(2) A.K.R. Watson appointed for three years from 10 August 1992.

(3)-(4),(7)

K.J. Edwards appointed for three years from 1 July 1992.

A.J. Good appointed for two years from 24 May 1993.

(5) Attorney General.

(6) Chairman \$10 000 per annum and each member \$7 000 per annum.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT - SEXUAL PREFERENCE DISCRIMINATION REPORT

31. Ms WARNOCK to the Attorney General:

- (1) Has a report on sexual preference as the basis for non-discrimination under the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 been completed?
- (2) Has the Attorney General yet seen the report?
- (3) If it has not been completed, when does the Attorney General expect it to be presented?
- (4) Will there be a public release of the report?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

(1)-(2) No.

(3) Approximately mid-1994.

(4) A decision with respect to the release of the report will be made at the appropriate time.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES - CHAIRMAN; MEMBERSHIP

40. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Women's Interests:

- (1) Who is the Chairman of the Women's Advisory Council?

- (2) What is the term of the appointment of the chairman?
- (3) Who are the committee members of the Women's Advisory Council?
- (4) What are the terms of appointment of each member?
- (5) By whom was each person nominated?
- (6) What remuneration is paid to each member and the chairman?
- (7) When was each member first appointed?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Jane Muir (President).
- (2) No fixed term, but the president as a member of the Women's Advisory Council has been appointed for two years.
- (3) Lynne McGuigan (ex officio), Jennifer Browne, Veronica Cousens, Tracy Cross, Wendy Dimmer, Felicity Farrelly, Lee Gilmore, Diana James, Judy Lubich, Myra Machin, Rosemarie Magro, Chona Pawloff, Elaine Rabbit, Pauline Vukelic.
- (4) Two years.
- (5) Each person is self-nominated.
- (6) \$108 to each member and \$145 to the president monthly for sitting fee.
- (7) 6 December 1993.

BOOT CAMPS - REMOTE SITES, LESS SECURITY REQUIREMENT

45. Mr RIEBELING to the Attorney General:

- (1) Why is it considered that less security will be required in "boot" camps if they are located in remote areas?
- (2) If the concept is worthwhile, why is the system not being set up in the metropolitan area?
- (3) Have similar systems throughout the world failed and if so, what changes are to be introduced to make this system different?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(2) Remote sites for work camps are more likely to have natural security barriers such as distance from public roads.
- (3) The Western Australian model will be devised specifically to address local justice requirements. This will incorporate those aspects of other systems which have been shown to be effective in similar circumstances and will avoid proven operational weaknesses of such systems.

MAGISTRATES - FOUR WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLES ALLOCATION

46. Mr RIEBELING to the Attorney General:

- (1) Is the Attorney General aware that some metropolitan magistrates requested and were given four wheel drive vehicles?
- (2) Have all four wheel drive vehicles now been replaced with sedans?
- (3) How did such a previous event occur and what cost to the state was incurred?
- (4) Does this demonstrate the efficiency of the new Ministry of Justice?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(4) The provision of four wheel drive vehicles occurred as a result of an administrative error due to the continuation of a practice which had commenced under the then Crown Law Department and has now been corrected. The four wheel drive vehicles in question will be reallocated to

those areas of the State where they are in use by the ministry. There will be no net cost to the state.

BOOT CAMPS - LOCATIONS; STAFF ACCOMMODATION

49. Mr BROWN to the Attorney General:

With reference to an article that appeared in *The West Australian* on 15 March 1994 concerning government plans to establish "boot camps" for young offenders, will the Attorney General advise:

- (a) has any consideration been given to where such camps may be located;
- (b) if so, what locations are being considered;
- (c) will such camps be located sufficiently near existing country towns so that special accommodation for camp staff will not have to be built?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

A number of possible sites have been identified and an evaluation process is currently in hand to determine the most suitable site.

PUBLICATIONS - RELEASE REFUSALS

Advisory Committee on Publications, Membership; Recommendations Overturned

60. Mrs HALLAHAN to the Attorney General:

- (1) How many publications were refused for release in -
 - (a) 1992;
 - (b) 1993;
 - (c) so far in 1994?
- (2) Has the Attorney General overturned or rejected the recommendations of the State Advisory Committee on Publications at any time since February 1994?
- (3) If so, what were the publications at issue and what was the Attorney General's decision?
- (4) Who are the current members of the advisory committee and when was each member appointed?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)
 - (a) 145
 - (b) 126
 - (c) 30
- (2) Yes.
- (3) "Australian Penthouse Letters 1994 No. 51" - refused
"Seventeen (Teeners from Holland) No. 20" - refused
- (4) Dr Rosemary Coates appointed 12 October 1993
Mrs Robyn Quin appointed 12 October 1993
Fr Dennis Claughton appointed 12 October 1993
Mrs Gwendoline Roderick appointed 12 October 1993
Mr Thomas Percy appointed 15 March 1994

REGISTRAR GENERAL'S OFFICE - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES

Monitoring Other States Records; Release of Records Cut off Dates

67. Mrs HALLAHAN to the Attorney General:

- (1) Further to question on notice 1655, does the Registrar General monitor trends in other states in relation to the release of birth, death and marriage records?

- (2) What are the cut off dates for the release of records of births, deaths and marriages in other States?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)
- | | |
|-----|--|
| ACT | No indexes are sold to the public |
| NSW | 1918 births (b), deaths (d), marriages (m) |
| NT | 1902 (b, d, m) |
| Qld | 1904 (b), 1914 (d and m) |
| SA | 1906 (b), 1915 (d), 1916 (m) |
| Tas | 1899 (b, d, m) |
| Vic | 1913 (b), 1980 (d), 1930 (m) |

SMITH, KARRI - WESTERN WOMEN ACTION GROUP

Attorney General, Meetings

68. Mrs HALLAHAN to the Attorney General:

Further to question on notice 1577, on what precise dates did the Attorney General meet -

- (a) Ms Karri Smith individually;
- (b) members of the Western Women Action Group collectively?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

My records indicate that I met with representatives of the Western Women Action Group on 24 February 1993 and Ms Karri Smith on 13 May 1993.

CRIME - CRIMINAL INJURY COMPENSATION CLAIMS, WAITING PERIOD

69. Mr D.L. SMITH to the Attorney General:

What is the average waiting period for the assessment and finalisation of criminal injury compensation claims?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The period required for the assessment and finalisation of criminal injury compensation claims varies considerably between applications and is dependent on a number of factors, including the degree to which all necessary information is provided with the application, the complexity of the case, the necessity for receipt of reports from other parties and completion of pertinent court processes. The average period required is presently nine to 12 months.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - GERALDTON AND GREENOUGH REGION, POWER CONNECTIONS DELAY

72. Mr THOMAS to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Are farmers in the Geraldton and Greenough region having to wait five to six months to have power connected to their properties?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that 16 properties in the district are awaiting connection but the State Energy Commission of Western Australia does not have sufficient staff or funding for overtime to do the work?
- (3) How does this square with the Government's policy of assisting small business, particularly in rural areas?
- (4) Will the Minister allocate a small portion of the SECWA's considerable positive cash flow to connecting customers who wish to join the grid?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) A heavy work load has developed in the Geraldton region. SECWA is addressing the issue and subject to confirmation of priorities will be

completing the extension of high voltage supplies to all of the 16 customers within the next 10 weeks. Seven of them have in fact recently been connected.

- (2) SECWA's resources at Geraldton are sufficient to meet normal base load work demands. These resources have been temporarily increased as necessary to assist in addressing peak work load.
- (3) SECWA heavily subsidises the cost of new rural connections and currently contributes more than 50 per cent towards the cost of contributory extension work. In addition, rural customers enjoy additional ongoing financial subsidies as a result of the application of uniform tariffs.
- (4) SECWA is responsible for the financial management of the business and I am assured there is adequate financial provision for this type of expenditure.

BY-ELECTIONS - GLENDALOUGH

Leederville Primary School, Not Used as Polling Booth

74. Mr MCGINTY to the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Affairs:

- (1) Why was the Leederville Primary School not used as a polling booth in the Glendalough by-election, contrary to previous practice?
- (2) Who made this decision?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

(1)-(2)

Section 100 of the Electoral Act 1907 empowers the Electoral Commissioner to appoint such polling places as are necessary for an election. The list of polling places for any electoral district or region is reviewed prior to each election, taking into account the suitability and availability of polling places previously used and the need for any new polling places to be established. Consistency with polling places used by the Australian Electoral Commission in federal elections is a factor taken into account.

In preparation for the Glendalough by-election held on 19 March 1994, the Returning Officer investigated all polling places used for the district at the state general election on 6 February 1993 to confirm their continuing suitability and availability on polling day. The Leederville Primary School, Oxford Street, Leederville had previously been used as a polling place, but following its closure as a primary school at the conclusion of the 1993 school year, renovation work had been commenced by the Ministry of Education.

Following the Returning Officer's investigations, it was apparent that with renovations in progress the site was unsuitable for use as a polling place on 19 March 1994. An alternative polling place was established at the Open Access Centre for Distance Education in Vincent Street, Leederville. This is adjacent to the former Leederville Primary School site.

All electors in the district of Glendalough were sent a brochure with details about the election, including details of the polling places that could be used for the election. Details of the locations of polling places were also advertised in the Press. In addition, on polling day, signs were posted at the entrance to the Leederville Primary School clearly advising that the polling place was now located around the corner in Vincent Street. During polling on 19 March, the Officer-in-Charge of the Open Access Centre polling place did not receive any complaints from electors about the change from the Leederville Primary School.

BY-ELECTIONS - GLENDALOUGH

Minister's Unauthorised Letter to Electors of Italian Origin

75. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Affairs:

What action does the Minister intend to take over the Minister for Local Government's failure to print an authorisation on a letter to Glendalough electors of Italian origin?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

I have been informed by the Electoral Commissioner for Western Australia, Mr Les Smith, that the State Secretary of the Australian Labor Party has lodged with the Electoral Commissioner an official complaint in writing about the letter written by the Minister for Local Government to some electors in the district of Glendalough. The Electoral Commissioner is obtaining advice from his solicitors about the complaint which claims that there has been a breach of the Electoral Act 1907. It is inappropriate for me as Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Affairs to take any action under the Electoral Act.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN - ATTORNEY GENERAL

Lunch with Senator Noel Crichton-Browne in Canberra, Private or Public Matter

77. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

With reference to the Attorney General's lunch with Senator Noel Crichton-Browne in Canberra on 10 February 1994, was the meeting relevant to the Attorney General's portfolio responsibilities or a private matter?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

I was on personal leave on 10 February 1994 and any meetings I may have had with any person is of no concern to the member.

CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF - EAGLE AIRCRAFT, PURCHASE

78. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) How many Eagle aircraft have been purchased by the Department of Conservation and Land Management and at what cost?
- (2) When were these aircraft purchased?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) CALM has purchased six Eagle aircraft at a cost of \$312 000.
- (2) The tender was awarded in November 1993.

WOMEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL - LUNCHEON, LOFTUS COMMUNITY CENTRE

80. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

- (1) Did the Women's Advisory Council hold a lunch at the Loftus Community Centre on 2 March 1993?
- (2) What was the cost of the luncheon?
- (3) Who was invited to attend?
- (4) Who arranged the lunch and selected the venue?
- (5) What was the purpose of the lunch?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) No.
- (2)-(5) Not applicable.

**CORONIAL AUTOPSIES - COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO ASPECTS OF
Report Recommendations, Decision; Public Submissions; New Legislation**

82. Mr D.L. SMITH to the Attorney General:

- (1) How many public submissions on the report of the Committee of Inquiry into Aspects of Coronial Autopsies have been received by the Attorney General?
- (2) When will the Attorney General make a decision on the recommendations of this report?
- (3) When does the Attorney General expect to introduce the appropriate amending legislation?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) 2 573 responses were received, including six full submissions and 2 537 in the form of seven different signed petitions.
- (2) The Government is broadly supportive of the recommendations contained within the report, however a final decision will be made shortly.
- (3) It is anticipated that a new Coroner's Act will be introduced during the 1994 spring session.

**CONSERVATION - VOLUNTARY GROUPS, GOVERNMENT GRANTS
Tree Society, Greening WA, Green Skills, Conservation Council of WA**

83. Mrs HENDERSON to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Did the Minister announce in January that he had made grants to a number of voluntary conservation groups, including the Tree Society, Greening Western Australia, Green Skills and the Conservation Council of Western Australia?
- (2) When were these grants requested by these organisations?
- (3) Were these grants intended to provide assistance for these organisations in the 1993-94 financial year?
- (4) Have these grants been paid to these organisations?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) If so, on what date were they paid?
- (7) Does the Government intend to continue the program of assistance to voluntary conservation groups?
- (8) If not, why not?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)

Tree Society	20 May 1993
Greening WA	20 May 1993
Green Skills	19 July 1993
Conservation Council of WA	23 August 1993
Environment Centre of WA	12 November 1993
- (3)-(4) Yes.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6)

Conservation Council of WA	3 May 1994
Environment Centre of WA	22 April 1994
Green Skills	22 April 1994
Tree Society	22 April 1994
Greening Australia	22 April 1994

- (7) Yes.
- (8) Not applicable.

MEAGHER, DR TIM - O'BRIEN, DR BRIAN, EMPLOYED BY GOVERNMENT

84. Mrs HENDERSON to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Is Dr Timothy Meagher employed by the Government in any capacity at the present time?
- (2) If so, in what capacity?
- (3) Is Dr Brian O'Brien employed by the Government in any capacity at the present time?
- (4) If so, in what capacity?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Dr Timothy Meagher, trading as Industrial Ecologists Pty Ltd, is employed by the Department of Conservation and Land Management as a consultant to advise the Executive Director on a wide variety of marine conservation and management issues as required by the Executive Director.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Dr Brian O'Brien through his company Brian J. O'Brien and Associates Pty Ltd is providing advice on specific issues from time to time.

**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COUNCIL - MEETINGS,
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT'S PARTICIPATION**

85. Mrs HENDERSON to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Does the Minister intend to participate in meetings of the National Environmental Protection Council?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) Does the Government intend to abide by the provisions of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1)-(2) The National Environmental Protection Council does not exist at this point in time. The establishment of the National Environmental Protection Council depends upon the various Australian Parliaments agreeing to it. The Western Australian Government has indicated that it will only participate if the decisions of such a body are implemented through the various state Parliaments. The establishment of environmental standards in this state is properly the responsibility of the Western Australian Government. Australian environments are marked by their diversity, not by their uniformity. Western Australia in this context is happy to cooperate with other states and territories in developing relevant standards.
- (3)-(4) Yes, where implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment is not inconsistent with the sovereign rights of Western Australia.

REGIONAL PARKS - MANAGEMENT, RESPONSIBILITY

86. Mrs HENDERSON to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Who is responsible for the management of regional parks?

- (2) What regional parks have already been established?
- (3) Are any other regional parks planned?
- (4) If so, what are they?
- (5) What is the legal basis for the use of the term "regional park"?
- (6) Which agency provides the funding for the management of regional parks?
- (7) Is the Government still committed to the implementation of the recommendations of the System Six Report (1983) including those relating to regional parks?
- (8) If not, why not?
- (9) When does the Government plan to amend the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 to provide for the establishment and management of regional parks?
- (10) Did the coalition parties promise, prior to the 1993 state election, to give a high priority to the establishment of the Peel-Harvey Regional Park and the Jandakot Botanical Park?
- (11) Have these promises been honoured?
- (12) If not, why not?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) Local authorities and government agencies controlling land in what are known as regional parks.
- (2) The following areas have been subject to extensive planning as regional parks -
 - Canning River Regional Park
 - Yellagonga Regional Park
 - Rockingham Lakes Regional Park
 - Beeliar Regional Park
 - Woodman Point Regional Park
 - Whiteman Park
 - Herdsmen Lake
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Consideration is being given to establishing the following as regional parks -
 - Gnangara Regional Park
 - Jandakot Botanic Park
 - Peel-Harvey Regional Park
 - Darling Range Regional Park
 - Serpentine Regional Park
 - Port Kennedy Regional Park
- (5) None.
- (6) See (1) above.
- (7) Yes.
- (8) Not applicable.
- (9) The legislative and administrative arrangements for regional parks are under consideration by the Government.
- (10) Yes.
- (11) Yes. A major amendment to the metropolitan region scheme to reserve land for parks and recreation for the Jandakot Botanic Park is in progress.

Final recommendations for the Peel Regional Park will be included in the Peel regional strategy, due for release in June.

- (12) Not applicable.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN - ATTORNEY GENERAL
Visit to Aboriginal Communities in Western Desert

87. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

- (1) Did the Minister visit the Aboriginal communities in the Western Desert recently?
- (2) If so, why was the local member not advised of the visit?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I attended the function expressly in response to an invitation issued by the North West Women's Association and the Martu women. I regret the local member was not informed by my office of the visit.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT - PATTERSON, HON MURIEL
Visit to Book Launching, South Hedland, Representing Attorney General

88. Mr GRAHAM to the Attorney General:

- (1) Did Hon Muriel Patterson, MLC, representing the Minister, recently attend a book launching in South Hedland?
- (2) If so, why was the local member not advised of the visit?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The member attended the function as my representative expressly in response to an invitation issued by the North West Women's Association and the Martu Women. I regret the local member was not informed by my office of the visit.

FOREST PRODUCTION COUNCIL - CHAIRMAN; MEMBERSHIP

92. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Who is the chairman of the Forest Production Council?
- (2) What is the term of the appointment of the chairman?
- (3) Who are the committee members of the Forest Production Council?
- (4) What are the terms of appointment of each member?
- (5) By whom was each person nominated?
- (6) What remuneration was paid to each member and the chairman?
- (7) When was each member first appointed?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) In accordance with section 26 of the Conservation and Land Management Act, the Chairman of the Forest Production Council is the Executive Director of the Department of Conservation and Land Management.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Dr Sydney Shea - Chairman - ex officio
Dr Donald Keene - Deputy Chairman - ex officio
Dr Robert Bunning
Mr Ardino Gosatti
Mr Mario Bajada
Mr Graham Shepherd

Mr Ronald Pollard
 Mr Don Spriggins
 Mr Patrick McNamara
 Mr Anthony Wheatley

- (4) Non ex officio members are appointed for no more than three years, but may be reappointed. The appointments of the present council membership, apart from the two ex officio members, expired on 9 September 1991 but current members continue in office until they resign or are replaced, as provided for under the schedule to section 29 of the CALM Act. The CALM Amendment Act No 20 of 1991 revised section 26(b) of the principal Act to provide for a 14 member tripartite member council by ministerial appointment.
- (5) Non ex officio members are nominated by the Minister under section 26(b) of the CALM Act.
- (6) Non-public servant members are paid for attending meetings at the rate of \$108 per full day or \$73 per half day.
- (7)

	Date of appointment
Dr Shea	Not applicable
Dr Keene	Not applicable
Dr Bunning	22 March 1985
Mr Gosatti	22 March 1985
Mr Bajada	7 September 1990
Mr Shepherd	22 March 1985
Mr Pollard	22 March 1985
Mr Spriggins	22 March 1985
Mr McNamara	22 March 1985
Mr Wheatley	22 March 1985

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - APPLICATIONS STATISTICS

99. Mr KOBELKE to the Attorney General:

- (1) How many Freedom of Information applications have been determined to date?
- (2) How many of these applications were for personal information?
- (3) How many applications for personal information were successful?
- (4) How many applications for non-personal information have been determined?
- (5) How many of these applications have been successful?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(5) The Freedom of Information Act requires applications to be lodged direct with agencies and the statistics requested to date are not available. However, a report by the commissioner covering the first five months since proclamation of the legislation has been tabled. The report incorporates statistics up to 31 March 1994. Separate figures for personal and non-personal requests received, and the outcome is provided in respect of the group of agencies which account for most requests. A comprehensive analysis will be contained in the commissioner's annual report.

DISABILITY SERVICES COMMISSION - LOCAL AREA COORDINATOR, CASE LOADS

104. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Disability Services:

- (1) What is the current minimum case load of a Disability Services Commission local area coordinator:

- (a) outside the metropolitan area;
 - (b) where is that;
 - (c) inside the metropolitan area;
 - (d) where is that?
- (2) What is the current maximum case load of a DSC local area coordinator:
- (a) outside the metropolitan area;
 - (b) where is that;
 - (c) inside the metropolitan area;
 - (d) where is that?
- (3) What is the average - mathematical mean - case load of a DSC local area coordinator:
- (a) in the metropolitan area;
 - (b) outside the metropolitan area?
- (4) What is the average (mode - most frequently occurring) case load of a DSC local area coordinator:
- (a) in the metropolitan area;
 - (b) outside the metropolitan area?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1)
 - (a) 40
 - (b) Pilbara
 - (c) 54
 - (d) Kelmscott
- (2)
 - (a) 66
 - (b) Lower Great Southern
 - (c) 95
 - (d) Rockingham
- (3)
 - (a) 74
 - (b) 53
- (4)
 - (a) 70 - 79
 - (b) 50 - 59

BLACKOUT - SEWAGE OVERFLOW, SWAN RIVER
Emergency Measures

105. Mrs HENDERSON to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) When the Minister became aware that power was not to be available for several hours on Thursday, 24 March 1994 did he contact his ministerial colleague the Minister for Water Resources to ensure that emergency measures were in place to ensure that sewage would not overflow into the Swan River?
- (2) Has the Minister subsequently discussed with his ministerial colleagues emergency measures to ensure that no sewage flows into the river in the event of another power failure?
- (3) What are these measures?
- (4) When will these measures take place?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) Whenever a sewage spill is likely standard emergency procedures are automatically put into place. These involve the Water Authority working

with the relevant State Government agencies and local government to take the necessary measures to minimise the discharge and provide health and environmental warnings if necessary.

- (2) Yes.
- (3) Discussions have been held between the Commissioner of SECWA and the Managing Director of the Water Authority to begin the process of planning better emergency procedures. Detailed contingency plans were already in place and worked well for the large majority of pump stations. The Water Authority is in the process of assessing three options to improve the existing plans in case of major power failures -
 - standby generation installed at the pump stations;
 - increased on-site storage for overflows; and
 - increased priority for return of SECWA power in the advent of future outages.
- (4) When planning is completed, the best measures will be implemented quickly. However, provision of standby generation or increased storage, if these options are practicable, will take some time to put into effect.

DISABILITY SERVICES - REPORT ON SERVICES TO RESIDENTS OF HOSTELS FOR INTELLECTUALLY DISABLED

106. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Disability Services:

- (1) When will the report on services to residents of hostels for people with intellectual disabilities be delivered to the Minister?
- (2) Which hostels have been studied?
- (3) Will the full report, findings and recommendations, be released to the public?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) I have not commissioned a report on services to residents of hostels for people with an intellectual disability, nor do I believe the Disability Services Commission is planning to communicate with me on this subject in the near future. A range of matters concerning the accommodation program of the Disability Services Commission are under consideration at present. These include matters concerning nursing personnel, the development and implementation of a system of national standards and an examination of the comparative costs of accommodation service providers. There is no report of the title provided by the member. However, if the member would be more specific, I would be pleased to release any report on these subjects to the shadow minister or other interested persons.

(2)-(4) Not applicable.

PRISONS - BANDYUP WOMEN'S Muster; Prisoners' Security Risk Ratings

137. Mr BROWN to the Attorney General:

- (1) What was the muster at Bandyup Women's Prison on:
 - (a) 1 January 1994;
 - (b) 1 February 1994;
 - (c) 1 March 1994?
- (2) How many prisoners were rated:
 - (a) maximum;

- (b) minimum;
 - (c) medium;
- security risks on each of these dates?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| (1) | (a) | 83 | | |
| | (b) | 78 | | |
| | (c) | 78 | | |
| (2) | | 1 January 1994 | 1 February 1994 | 1 March 1994 |
| | (a) | 17 | 21 | 20 |
| | (b) | 39 | 35 | 38 |
| | (c) | 27 | 22 | 20 |

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT - APPLICATIONS FOR INFORMATION, REFUSED, EDITED OR DEFERRED

162. Dr CONSTABLE to the Attorney General:

- (1) Since 1 November 1993 how many applications for access to information under the Freedom of Information Act have been -
 - (a) refused;
 - (b) edited, or
 - (c) deferred?
- (2) Under which provision or provisions of the Freedom of Information Act was each application refused, edited or deferred?
- (3) What was the general nature of the information sought in each such application?
- (4) Who or what was the agency in each application?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) (a) 74
- (b) 127
- (c) 11
- (2)-(4) These details are not maintained centrally in respect of each application to enable this information to be provided.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT - CHARGES FOR NON-PERSONAL INFORMATION

163. Dr CONSTABLE to the Attorney General:

Since 1 November 1993 -

- (a) what has been the average charge per application for non-personal information sought under the Freedom of Information Act;
- (b) what has been the highest charge for an application for non-personal information sought under the Freedom of Information Act;
- (c) what has been the lowest charge for an application for non-personal information sought under the Freedom of Information Act?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (a)-(c) The Freedom of Information Act requires applications to be lodged direct with individual agencies. Arrangements have been initiated by the Information Commissioner to require agencies to provide quarterly

statistical returns for the purpose of providing an overview to Parliament during the year. The most recent report covers the period 1 November 1993 to 31 March 1994 and has been tabled. The report shows that \$12 817 in charges was received by agencies in respect of applications for non-personal information. Based on the top 20 agencies for the last quarter the average was \$48.11. Details are not maintained centrally in respect of each application to enable the highest and lowest charge levied to be provided.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT - CHARGES AND FEES WAIVED OR REDUCED

165. Dr CONSTABLE to the Attorney General:

- (1) What is the total amount of charges and fees that have been waived or reduced under the Freedom of Information Act and on what grounds were they waived or reduced?
- (2) How many applications for reduction or waiver of fees and charges have been made under the Freedom of Information Act and what was the amount of the fees and charges involved in each application?
- (3) How many applications for reduction or waiver of fees and charges made under the Freedom of Information Act have been refused and what were the reasons for refusal?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

(1)-(3)

The Freedom of Information Act requires applications to be lodged direct with individual agencies and therefore details of any applications for reduction of charges refused are not maintained centrally. However, arrangements have been initiated to require agencies to provide quarterly statistical returns for the purpose of providing an overview to Parliament during the year.

The most recent report by the Information Commissioner covers the period 1 November 1993 to 31 March 1994 and has been tabled. The report shows that reductions in charges for non-personal information totalled \$1 082 to 31 March 1994. A more comprehensive analysis will be contained in the Information Commissioner's annual report.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT - COMPLAINTS AGAINST AGENCIES MADE TO INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

166. Dr CONSTABLE to the Attorney General:

Since 1 November 1993 -

- (a) how many complaints have been made to the Information Commissioner under the Freedom of Information Act regarding the decision of an agency;
- (b) what was the nature of each such complaint;
- (c) against which agency was each complaint made?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

(a)-(c)

A progress report concerning the freedom of information legislation has been tabled by the Information Commissioner. The report, covering the period 1 November 1993 to 31 March 1994, contains an overview of the review and complaint resolution subprogram to date. A more comprehensive description will be provided in the commissioner's annual report to Parliament.

**JUVENILE DETENTION CENTRES - NEW CENTRE, BEECHBORO,
CONSTRUCTION PLANS**

186. Mr BROWN to the Attorney General:

Has any consideration been given to a new juvenile detention centre being constructed in or near Beechboro?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

No.

**JUSTICE, MINISTRY OF - ABORIGINAL DRIVER EDUCATION PROGRAM,
FUNDING SUBMISSION**

188. Mr CATANIA to the Attorney General:

- (1) Has the Ministry of Justice received a submission for funding from the Aboriginal driver education program?
- (2) When was this submission received?
- (3) What action has the Ministry of Justice taken on the submission?
- (4) For how long has the program been funded by the State Government?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 30 December 1993.
- (3) Discussions have occurred with the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority. AAPA has facilitated the preparation of an evaluation report on the Aboriginal driver training program. The Ministry of Justice is now considering the funding application in light of the evaluation report.
- (4) Since 1987 from a variety of agencies including AAPA, the Police Department, the Department for Community Development, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the Ministry of Justice.

**STATE ENERGY COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - LINE
MAINTENANCE, EXPENDITURE**

192. Mr THOMAS to the Minister for Energy:

Could the Minister provide a record of the State Energy Commission of Western Australia's budgeted and actual expenditure on line maintenance on a monthly basis for the financial years -

- (a) 1991-92;
- (b) 1992-93;
- (c) 1993-94;
- (d) the expired period of 1993-94?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

(a)-(d)	1991-92		1992-93		1993-94(to date)	
	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Jul	1 782	2 170	1 811	1 721	2 032	2 485
Aug	1 742	2 259	1 974	1 805	2 160	2 491
Sep	1 608	1 986	1 699	1 583	2 111	2 495
Oct	1 737	2 267	2 116	1 810	2 170	2 407
Nov	2 135	2 214	1 594	1 728	2 388	2 494
Dec	1 558	2 143	1 630	1 721	2 434	2 623
Jan	1 632	2 296	1 586	1 778	1 883	2 383
Feb	1 817	2 021	1 715	1 622	2 471	2 254

Mar	1 805	2 191	1 932	1 711	2 761	2 584
Apr	1 601	2 111	2 075	1 649	2 463	2 484
May	1 935	2 296	1 652	1 786		
Jun	1 855	2 113	1 746	1 649		
Total	21 207	26 067	21 530	20 563	22 873	24 700

POLICE - PERSONS CHARGED BUT FOUND NOT GUILTY, NUMBERS

203. Mr HILL to the Attorney General:

What was the total number of cases where those charged by the police have been found not guilty in -

- (a) 1990;
 - (b) 1991;
 - (c) 1992;
 - (d) 1993;
 - (e) 1994 to date;
- in the various offence categories?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The information requested is not available from the Ministry of Justice.

**STATE ENERGY COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - GAS
APPLIANCE TESTING LABORATORY, CLOSURE**

242. Mr HILL to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Does the Government intend closing the State Energy Commission of Western Australia gas appliance testing laboratory?
- (2) If yes:
 - (a) has the Government consulted the gas appliance industry in making its decision;
 - (b) where will Western Australian manufacturers obtain services currently provided by the laboratory;
 - (c) what are the expected savings to SECWA as a result of the decision to close the laboratory;
 - (d) has the Government considered the increased costs to business as a result of the closure?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) The current gas appliance testing laboratory in East Perth will be relocated because of the redevelopment of the East Perth area. It is intended that the laboratory continue to operate except for a brief period during the relocation.
- (2) Not applicable.

RAILWAY HOTEL, KALGOORLIE - PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

246. Mr GRILL to the Minister for Heritage:

What is the present situation in respect of the preservation and restoration of the Railway Hotel building in Kalgoorlie?

Mr LEWIS replied:

The building's owner applied to the Heritage Council of Western Australia in March 1994 for approval to proceed with the conservation of the buildings, based on plans and specifications submitted in 1992. She was advised on 29 March 1994 that the Heritage Council of Western

Australia had no objection to the proposed work but she would have to first seek the approval of the local authority. As at 31 May 1994 no such approval had been sought from the Kalgoorlie-Boulder City Council.

SWAN RIVER - CONDITION, MINISTER FOR PLANNING'S VIEW

262. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Does the Minister still hold the view which he stated publicly, at the official launch of the Riverside Gardens project in Bayswater in early April this year, that there was not much wrong with the Swan River?
- (2) If not, what new information or advice has caused him to change his view on the condition of the Swan River?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1)-(2) I recognise that there are problems with the upper reaches of the Swan River. The Premier has already given a commitment that all the necessary resources will be provided for the research and implementation of remedial measures. I totally support this approach.

"LOCATE TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA" PROGRAM - COMMENCEMENT DATE

271. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) When was the "Locate to Western Australia" program commenced?
- (2) How many companies have applied for assistance through this program?
- (3) How many were successful?
- (4) How many are still under consideration?
- (5) What are the eligibility criteria for companies applying for this assistance?
- (6) Have these criteria changed since the program's commencement?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) The "Locate to Western Australia" program was launched on 7 December 1993.
- (2) Ten companies have registered their expression of interest in the program.
- (3) Five.
- (4) Five.
- (5) Demonstrated economic benefits to the State; technology transfer; employment generation; import replacement; export oriented.
- (6) No.

GENERAL BULLDOZING CO PTY LTD - APPEAL FILE, ACCESS DECISION
Supreme Court Challenge, Queen's Counsel's Advice

273. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Did the Minister receive the advice of a Queen's Counsel on the possible grounds for a Supreme Court challenge to the decision of the Information Commissioner that granted access to the General Bulldozing Appeal file?
- (2) If such legal advice was obtained, then who was the Queen's Counsel who provided it?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I do not see that any purpose is served in identifying the Queen's Counsel.

SUBDIVISIONS - APPROVAL CONDITIONS

Standards for Contribution Required of Developers by Local Government, Equitable and Proper

274. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Are the existing standards or guidelines for the contribution required of developers by local government as a condition of subdivision approval equitable and proper?
- (2) If yes, will the Minister provide the details of these established standards or guidelines?
- (3) If no to (1), will the Minister indicate the details of what he wishes these standards or guidelines to be?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) These are generally contained in the policies of the State Planning Commission, government servicing agencies or in local government town planning schemes.
- (3) Not applicable.

SUBDIVISIONS - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Use of Compensation Basins, Minister's Approval

275. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Does the Minister approve of the use of compensation basins as a credit for public open space with the resulting reduction in the area of true public open space to a net amount less than that formally required?
- (2) If not, what action has the Minister taken to ensure the minimum requirement of public open space is provided for in all subdivisions?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes, provided that such basins are located, designed and landscaped so that the public is able to use the open space for safe recreation and amenity is not impaired.
- (2) Not applicable.

LAND ACT - MADE INVALID BY FEDERAL HIGH COURT

286. Mr BRIDGE to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the fact that the federal High Court is likely to render the Western Australian Land Act invalid?
- (2) Is the Minister prepared to urge the mining companies to validate their mining leases under the federal legislation in order to avoid the event in which the state may have to pay millions of dollars in compensation to the mining companies?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) The Western Australian Government has, in fact, challenged the validity, in Western Australia, of the Commonwealth Native Title Act in the High Court and the advice I have received is that the state has a very good case.
- (2) No. The Western Australian Government is the only body that can issue mining leases in Western Australia and the Western Australian Parliament is the only body that can validate mining leases in the unlikely event that an invalid lease may have been issued.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

BRADSHAW, DR WAYNE - POLICE INQUIRIES, ABANDONED 1988

44. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Police:

I refer to charges outstanding against former Wanneroo Mayor Wayne Bradshaw, now a fugitive in the Maldives, his known links with police in the 1980s, and to this week's conviction for corruption against former Wanneroo Councillor David King, and ask -

- (1) Can the Minister now explain to the House why police inquiries were apparently abandoned in 1988?
- (2) Can he give an assurance to this House that those inquiries were not nobbled in any way?

Mr WIESE replied:

- (1)-(2) I can certainly indicate to the House that those police inquiries were not abandoned in 1987 or 1988, the date referred to by the member. I have been given indications by the Commissioner of Police that the persons who were carrying out those investigations have no known links with Mr Bradshaw or with any of the councillors on the Wanneroo City Council. I think that covers the matters the member was inquiring about.

BRADSHAW, DR WAYNE - EXTRADITION CALLS, ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ACTION

45. Mrs van de KLASHORST to the Attorney General:

What is the Attorney General doing in respect of calls for the extradition of Dr Wayne Bradshaw?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

I am sure the members opposite will be interested, particularly given the Leader of the Opposition's comments yesterday. They do not do very much for his integrity when he states that Mrs Edwardes' husband Colin served on the Wanneroo Council with Dr Bradshaw, and can no longer duck the issue. I have pointed out and stated on numerous occasions -

Mr Taylor: Who said that?

Mrs EDWARDES: The Opposition Leader, Ian Taylor.

Mr Taylor: I said nothing at all about your husband. I said it was your responsibility and your husband was not even mentioned.

Mrs EDWARDES: The Leader of the Opposition can take that up with 6WF.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs EDWARDES: In December last year, a comment was made by me in this House and in the media that the Director of Public Prosecutions will, as is proper, make any decisions relating to the extradition of Dr Bradshaw. He will be treated in exactly the same manner as anyone else who faces charges in Western Australia.

On 30 March this year I tabled a letter from the Director of Public Prosecutions which clearly outlined the guidelines that relate to extradition proceedings for the benefit of members who wanted to know what processes are put in place. The DPP highlighted the fact that he was concerned about the level of public debate that was taking place for political purposes because there was a forthcoming trial and that debate might interfere with that trial process. I have had ongoing discussions with the DPP on this and a range of matters. These conversations are confidential and they will not be made public. Neither the DPP nor I will

be bullied by the media or the Opposition in relation to the proper processes of the administration of justice in Western Australia.

I can now advise the House that in a memo I received from John McKechnie, QC, Director of Public Prosecutions, he advises that investigations have been continuing into Dr Bradshaw's activities and I will read it to the House and then table it. It reads -

I refer to our discussions over the past months. The situation has now changed.

An alleged accomplice David Anthony KING has pleaded guilty in the District Court on 30 May to 1 count of corruption.

Points of Order

Mr RIPPER: I understand the Attorney General is quoting from official documents. I ask that she table all the official documents she has and not only the one from which she is quoting now.

Mrs EDWARDES: I have indicated that I will table it.

Mr Ripper: What about the rest of the documents?

Mrs EDWARDES: The other document was tabled on 30 March 1994 and members opposite are welcome to have a copy of mine.

Mr Ripper: What about the one you have there?

Mrs EDWARDES: They are my personal notes. Would members opposite like the toilet paper as well?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs EDWARDES: The document I originally tabled was paper No 960A and the other papers I have are my personal notes.

Mr Taylor: That is what we are asking for.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members are not required to tabled personal notes.

Mrs EDWARDES: The Leader of the Opposition either wants to know the information or he does not want to know it.

Mr Taylor: I want to know all the information.

Mrs EDWARDES: I thought members opposite were after this information.

Mr Taylor: All of it; not what you select.

Mrs EDWARDES: The other document I read from was my media release and members opposite can have a copy of it as well.

Mr Taylor: All of it.

Mrs EDWARDES: It is already public and I said that members opposite can have it, but they will not get my personal notes.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mrs EDWARDES: The memo from the Director of Public Prosecutions continues -

As a result, his evidence now becomes available for use in a prosecution against Dr Bradshaw together with other evidence previously obtained.

I have applied the *Extradition Guidelines* which form part of the *Prosecution Policy* published 1 November 1992 and 3 December 1993 to the facts of the case.

I consider that steps should be taken to extradite Dr Bradshaw if extradition proceedings are possible.

As Dr Bradshaw is overseas, any request to his country of residence must be made by the Commonwealth Attorney General.

A Crown Prosecutor has already discussed the matter with a Commonwealth Attorney General's officer and has advised that we propose to make a formal request in the near future.

The formal request to the Commonwealth Attorney General, by convention, is made by the State Attorney General.

My office will prepare a draft for your consideration shortly.

I hope that in future members opposite will actually take the opportunity to read tabled papers and try to understand them and not use them for their own political purpose to perhaps lift the profile of the Leader of the Opposition simply because the public does not know who is the Leader of the Opposition.

[See paper No 86.]

SMITH, WAYDE - JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, APPOINTMENT

46. Mrs ROBERTS to the Attorney General:

I refer the Attorney General to her response in this House nearly three weeks ago, on 12 May, that she would inquire into and advise me whether she is considering the appointment of the member for Wanneroo as a justice of the peace. As I have not received a response, will the Attorney now advise the House whether she has made the promised inquiries and whether she is proposing to make the member a JP?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

When I made inquiries after that question was asked, I learned that the member for Wanneroo had been made a justice of the peace some time last year, under guidelines which were put in place by members opposite to allow members of Parliament to become justices of the peace in order to help their constituents. If the member for Glendalough would like to submit an application in accordance with those guidelines, I would be happy to consider an application from the member for Glendalough.

Mr McGinty: To revoke the member for Wanneroo's commission?

Mrs EDWARDES: On what grounds?

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS LEGISLATION, FEDERAL - HIGH COURT CHALLENGE

47. Dr HAMES to the Minister for Labour Relations:

Some notice has been given of this question. Has the Minister any intention of proceeding with his threat to mount a High Court challenge to the Federal Government's new industrial relations legislation?

Mr KIERATH replied:

It gives me a great deal of pride to stand in this House and announce that this week Cabinet endorsed the state's challenge in the High Court to the Federal Government's industrial relations legislation. I assure members opposite that the legislation will be vigorously opposed. I stood in this Chamber yesterday and explained that even Laurie Brereton is having second thoughts about his legislation, and not just that part, but also other parts where the Federal Government has gone way beyond its powers. State Cabinet has given the green light to the challenge.

Mrs Henderson: It is a waste of money.

Mr KIERATH: It is interesting that the member for Thornlie should talk about wasting money; the waste of money is in the legislation Laurie Brereton introduced in the Federal Parliament. Even the Australian Council of Trade Unions has recognised that the legislation will cost people jobs; instead of helping employees, it will punish them. Even the ACTU has woken up to that and has put pressure on Mr Brereton to do a backflip. It was to be reviewed in September but he has agreed to make some changes now. Members opposite should not try to tell me about well thought out legislation and a waste of money; the Labor Party's legislation at a federal level is a waste of not only money, but also human lives and jobs. The colleagues of members opposite at a federal level are waking up to that. It is a pity that opposition members at the state level cannot open their eyes for one moment and look for the benefit to the state rather than the benefit to the people who put them into this House. If the Opposition took a wider view for the benefit of Western Australia as a whole instead of its political mates, it would grow up and start to become a very effective opposition, instead of the narrow sectional interest that it is.

Western Australia is not alone in this action. Victoria has already mounted a challenge, South Australia has lodged a challenge, and Western Australia will lodge its challenge next week. New South Wales will challenge by intervening on one of the other challenges, and so will Tasmania. Most of the states are lining up to challenge the Federal Government's legislation. The Northern Territory also intended to intervene and mount a challenge, but it suddenly had an election to face so that challenge has been put on hold.

I understand members of the Labor Party from this State Parliament are in the Northern Territory campaigning for the Labor Party candidate. In other words, they put their party political mates ahead of the interests of their electorates and this state.

I thought the Opposition would also want to know on what basis that advice has been received. I assure the House that the advice we have received is that we have a good chance of success on a number of the grounds - not all - that we will be challenging. We intend to try to knock those areas out of the federal legislation, because clearly the Federal Government has gone beyond its constitutional power in overriding the states. The Federal Government has a track record of enacting unconstitutional legislation. I remind members opposite about the legislation to ban political advertising, which was thrown out in the High Court. We believe the Federal Government has overstepped the mark also in this case. To back up the thrust of our attack, seeing that the Federal Government has found new ways of elevating the status of International Labour Organisation conventions to override and crush states' rights, I intend to go to Geneva to find ways to prevent those conventions from coming in.

I warn members opposite that it can go both ways. One day, there will be a federal coalition government. Members opposite are scared that if they use the ILO convention on freedom of association to introduce legislation, all of the precious exclusive reserves of their union mates will go out the window. The wheel does turn, the tide comes in and goes out, and one day the boot will be on the other foot. I guarantee that members opposite will scream loud and long when that legislation comes through. It is as inevitable as night follows day that there will be a change.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to bring his answer to a conclusion.

Mr KIERATH: It is difficult for me to get a word in edgeways because of this undisciplined Opposition. It cannot even behave itself in question time.

The SPEAKER: Order! Please bring your answer to a conclusion.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections. I ask members to cease that level of interjecting, and I direct the Minister to bring his answer to a conclusion forthwith.

Mr KIERATH: I was trying, Mr Speaker. The challenge will be on the basis of the minimum conditions provisions, the right to strike, secondary boycotts, and discrimination on the basis of sex, age, physical or mental activity; and we will fight this to the end.

WANNEROO CITY COUNCIL - DIVIDING, NOT WITHIN MINISTER'S POWERS

48. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer the Minister to a full chapter of the Kyle report into the City of Wanneroo, which recommends splitting the city because of the "ridiculously onerous" responsibilities placed on councillors, which of course also means that powerbrokers can easily corrupt the processes, and ask -

- (1) Can the Minister confirm his radio comments earlier today that he believes it is not within his power to divide the City of Wanneroo?
- (2) How does the Minister explain his capacity to divide Perth City Council into four parts, but not Wanneroo?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1)-(2) The member is right. I am rather surprised that he has the courage to ask the question. It seems to me that most of the debate on local government issues is taking place in another place, and I wonder whether the member and some of his colleagues might like to take up that debate in this House. The City of Perth was regarded as a one-off situation because it is the capital city of Western Australia, and this Government chose to use legislation to change the boundaries and structure of that capital city. However, I made commitments during that debate that no other local authority would be treated in the same fashion as the capital city, and that commitment holds to this day. At this stage, I have received a petition seeking to split the City of Wanneroo, and I understand from comments that I have heard from the community that other petitions may be imminent. Once I have received those petitions, I will be seeking advice from the Department of Local Government on the due process in line with the Local Government Act. In other words, either a poll could be held based on the structure of the petition, or alternatively I will put in place a boundaries commission to determine whether the City of Wanneroo boundaries should be changed. That is the situation to date.

Mr Court: Does the member for Ashburton think it should be split?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OMODEI: The interesting response from the shadow Minister for Local Government was that "it may well be". That contrasts a fair amount with his colleagues in another place, although nobody has said whether it should be split into two, three or four parts and how it should be restructured. The member for Glendalough believes in another arrangement.

Several members interjected.

Mr OMODEI: The Opposition appears to be confused on this matter. Mr Kyle

has the right to suggest within his report that the City of Wanneroo should be split. However, 'due process' should take place.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OMODEI: The Government is treating the City of Wanneroo and its potential split in line with the Local Government Act.

FAMILY CENTRES - CANNINGVALE, CONSTRUCTION NEGOTIATIONS

49. Mr BOARD to the Minister for Community Development:

What is the current position and state of negotiations between his department and the Canning City Council regarding the construction of a family centre at Canning Vale?

Mr NICHOLLS replied:

I thank the member for his question and for his cooperation in this matter. Negotiations between the Department for Community Development, the council and the community regarding the Canning Vale facility were undertaken through a community-based committee. The Building Management Authority has been involved in that process. An agreement was reached to collocate the child health centre with the council hall and changerooms being planned for the area. This facility will be positioned near the proposed Livingstone primary school, the location for which the Education Department recently gave approval. Submissions are being sought regarding the undertaking of contract drawings, and negotiations are being undertaken with the City of Canning. I understand that the submissions will close on Friday, 3 June, and I hope that the project will proceed in the near future and be completed by the end of the calendar year.

RAILWAYS - NORTHERN SUBURBS

Overcrowding

50. Mr TAYLOR to the Premier:

I refer to the fact that trains on the northern suburbs railway line are so crammed that commuters are forced in peak hours to wait for the second or even third train before boarding.

- (1) Does the Premier agree with the comments which I understand were made by the Minister for Transport along the lines that the fact that people are standing on the trains demonstrated the efficiency with which the Government was running the transport system?
- (2) Is it the Government's intention to cram every train and penalise every passenger with higher fares in order to increase that efficiency?
- (3) Are trains sliding past railway stations as a means of avoiding overcrowding?

Mr COURT replied:

(1)-(3) The last part of the question is a technical matter, and I only know the explanation I read in a newspaper advertisement which apologised for what was happening.

Mr Taylor: It was the most amazing Monty Python-type advertisement I have seen for a long time. I spoke about it last night.

Mr COURT: Yes. I cannot give a detailed answer on the cramming of trains during peak hour traffic. However, I will follow the matter through with

the Minister for Transport. The number of passengers on public transport last year increased by approximately 6 per cent, most of which was on train travel; that is an encouraging sign.

In relation to ensuring that there are enough trains, the Leader of the Opposition would know of the difficulty involved in increasing the number of trains, including the cost of the units and their use in peak hours. I do not know what are the plans for additional trains or carriages to be brought on stream, but I will obtain that information for the Leader of the Opposition. During a meeting this morning Stuart Hicks said that an increase in the traffic on trains is again being budgeted for. I will get all of the information for the Leader of the Opposition, including future plans for purchasing more rolling stock.

HOSPITALS - BUNBURY REGIONAL

Location

51. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

I have given some notice of this question. In regard to the location of the new Bunbury regional hospital, I ask:

- (1) Has an announcement been made on the location for the new Bunbury regional hospital?
- (2) Where will the new hospital be located?
- (3) What are the advantages of the site?

Mr MINSON replied:

I thank the member for notice of this question.

- (1)-(3) I can inform the member and the House that the new Bunbury regional hospital is proposed to be located next to the Edith Cowan Bunbury campus which is located at the corner of Robertson Drive and Bussell Highway. There are a number of advantages to this site. Firstly, it provides not only room for the hospital as it will be built now but also plenty of room for future expansion. Secondly, as I said, it will be next to the Edith Cowan University. As members will be aware, there is a considerable amount of synergy between training institutions and hospitals. As that synergy develops, being so closely related in terms of geography will be of great advantage to them. Thirdly, it releases the existing Blair Street site for improved aged care facilities. Finally, the land is readily available and there will be no delay in the construction phase of the hospital.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE - WOMEN, PREGNANT WHO RESIGN AFTER THREE YEARS CONTINUOUS SERVICE, NO CHANGE COMMITMENT

52. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Labour Relations:

- (1) Will the Government give an unequivocal commitment that pro rata long service leave will continue to be an entitlement for women who are pregnant or newly delivered and who resign their job having completed at least three years' continuous service?
- (2) If this commitment cannot be given, what changes does the Government plan to make?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)-(2) I am not aware of any plan to change that. I have under my responsibility a body called the Western Australian Labour Relations Advisory Council. All of the legislation that I plan to introduce or to which changes are intended will go through that body. I am happy to provide any discussion

papers that we have in relation to this matter. I will chase up my department to see whether it has any information about this matter for the member concerned.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT FOR - CHILD ABUSE
Staff Not Making Professional Assessments

53. Mr BLOFFWITCH to the Minister for Community Development:

Are suggestions correct that Department for Community Development staff members are not making professional assessments of child abuse allegations which have been referred to the department?

Mr NICHOLLS replied:

I will touch on the issue that, quite frankly, members now in opposition simply see as a political agenda. I put on the record that the Court Government is very committed to addressing the issues of child abuse and abuse in our community.

Mr Kobelke: So committed that you would not even speak in the debate last night.

Mr Court: Don't you talk about your track record. Some of the instances that came out of the department are bad news, and we are addressing them.

Mr Taylor: If it was so serious, why did you not answer it last night?

The SPEAKER: Order! The quantity and, in one case at least, the sheer volume of the interjections are intolerable. It is not possible to hear the answer of the person who has been asked the question. That right must be preserved.

Mr NICHOLLS: Some statements were reported in today's *The West Australian* which were attributed to the Mofflyn Child and Family Care Services' director regarding cases which were believed to have been referred to the department but not suitably followed through. I have spoken to the director and requested that she provide me with those details, because it is important that these allegations are pursued and where there are valid issues they should be addressed. I state clearly to the people of Western Australia that the attempt to suggest that the professional staff of the Department for Community Development are not capable of setting priorities and doing their job should be viewed with serious deliberation. The potential downside for the type of political and opportunistic garbage put forward by the Opposition last night and now today is that people in our community will not be prepared to report allegations of what they think may be child abuse because of misinformation and the outright intention to try to denigrate the people who are doing a hard and difficult job. The members opposite should have a very close look at themselves. Instead of trying to score cheap political points, they should be behind the people who are doing the job.
