

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 11 May 1994

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

STATEMENT - BY THE SPEAKER

Exchange Students from United States and Dr Tannock in Speaker's Gallery

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): I advise the House that today in the Speaker's Gallery are exchange students from the United States who are attending the Notre Dame University. I welcome them.

[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: I failed to notice Dr Tannock, who was at school with me many decades ago. I acknowledge him for his contribution not only to the university, but also to football.

PETITION - SUNSET HOSPITAL, CLOSURE

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park) [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 call on the State Government to reconsider its ill-conceived and insensitively handled decision to close Sunset Hospital, Dalkeith.

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 160 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 14.]

PETITION - FITZGERALD RIVER NATIONAL PARK, ROAD REPAIRS

MR AINSWORTH (Roe) [2.08 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 request the State Parliament to intervene in the matter between the various responsible Ministers and the residents and tourists of Ravensthorpe Shire to ensure that the prolonged break in the eastern road access into the Fitzgerald River National Park is repaired with the utmost priority.

We make this request on the following grounds.

1. The break was on 30 May 1993, due directly to the failure of a new emergency relief overflow from the Culham Inlet to the sea, which has been planned and constructed by State Government Departments. Flood water then cut a 250 metre wide channel across the Hamersley Drive at the National Park entrance. It is said that if the overflow had not been constructed, the sand bar and the road would later have broken naturally, but that is uncertain. The last break was over 70 years ago and was artificial.
2. This eastern entrance to the National Park is by far the most convenient and popular of the four 2-WD road entrances, even though it is the furthest from Perth. This is because it is only 8 km from Hopetoun and leads

immediately to a spectacular stretch of coastline with beautiful and accessible beaches, and mountains. There are also popular sea and inlet fishing spots and several good campsites. In a survey by the Department of Conservation and Land Management in 1988, 58% of all vehicles entering the Park used this one entrance and 61% of all expenditure by Park visitors in surrounding districts was made in Hopetoun and Ravensthorpe.

3. The only other 2-WD route to the same stretch of coastline is 100 km from Ravensthorpe and 150 km from Hopetoun, by a narrow and slow rough gravel drive.
4. Local tourist offices and businesses daily face angry complaints from tourists expecting to visit the National Park, which is one of only two in WA of international biosphere status. The break is causing long-term damage to the popularity of the area which it was previously gaining rapidly with the rise of eco-tourism.
5. Residents of the district are equally affected by the break, for the varied recreational activities which the National Park provides. Many have retired to live here because the coastline is so easily accessible by car.

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 352 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 15.]

PETITION - ROELANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, CLOSURE

MR BRADSHAW (Wellington) [2.10 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 -

totally oppose the closure of the Roelands Primary School.

call on the Minister for Education to consult with local people, parents and schools before he makes such important and vital decisions affecting our community.

as a matter of urgency call on the Minister for Education to maintain the Roelands Primary School for the benefit of local families and the community.

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 132 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 16.]

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT - MINISTER FOR WATER RESOURCES

Water Supply, Perth Region

MR OMODEI (Warren - Minister for Water Resources) [2.14 pm]: I take this opportunity to refer to a number of water-related issues of importance to the community. Some people have expressed concern about Perth's water supply position, and some have

suggested water restrictions should be imposed. This is not surprising, in light of the record dry period for the last six months. However, it is important for people to understand that Perth's water supply system does not rely on summer rains. Generally speaking, rainfall in summer is light. We rely on winter rains to replenish our dams - and these surface water supplies are augmented by vast underground resources. I can assure the House that Perth is not about to run out of water. Additional capacity is being developed in a number of country centres and for the metropolitan area. The North Dandalup Dam has been completed and will provide a further 22 million cubic metres of water per year to the metropolitan water supply system. This is equivalent to just under 10 per cent of Perth's current annual demand. If restrictions do become necessary, I will introduce them without hesitation but they are not necessary now. Dams supplying the Perth-Mandurah region are about 32 per cent full. This is less than at this time last year, but it has been far lower in some previous years. For example, in 1991 the figure was 24 per cent and in 1988 just 20 per cent.

The important fact is that the 32 per cent storage in our dams could supply Perth's water needs for almost one year - even without any rain this winter. Of course, it will not have to, as we supply about 40 per cent of our water needs from underground. Right now, with our dam supplies plus ground water, we have about two years' supply available. This does not mean people should waste water. It is a precious resource, and it is very costly to develop more and more new sources. Members may recall that the recently completed North Dandalup Dam was constructed at a cost of \$60m. There is also an obvious environmental cost in increasing our draw on ground water and developing new sources. Most people are now more aware of these issues, but there is a lot more we can do.

The Water Authority is in the process of developing - through a major public involvement study - its long-term strategy for water conservation in the Perth region. The aim is to gradually, but permanently, reduce long-term per capita water consumption and a key component will be greater water efficiency. It is estimated that by the year 2020 the Perth-Mandurah population will have risen from 1.2m to over two million people. On present usage that growth would see water demand double, and inefficiencies such as low-flow shower roses, low water dual-flush toilets and water efficient washing machines will become increasingly important. For example, the change over from the old single-flush 11 litre toilet to the dual-flush six-and-three-litre toilet will save about 11m cubic metres by 2020. This is equivalent to half the anticipated supply from the new North Dandalup Dam. Reducing per capita consumption will help reduce the need to develop additional water sources and thus reduce the financial and environmental costs associated with the use of our water resources. It is cost, in financial and environmental terms, not availability, that is the central issue in future water supply.

[Questions without notice taken.]

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT - ATTORNEY GENERAL *Boot Camps and Juvenile Justice Programs, U.S. and Canada Visit*

MRS EDWARDES (Kingsley - Attorney General) [2.49 pm] - by leave: I wish to report on the official visit to the United States of America and Canada to examine boot camps and juvenile justice programs.

A view commonly expressed in the media and in many of the letters which I receive from constituents is that the level of crime in our community is unacceptably high. Of particular concern is the number of offences being committed by young people. This problem is not unique to Western Australia. Other states and countries have similar concerns. One view is that young offenders would benefit from sterner discipline. The much lower rates of crime in Singapore and Japan are cited as evidence for a tougher approach. Some have suggested that military training would instil greater self-discipline in our young people and assist in reducing the crime rate. For similar reasons, the 1980s saw the emergence of so-called boot camp prisons in the United States.

Ten years ago in the United States boot camp prisons were introduced to provide a tough,

highly disciplined sanction as an alternative to detention or imprisonment for young adult offenders. Modelled on the military boot camp training program, the early boot camp prisons emphasised military-style discipline, drill and ceremony, physical fitness, and hard labour. Inmates began their day before dawn and were required to participate in highly structured activities until lights out 16 hours later.

An underlying assumption is that participation in a boot camp program will generate improved self-discipline and enhanced self-esteem. More recent developments in boot camp programs in the United States have seen a greatly increased emphasis on remedial education, drug and alcohol counselling, and other such rehabilitative activities. Some programs also incorporated a period of intensive post-release follow-up to facilitate the offender's successful reintegration into the community.

The purpose of the official visit to the United States and Canada, which I undertook between 15 April and 26 April 1994 with the Director General of the Ministry of Justice, Mr David Grant, the Executive Director Strategic and Specialist Services of the Ministry, Dr Robert Fitzgerald, and Mr Craig Halligan of my office, was twofold: Firstly, to examine at first hand the operation of boot camps in the United States and to compare this approach with that being followed in the province of Ontario, Canada; and, secondly, to recommend how the approach could be applied in Western Australia.

The itinerary was designed to enable consideration of the broad spectrum of programs operating in the United States. Given the short time available, it was necessary to be highly selective. The Georgia and New York State programs were selected because they represent the two extremes of the boot camp continuum, and are significantly different from the City of New York Correction Department program visited by Mr Ian Hill, former executive director of the then department of corrective services, and Dr Fitzgerald in 1991. By way of contrast, the province of Ontario, Canada, does not operate alternatives to imprisonment along boot camp lines. However, the province does operate Residential Community Resource Centres and Open Custody (Youth) Centres which are structured differently from, but serve similar functions to, the US boot camps. Facilities in remote northern Ontario towns were examined with particular reference to the ways in which these programs had been designed and adapted to meet the needs of indigenous offenders.

The Georgia visit focused on probation boot camps which have the objectives of -

- beginning a process of change in offenders' attitude and behaviour;
- providing post-release community supervision;
- providing restitution through community service work; and
- achieving cost effectiveness in the management of offenders.

Emphasis is placed on physical fitness, physically demanding community work, and attendance at educational, drug treatment and other such programs, all within a context of strict military discipline.

The target population is physically fit, first offenders aged between 17 and 30 years who need a period of strict regulation but do not need lengthy incarceration in prison. Offenders are sentenced by the court to the program as a condition of a probation order and must complete 90 days on the program, exclusive of days sick or any other periods of absence. They enter the camp in platoons which live together, participate in work, education, exercise and other activities together, and graduate in a formal, military style graduation ceremony.

Stone Mountain Boot Camp, a state-run probation boot camp located one hour from Atlanta, was visited by the study group. The camp accommodates up to 150 offenders sentenced by the court to boot camp as a condition of probation. The facility is a former prison and for this reason only has a mesh wire perimeter with a roll of razor ribbon at the top. Accommodation is in four dormitories. These are sparsely furnished with limited space for personal possessions, no television sets, no indoor recreational equipment and no chairs.

On weekdays the daily regimen for offenders commences at 0500 hours and concludes with lights out at 2200 hours. Offenders are subject to a very tight schedule. Movement both inside and outside the camp is highly regimented. One hour is devoted to physical training and the rest of the day to work details, such as cleaning highway verges of rubbish, planting flowers and trees - for the 1996 Olympic Games - repairing sidewalks, and building walls in Stone Mountain Park. Evenings are devoted to education, drug and alcohol and other such programs. Offenders are required to participate in pre-release preparation in the last 30 days of the program.

Discipline is very strict. Minor breaches are dealt with on the spot by officers imposing penalties such as 20 push-ups. More serious breaches are referred to a hearing officer who may impose penalties such as loss of visits or canteen privileges, or additional time to be served in the camp. The ultimate sanction is referral back to court, which could result in imprisonment.

Boot camp graduates are subject to structured probation supervision for six to nine months. This period is used to reinforce concepts of self discipline, work ethic and acceptable community behaviours initiated during the in-camp component of the program. Some are placed for periods of 90 to 100 days in probation diversion centres, one of which located half an hour from Atlanta was visited. These semi-structured residential facilities are designed for offenders placed directly on probation and for offenders in transition from boot camp to community.

The New York State shock incarceration program is described as "a rigorous multi-treatment program which emphasises discipline, academic education, substance abuse treatment and education, with group and individual counselling, all within a military structure." The program targets offenders within the age range 16 to 34 years who are serving their first term of imprisonment and who are within three years of their parole eligibility. Violent offenders, sex offenders and escape risks are excluded from the program. As in Georgia, offenders enter the camp in platoons, participate in program activities as a group and graduate together in a formal graduation ceremony. The program has two stated goals -

- to treat and release specially selected state prisoners earlier in their sentence than their court mandated minimum period of incarceration without compromising the safety of the community; and

- to reduce the demand for bed space - and, indirectly, costs.

The New York program varies in a number of important respects from that which was studied in Georgia -

- firstly, admission decisions are made by the Department of Correctional Services following the imposition of a prison sentence, not by the courts;

- secondly, the duration of the in-camp program is 180 days, double that in Georgia;

- thirdly, the New York program places less emphasis on military style drill and much greater emphasis on the benefits of living in a therapeutic community, education, and drug and alcohol treatment; and

- finally, the program has a more structured and complete post-release follow-up phase.

Summit Shock Incarceration Facility, a 250 bed camp located one hour from Albany, was visited by the study group. The camp is fairly isolated and has no perimeter fence. Offenders are housed in dormitories which, as in the case of Stone Mountain, are sparsely furnished. There are no television sets, no indoor recreational facilities, and no chairs. The program is highly structured and regimented, and offenders are subjected to strict discipline. There is no doubt that the offenders view the program as being tough; more than one-quarter of those leaving the program do so voluntarily.

Strong emphasis is placed on treatment and education. Program content and structure vary at different stages of the program. Education is mandatory for all inmates who must

spend at least 12 hours in academic classes each week. In general, a further 22 hours each week are spent in treatment programs, mainly, in the late afternoons and evenings. The educational focus is on the enhancement of verbal, mathematical, reading and writing skills with the opportunity of General Education Diploma testing. Daily network group therapy meetings bring peer group pressure to bear on negative attitudes and the promotion of pro-social behaviour. In addition, alcohol and drug treatment, individual counselling as required, and pre-release programs designed to help offenders make the transition to parole are provided.

Disciplinary procedures are similar to those in Georgia. Staff may hand out instant corrective actions such as push-ups or jogging on the spot for minor infractions. Serious misbehaviour may result in removal from the program and return to prison. Approximately 30 per cent of those transferred out of the program were removed for disciplinary reasons. All Shock graduates are required to participate in an intensive after-Shock program to ensure that the discipline and motivation which the Shock program instilled are maintained in the community. Supervision is structured to maximise contact time with the Shock parolees. Frequent home visits, employment and treatment program verifications, curfew checks and urinalysis are conducted by parole officers.

In addition to intensive parole supervision, the Division of Parole has contracted specialised vocational training and employment placement from the New York City based Vera Institute of Justice. Under Vera's vocational development program and neighbourhood work project, new Shock graduates are provided with one week of job preparation training; a guarantee of paid employment for at least 30 days; and assistance after that to obtain a job on the open market. The guaranteed work is low level such as garbage removal, painting and maintenance, and is closely supervised. Shock graduates also have access to relapse prevention counselling provided by the Fellowship Centre of New York City, and the community network program operated by the Episcopal Mission Society under contract to the division of parole. The focus of the visit to Ontario was on programs and facilities other than boot camps which were being used in areas where there was a high rate of offending by Aboriginal or first nation Canadian offenders. The program at the Ivik Youth Residential Centre exemplified the Ontario approach. The Ivik Youth Residential Centre is an eight bed, coeducational, open custody residence for young offenders aged 16 to 18 years located 9 kilometres east of Fort Frances, Ontario - which is itself north west of Lake Superior. Staff of the residence include a program manager, rehabilitation counsellors and a full-time teacher.

The objectives of the centre are to provide -

- custodial care; that is, control and security of offenders sentenced to the centre;
- basic care; that is, services which promote natural, culturally appropriate development in all spheres; and
- remedial assistance; that is, education and treatment to address educational deficiencies and to promote responsible, socially acceptable behaviour.

Young offenders are referred to Ivik by the court on the basis of an assessment of the young person's potential to benefit from participation in the program. Upon admission, a plan of care is developed with the young person in conjunction with his or her probation officer and family. This plan sets goals which the offender will try to achieve while in custody and upon release. In general, the program is aimed at promoting in the residents a greater acceptance of responsibility for their actions. The daily routine of the centre is fairly structured and fairly high standards of neatness, cleanliness and personal hygiene are required. A point system is used to encourage offenders to participate in the daily routine and perform necessary chores.

One of the things which makes the six month Ivik program unique is the emphasis on out tripping, or wilderness experience activities, including canoeing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, backpacking, and extended camping trips which last for five to seven days. These wilderness programs are used to build self-confidence, concern for others, and self-awareness as a result of being exposed to challenging shared experiences. The needs

of indigenous offenders are addressed through the facilitation of native practices and spirituality including, for example, the sweat lodge. All the youths at the centre are encouraged to participate irrespective of their personal beliefs.

The Red Lake Community Resource Centre and other such facilities in northern Ontario provide native-specific residential supervision programs for offenders on temporary absence from prison, or who are subject to probation or parole orders. The 16 bed coeducational centre in Red Lake is operated by a native organisation, the Red Lake Friendship Centre, under contract to the Ministry of Correctional Services. Friendship centres also provide native inmate liaison workers who arrange specific services for native young offenders and prisoners within institutions such as Kenora Jail.

Graduates of boot camp programs perform at least as well as those released from traditional prisons, and there is evidence from evaluation studies conducted by Georgia and New York State correctional authorities that completion of the boot camp program and participation in a follow-up period of intensive parole supervision achieves a reduction in the rate of recidivism. Boot camps should be viewed as forming part of the continuum of sentencing or administrative offender management options. In some states of the United States they are placed at the high end of the community based orders and in others at the low end of the custodial orders.

Careful screening of offenders prior to their being placed on boot camp orders, and during the period of their placement, is important in order to ensure their suitability both in terms of the protection of the community and the likelihood that the offenders will benefit from the programs. Offenders facing their first term of imprisonment, in the age range between 16 and 30 years, but preferably towards the lower end, convicted of non-violent offences and facing prison terms of up to three years, would appear to be the most suitable. As far as possible programs should be tailored to meet the individual circumstances and needs of offenders. The duration of boot camp programs varies. There are advantages and disadvantages of the three and six month program lengths which were observed. In order to maximise the impact of the program and maintain its intensity, a shorter duration is preferred, provided that upon leaving the camp the offender progresses to a period of at least six months intensive supervision in the community.

Essential components of the boot camp approach are -

- a structured and disciplined routine;
- strenuous physical exercise in the form of a structured fitness program;
- intensive community work;
- remedial and other education aimed at improving life skills and job prospects;
- drug, alcohol and other rehabilitation programs;
- pre-release preparation; and
- intensive post boot camp supervision, practical assistance and support.

In addition the following elements are likely to be beneficial -

- group intake and group program participation;
- "outward bound" type activities;
- group sessions during both the in-camp and post-release phases to focus peer group pressure on the development of pro-social behaviours; and
- culturally appropriate activities for indigenous offenders.

Involvement of relevant community members and organisations, particularly in the case of indigenous offenders, and of the families of offenders, is also likely to be of benefit.

A trial of the concept in Western Australia as an alternative to detention or imprisonment is proposed as a means of giving young adult offenders an opportunity to make constructive changes in their lives. The mix of strong discipline, physical exercise and

hard work could be just what is needed to turn some offenders around and divert them from re-offending. The model will, of course, be suitably modified to match conditions in Western Australia. The trial will include the essential and supplementary components which I have already mentioned and, where appropriate, involve community members and families. I table my report.

[See paper No 44.]

MR BROWN (Morley) [3.05 pm]: I was provided with a copy of the lengthy ministerial statement about 15 minutes before the Parliament started. I understand the statement was available prior to that time, but I was not in the House due to other commitments. This statement deals in part with the different models of boot camps.

Points of Order

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member for Morley may well have received that statement only 15 minutes ago, but it was provided to the Leader of the Opposition's office two hours before. I want it made very clear that the Attorney General complied with the convention of the House.

Mr RIPPER: Had the statement not been provided within the time indicated by the Leader of the House we would not have granted leave for the ministerial statement.

The SPEAKER: It is traditional practice that we do this and it seems to me it is an excellent practice that members of the Opposition be given adequate time to respond. It seemed to me that the member for Morley was indicating that, due to other commitments, he was somewhat inhibited from having that amount of time.

Debate Resumed

Mr BROWN: I was making the point, if the Leader of the House was listening, that although the statement was made available two hours before the Attorney General spoke, I received it 15 minutes before, not through any devious act by the Attorney General or the Government, but rather because I was not here. I made that point for no other reason than in the context that in the limited time available to me I will endeavour to respond to what is in the statement.

The statement provided by the Attorney General deals primarily with the question of various models of operation of boot camps in the United States of America and Canada. The central question in this issue is the model to be applied here. People have various views about what might be called a boot camp or an outward bound exercise for young offenders. The critical issue in all this which determines the degree of support or opposition from this Opposition depends on the model brought forward. In the first place, the Opposition placed a number of questions on the Notice Paper seeking information about the precise model that was being considered by this Government. The answer to those questions was that a model had not been determined. Secondly, we placed an application under the Freedom of Information Act seeking documents and other information that would give advice about the model that will be used. That application has yet to be responded to. At this juncture, the Opposition does not know what model is being proposed for Western Australia.

Mr D.L. Smith: I suspect even the Attorney General does not know.

Mr BROWN: Although we do not know exactly what model is being proposed, we are simply left to rely on the press releases issued by the Attorney General and the Premier. It is interesting to read the releases that came forward in the Press when this matter was first announced on 14 and 15 March. In an article appearing in *The West Australian*, the Attorney indicated -

Prime candidates for work camps will be those well and truly off the tracks.

We are talking about candidates who presumably are repeat offenders and who may have been in prison previously. Again on 15 March, the Attorney General is quoted in *The West Australian* as agreeing with comments made by Professor Savage that hard core repeat offenders would be most suited to the program. The message that is constantly being given by the Government is that we are talking about hard core repeat offenders.

In *The West Australian* of 14 March, the Premier launched into the headlines during the Glendalough by-election indicating that the Government would introduce strict, military style camps for juvenile offenders. By press release, the Government has endeavoured to convey to the community of Western Australia that these camps will be used for hard core repeat offenders, people who are out of control, people who have offended over and over again. That is the impression that we get.

The second matter is that, because there is no model for the scheme, an investigation was to be carried out by the Attorney to ascertain whether such a model will work and where one might draw some support for it. That examination was carried out in the United States. When one looks at the alternatives to prison in the United States, one asks whether any examination was made of the prison system in the United States when the Attorney visited that country. I have been to the United States and looked at the prison system.

Mr Kierath: On your imprint account?

Mr BROWN: No, unlike some others who have travelled extensively. I have visited Leavenworth, where a number of different correctional institutions are located. One can see why there might be some encouragement among offenders in the United States to opt for these camps. When one looks at the standard of the prisons, the facilities in the prisons and the types of institutions which are provided in the United States for people who offend, one realises that they are of a much lower and sloppier standard than prisons in Western Australia and the rest of Australia.

There is no comparison. When the Minister holds up a comparison of the success of boot camps in the United States vis-a-vis the success of the prison system and the encouragement for people to opt for so-called boot camps rather than prison, we must look at what that means in the US context. It does not have the same meaning in Western Australia. It is quite different; the two are not comparable. The US experience must be refined and redefined to fit the Western Australian context. One cannot simply extract information on what occurs in the US and place that here. One hopes that we do not simply extract a model from the US. I would hate to see our falling so far behind that we adopt a US model.

Exactly what model is proposed here? Some confusion exists on that point. I refer to *The West Australian* of 15 March 1994, which contained two articles on the one page on boot camps. The first article contained a comment by the journalist, Malcolm Quekett, who was obviously working from a press release -

The camp would be a court directed sentence and used as an alternative to prison.

We are told that it will be a court directed sentence in Western Australia. On the same page, we are told by the Attorney that, although the courts would be able to recommend that juveniles go to a camp, the offender could choose to go to the camp, a detention centre or a gaol. We are not sure what that is. There are two articles in the same paper on the same day containing different views emanating from the Government.

Mrs Edwardes: Can I explain that? It will be court directed, but it is on the basis of advice and assessment of the individual by the court advisory service. The individual must consent before the court would make such a direction to the camp. The court advisory service will recommend to the court but, in doing so, the individual must agree to go there.

Mr BROWN: I thank the Attorney for that explanation. Our difficulty in all this is in obtaining the information. Although we have sought the information by way of questions and an application under the Freedom of Information Act, that information has not yet been forthcoming.

The other question which is at the heart of this issue is whether the so-called boot camps work. Boot camps can be run almost in a military style, with harsh discipline for first offenders; or the camps can be run at the end of the prison sentence when prisoners are in some other form of incarceration. Again, it depends on the model that one looks at as to whether one believes it will work. In Western Australia, for years we have had work

release. There is nothing new about work release. Prison farms have been operating in Western Australia under successive governments since the 1920s. There is nothing wrong with a prison farm. No-one has ever said that it is wrong to incarcerate people on a farm. No-one has ever said that it is wrong to take minimum security prisoners and put them in low security institutions. But we cannot find out whether that is the model.

If that is the model, there may be very few objections. However, if the model is the "lock them up and flog them" model which involves strict discipline, getting people up at four or five in the morning and screaming by sergeant majors - the harsh disciplinary model that the public has been led to believe that it might be - to the extent that it can operate in the Western Australian context, the evidence indicates that it has failed elsewhere.

Let us look at the independent research in the report. The report refers, appropriately in my view, to the one set of data carried out independently. That data reveals that boot camps have not worked. It has been said that the research is dated. It must be updated to see whether it is appropriate in today's environment.

Mrs Edwardes: But the table to which I referred quite clearly shows that there has been some success, even though it is dated research.

Mr BROWN: Although I did not have time to analyse the tables adequately, those research findings, be they dated or not, reveal that the system has not worked. I appreciate the Attorney General has been told by officials in the United States that the system operating in that country is working. There is nothing wrong with being told those things. I am sure that if the Attorney were visited by people from the US she would tell them that the system in this country is working. One does not tell Ministers from other countries what faults there are in this state's system.

Mrs Edwardes: Why not?

Mr BROWN: The Attorney should go on a few international missions and find out. Generally, people are fairly proud of their country. For example, if members talk to American politicians about that country's health system they will say it is wonderful. However, if one talks to an ordinary American who does not have private health insurance he will say that it is the worst health system in the world. Bureaucrats do not tell the whole truth; they try to make an impression.

Independent research is necessary. If we were genuinely looking for a method to deal with young offenders by encouraging them not to re-offend and to become law abiding citizens, it would be one thing. Members should recall that this issue was first raised not as a result of an exhaustive government inquiry, not as a result of the Attorney General's visit to the US or independent research, but in the middle of a by-election campaign. It was raised to create the imagery that the Government had a solution to an important and difficult issue.

Instead of creating the imagery and making the same mistakes which have been made in the US this Government should step back and give more thought and further consideration to the issue to allow programs to be implemented in this state which will ensure that those people who do offend have every opportunity to re-enter the community and do not re-offend again.

BILLS (3) - INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. **Supply Bill**

2. **State Bank of South Australia (Transfer of Undertaking) Bill**

Bills introduced, on motions by Mr C.J. Barnett (Leader of the House), and read a first time.

3. **Young Offenders Bill**

Bill introduced, on motion by Mrs Edwardes (Attorney General), and read a first time.

LAPSED BILLS

Restoration to Notice Paper

On motion by Mr Ripper, resolved that the following Bills be restored to the Notice Paper at the stages which they reached in the previous session of Parliament -

1. Chiropractors and Osteopaths Registration Bill 1993
2. Health Services (Conciliation and Review) Bill 1993
3. Medical Treatment Bill 1993
4. Transfer of Land Amendment Bill 1993
5. Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Amendment Bill 1993
6. Government Pricing Tribunal Bill 1993
7. Police Amendment Bill 1993
8. De Facto Relationships Bill 1993
9. Administration (De Facto Relationships) Amendment Bill 1993
10. Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Amendment Bill 1993

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 10 May.

MR CATANIA (Balcatta) [3.26 pm]: In my contribution to this debate I will comment on the Government's vision for this state which was outlined in the Governor's speech. I express concern at the comments he made about law and order.

In January 1993, prior to the last state election, this Government, when in opposition, made law and order the centre of its election platform to persuade electors to elect it to the Treasury benches. Its platform outlined how it would address the lack of law and order in this state. I quote from the coalition platform and under the section allocated to victims of crime it states -

Establish a Victims of Crime unit in Midland, Wanneroo, Armadale and Fremantle. Other units will be established according to demand. Initially, a special 24-hour 008 phone number will be set up for victims in country areas;

I do not know whether that has been implemented because I have not heard anything about it. Another point reads -

Ensure police have adequate powers and resources to intervene in cases of domestic violence;

It was a very good promise, but again I do not know whether it has been implemented or whether it will be implemented. I am not aware of any legislation which has been introduced by this Government giving special privileges to the police to allow them to intervene in cases of domestic violence.

The next item relates to juvenile justice and it identifies the areas in which the then opposition said it would provide additional resources to make the Police Force more efficient. It reads -

Thoroughly review the conditions of service for police to identify areas in which the State can offer more support for police officers who work under highly dangerous or stressful conditions. Included in this will be a review of the counselling available for officers who deal with horrific crimes of violence or road accidents.

That has not taken place. What will take place, as we saw today from the Minister's answer, is that the police officers will be offered counselling. The way this Government will solve that problem is by offering them counselling. The Government will not

improve the conditions of service of police officers so that they will be more satisfied and contented and able to perform their job properly. The next point reads -

Continue to support the establishment of a working party to consider an optional retirement scheme for police officers to enable them to retire on full pension after 30 years of qualifying service without the retirement options available to police officers at 55 years of age;

This is one of the major concerns of police officers. There has been a constant complaint by police that a working party has not been established and that the Government has no intention of establishing a working party to examine this issue. The next point reads -

Formally recognise the role of police spouses who presently act as unpaid assistants at country stations and examine means of providing appropriate compensation for these spouses, including short term contracts for station cleaning and casual reception duties;

The Government has refused to consider compensation for the spouses of country police officers, who act as de facto police officers. This is one example of country police officers being given worse conditions rather than better conditions. The next point reads -

Investigate replacing police orderlies in the courts with public servants;

We have heard the Minister for Police and other Government members say that they will deal with this issue, but all we have seen so far is a report by an independent management consultant, suggesting that action be taken. I hope the Minister for Police, if he is aware of the problem - he appears not to be aware of too many things - will put in place this measure. The next point reads -

Ensure that the police regions outside the metropolitan area have a full roster of officers;

If ever we have read a furphy, this is it. This Government has reduced the number of police officers on the roster in not only country areas but also the metropolitan area. The next point is interesting. The Minister for Police has in fact stated that he will do the reverse. It reads -

Guarantee that all one-officer police stations in the country will remain open unless an alternative which is acceptable to the local community has been put in place;

That has not taken place. I have received letters from country shires and local governments that state this is not the case. The next point reads -

Implement a curfew program as a trial in a number of country regions where problems of violence and crime exist as a characteristic of the region. Programs will only operate where there is support from the community, local council and police.

We have not seen that happen. The third section is headed "Police - A Stronger Force". The first point is the famous promise that 800 additional police officers will be provided over the four year period that this Government occupies the Treasury benches. It states also that -

A working party comprising representatives of the Police Board, the WA Police Union and Treasury will be established to assess and recommend subsequent increases to police personnel;

That is incorrect and inconsistent with the Government's behaviour. In fact, the Deputy Premier suggested that police stations be closed. The Minister for Police suggested that police numbers be reduced.

Mr Minson: What are you quoting from?

Mr CATANIA: From the Liberal Party's law and order policy released before the last election - more jobs, better management, and a better Police Force. The next point reads,

"Establish an independent Police Complaints Tribunal". That has not even been considered. In fact, it has been refuted by the Minister for Police. The next point reads -

Supplement Westrail security officers with an increased police presence on suburban trains to enable the public to travel in safety;

I have yet to see that, and I do not think we should hold our breath. The next point reads -

Expand and modernise police training facilities to cope with the intake of new recruits . . .

The Government should consider increasing the number of recruits, because the number of recruits presently in the academy will not be enough to take the place of those police officers who are currently on suspension for one reason or another.

Mr Wiese: How many police officers are on suspension? That is the sort of stupid nonsense that you talk in this place all the time.

Mr CATANIA: The Minister for Police quoted eight today. Tell the shadow Minister for Police, to whom you are not willing to supply statistics, what are the numbers.

Mr Wiese: How many are on suspension now?

Mr CATANIA: The Minister for Police said today there were eight police on suspension.

Mr Wiese: Those officers are not on suspension, and you know that.

Mr CATANIA: If they are not on active duty, I would say they are on suspension, or whatever the Minister would like to call it.

Mr Wiese: They are on active duty. They are not on suspension.

Mr CATANIA: Are they on desk duty, or whatever the Minister likes to call it?

Mr Wiese: No. They are doing exactly the same duties as they were doing previously, so they are not on suspension.

Mr CATANIA: Are there two officers on suspension?

Mr Wiese: I do not know at this stage. I do not think a single police officer is on suspension at present.

Mr CATANIA: Then would the Minister agree that there is no necessity, as this document states, to have a modernised police training facility?

Mr Wiese: What you just said was typical of the stupid statements that you make in this place. That is totally incorrect and without foundation.

Mr CATANIA: It is good to see the Minister find his voice for once. The matters to which I refer may be incorrect in certain aspects because the Minister's office either does not have the statistics available or does not want to give the statistics to the Opposition about crime or the number of police officers who are on suspension.

Mr Wiese: Have you ever asked a question either on notice or without notice about how many police officers are on suspension?

Mr CATANIA: I have asked questions about police statistics, which the Minister does not desire to answer, particularly when they may be used to discount what the Minister has stated. Another promise made by the Liberal Party is to review the police prosecutions unit. Will we get that unit?

Mr Wiese: The member would know that the inner workings of the Police Force will be reviewed over the next 12 to 18 months.

Mr CATANIA: Is the Minister saying that the recommendations made by an independent management consultant will be implemented over the next 18 months, and in the meantime the Government will do nothing to address the problems being experienced today by our Police Force?

Mr Wiese: No. Had the member read the report that was provided to him, he would

know that there is a program whereby that will be implemented, with the Police Department working together with the independent consultant to identify the changes to be made and to put those changes into effect. Had the member read that report, he would know that there is a timetable.

Mr CATANIA: Does the Minister agree that the operation of the Police Force should be addressed under the law and order area, and that perhaps that should have been addressed by the Governor in his speech?

Mr Wiese: The whole operation of the Police Force is being addressed right now, and that process will continue over the next 12 or 18 months.

Mr CATANIA: I have no confidence that what the Minister states will be carried out. The Governor, on Thursday, 5 May - 18 months after this Government was elected to office - on the opening of this Parliament, stated -

There is unmistakable community concern about law and order issues.

I agree entirely with that comment. The speech continues -

The public perceives a general deterioration in safety and respect for the law. The Government is responding to this concern.

The way it will respond to this concern is solely through punitive action for juvenile crime. The Government's response is to blame the whole breakdown in law and order on juveniles. The Governor's speech continues -

These continue the Government's initiative across a broad front to reverse the trend to more lawlessness and lift community pride, especially among young people.

The whole emphasis in the Governor's speech on law and order was to suggest punitive action for juvenile crime, and this is how the Government has addressed law and order during the last 18 months. The Minister has not dealt with the Police Department, an area for which he is responsible, and its problems associated with accommodation, hours of work and the number of police available on the beat. Of the 4 200 police officers in this state, no more than 30 per cent of personnel are on duty at any time in the day or afternoon shifts, and the figure is 5 to 15 per cent at night. The Minister cannot tell me that that is proper administration.

The Minister points to the Commissioner of Police and says that he is responsible for operations. I point to the Minister: The Commissioner of Police is his chief executive officer, and if the commissioner does not oversee the operation of the Police Force, the Minister is responsible. If the merit-based promotion system is not operating properly, and the morale of the Police Force is declining daily, it is a problem for not only the Commissioner of Police but also the Government and the Minister. No desire or move to address this problem has been evident, other than the reluctant release of the Scoping report. As the Opposition Leader stated, it was like pulling teeth to have the report made available publicly. This is the Government's answer to the police operation and crime problem.

Crime is on the increase. Statistics requested from the Minister's department were not made available to the Opposition in its endeavour to carry out its duty properly; however, they were made available to every community newspaper in Western Australia. Those statistics indicate that crime is on the increase. The Minister and his Government are not addressing that problem.

One area not being addressed is the proper operation of the Police Force. The Minister cannot allow the Police Force to be starved of funds. He must devote personnel to look at the financial resources on a day to day basis to see whether commitments can be met so that the force operates effectively and efficiently. A Police Force cannot operate under such great financial pressure and still provide the security which the state expects of it. That responsibility rests directly in the lap of the Minister and his Government. The Government is not living up to the promises it made to the community in its crime platform before the last election. Not one promise made at that time has been met by this

Government. The Minister has a long time to go and if he cannot deliver once in his 18 months in office, it is a sad and sorry state of affairs. The Minister's central push to deal with crime has been directed at juvenile crime. We have seen juveniles committing crime, yet the Government's response is a slick advertising campaign revolving around graffiti. This is an important problem which creates costs for business; however, it is certainly not the only issue to be dealt with by the Government. Graffiti has been used as a gimmick to mislead the community of Western Australia to the view that this Government is actually addressing a visible problem. Nevertheless, this issue is not as important as other crimes, such as break-ins, theft, assault and car theft.

Mr C.J. Barnett: I hope you will listen tomorrow when the Attorney General makes the second reading speech for the young offender legislation.

Mr CATANIA: The Leader of the House is supporting my argument: The whole emphasis and focus of this Government regarding the crime problem is upon juveniles. Western Australia has many more problems in this area than just juvenile offenders. If the entire problem is not dealt with by a properly resourced Police Force, law and order in this State will not be addressed. The Government's approach is irresponsible.

I heard with interest today the Attorney General outline the experience of her trip to the United States, where she dealt with youth camps. Again, that was dealing with only juvenile crime. Boot camps were chosen as a central issue in the Glendalough by-election campaign, together with the Government asking the former Prime Minister of Singapore to tell WA how to handle juvenile crime. Again, they are gimmicks. The Government is telling the people of Western Australia, "We will kick all these kids into military-style camps, and we will hang people, innocent or not, if they commit a murder." To top it off, the Government will ask the former Prime Minister of Singapore to tell us how things are done in Singapore, which has a low crime rate. This is the Government's central focus to solve the ever increasing crime problem in Western Australia.

This Government should look at the social problems which cause not only juvenile crime, but also crime in general. The Government should be looking at not only punitive measures but also measures to help people who, with some assistance, would not offend and re-offend. The Minister for Community Development, for example, is spending less in his portfolio than in previous years. This is an area on which the previous Government focused a lot of energy and financial resources, but it is being depleted daily. The Police Minister is unable to convince his colleagues that appropriate finances must be provided to the Police Department. However, the Police Department and its personnel have a special position in any community. They provide security to the people on the streets of Perth, in the country towns and in the bush areas to enable Western Australians to enjoy a style of living that they are used to. This Government is not providing the Police Force with resources in the areas of most need; that is, human resources -

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I bring to the attention of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition the relevant standing order about entering the Chamber.

Mr Taylor: There was not really any other way of getting in here.

Mrs Hallahan: My apologies, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr CATANIA: The Government has not provided the Police Force with human resources and adequate accommodation, mechanisation and laws that will help it to carry out its duties. This lack of assistance was obvious with the introduction by the Opposition of the Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Bill. The previous day the Minister had sought cooperation with the Opposition for a bipartisan approach to law and order, and the Opposition promised him that cooperation. The Opposition had brought to this Chamber a perfectly good piece of legislation. If the Government did not think that the proposed legislation came up to its expectation, it could have amended it and the Opposition would have agreed to the amendments. This would have given the police a piece of legislation which would have dealt with the anomalies that existed in the second-hand dealers and pawnbrokers legislation.

This Government, through this Minister, has not taken action to give the police the

appropriate tools to enable them to do their job appropriately and more efficiently. In the area of recruitment, I am told that young people who are doing the Associate Diploma of Social Science (Police Studies) at Edith Cowan University have been advised that they cannot hope to go to the academy in June as would be the normal procedure because there will not be an intake. Young people, who are very keen and interested in getting qualified to enter the police academy to wear the uniform of the Police Force of Western Australia proudly, are being told, "Your studies will not result in anything. We will not be taking recruits as we promised we would. In fact, only half of the 40 people will be getting the opportunities." That is the type of Police Force for which the Minister is responsible. It is not properly resourced and does not have the tools to enable it to act effectively. The Government has not dealt with firearms, which was referred to today; prostitution; drugs; and the gaming laws. I am particularly concerned about the latter because I have received complaints from billiard houses and family centres in Northbridge that as their opening hours have been regulated, they will not be able to stay open after midnight and will be out of step with the other entertainment venues there. These are all areas in which the Police Force needs more resources and legislation to enable it to operate efficiently.

My final point relates to one area which the Minister has said is decreasing; that is, morale. I will spend the last few minutes available to me speaking about this specific area because it is very important. I believe a number of actions taken by police officers which have attracted the wrath not only of the community of Western Australia but also their superiors have been caused by the lack of leadership shown by this Government in not appointing a deputy commissioner and other senior personnel. In turn, this has left a void below that position with officers acting in senior positions, culminating in a lack of respect by officers for their superiors which has drifted down the line. In fact, police officers are not showing the respect that should be shown to their superior officers when given directions. This reaction exists purely and solely because the morale of police officers is low. They see their jobs and their standing in the community being downgraded because this Government will not give them the lifeline and the resources to enable them to do their duties properly. They have to operate out of small, cramped police stations, with 24 officers operating out of a station which should accommodate only three or four. The manning and operation levels are below par so they are unable to attack the crime rate in their particular area. Their overtime and long service leave have been cut, and annual leave is being restricted to a specific year. It is no wonder that morale is down. I condemn the Government for this and I condemn the lack of emphasis on this area in the address given by the Governor at the opening of this Parliament.

Amendment to motion

Mr CATANIA: Therefore, I move -

That the following words be added to the motion -

but the House regrets to inform His Excellency that despite the Government's election promise to "rebuild a strong and well equipped police force to halt the crime wave and introduce wide-ranging reforms to make sure that crime doesn't pay", the Police Force is in crisis and crime continues to increase at an alarming rate.

The House advises that -

- (1) Public confidence in the Police Force is at an extremely low ebb following reports of a wave of well-publicised and highly-questionable police activities.
- (2) Morale within the force itself has collapsed, due largely to the incompetence of the Police Minister, and has led to greater police difficulties in coping with the crime rate.
- (3) Increases in police numbers promised by the Liberal Party before the last state election have failed to materialise.

- (4) That the Minister's inaction and inability to convince Cabinet colleagues of the need for priority funding for the Police portfolio is further destabilising the force.
- (5) The Commissioner of Police or his representative has been excluded from the selection process for the new Commissioner and police officers are openly speculating that the Government is trying to appoint a political ally as the next Commissioner.

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Leader of the Opposition) [3.57 pm]: The Minister for Police - without wanting to sound condescending towards him - is well aware of my personal respect for him as an individual. This issue is about the role of the member as the Minister for Police and it deals very directly with what is happening in Western Australia in relation to that Police Force. I suggest to the Minister that the essence of the problem goes back to last year when he took to Cabinet a recommendation for the appointment of a deputy commissioner of police. From what I understand, it was overturned and no appointment was made to the position for reasons that may be best understood by him and others, but I will not seek to canvass those reasons. Nonetheless, Cabinet refused to accept the appointment of Mr Ayton as the Deputy Commissioner of Police. From that time those in the upper echelons of the Police Department must have felt that they did not have the confidence of this Government. We all understand that when it comes to confidence in leadership, people are fully aware that if a leader or leaders do not have the support where it is necessary, it makes their job very difficult indeed. Undoubtedly that sort of problem is further exposed in an organisation such as the Police Force which relies absolutely on the necessity for discipline.

Members of the Police Force must understand that if they step out of line, most certainly they will have problems. Perhaps the first mistake the Minister made in the handling of this portfolio was when he allowed Cabinet to overrule that recommendation. Without wanting to have the benefit of hindsight I am sure the Minister would agree that, had he gone to some of his colleagues, in particular to his National Party colleagues, and indicated to them clearly that it was his wish and the wish of the Police Force, and that it made a lot of sense, to appoint Mr Ayton as deputy commissioner of police as recommended by the Police Force, then certainly it would have made a difference. Instead we found there was no agreement, no acceptance that Mr Ayton would become deputy commissioner of police, and we are left with a situation where there is effectively no deputy commissioner. But worse than that, in Western Australia the Commissioner of Police has announced his intention to resign, the Deputy Commissioner, Frank Zanetti has in fact resigned, the Assistant Commissioner, Crime, has also announced his intention to move on, the Assistant Commissioner, General Operations, the Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support, and the Assistant Commissioner, Policy Planning Evaluation have resigned, and one of the commanders has resigned. I am sure if the Minister looked across the upper echelons of the Police Force in Western Australia today he would find position after position either empty or filled by people in an acting capacity. It is not one or two positions; it is at least a dozen senior positions in the Police Force of Western Australia in that situation. We cannot run a Police Force in circumstances where the senior people are, first of all, unsure as to their future, where the senior people are moving on, where they do not consider that they have the support of the Government of the day and where that flows through to the lower ranks. It certainly has flowed through into the union and it has flowed right down to the very low levels of the Police Force where officers do not believe that they have the support of this Government. We are seeing the consequences of that right through the Police Force today.

Despite the Minister's efforts to get \$2.5m recently he has still not been able to get sufficient dollars to ensure the Police Force has what it needs. The Minister is part of a government that promised 800 additional police officers, and there is an expectation that promise will be fulfilled. Instead we will see by 30 June a virtual decrease in the number of police as compared with a year ago; or, if it is an increase, it will be a small increase indeed. Units such as the retail theft unit and the heavy haulage unit have been abandoned or put to one side. The Police Union secretary is saying that the Police Force

has lost confidence in the Government. The police commissioner has been deliberately undermined by some ranks in the Government because they will not accept his recommendation for police commissioner. The retiring police commissioner is being denied a place on the selection panel for his replacement.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Do you think an outgoing chief executive officer should be able to nominate his successor or indeed sit on the selection panel?

Mr TAYLOR: I am not saying he should nominate the person who should take his place. I understand he would have a preference, because most chief executives would. Certainly that person should have a role in the selection panel. Given the nature of the Police Force, replacing a commissioner of police is different from replacing the chief of Woolworths or indeed replacing a head of a government department. It is a different situation and that should be understood.

Mr Wiese: Do you think that should have been done in the past?

Mr TAYLOR: Where it was considered to be appropriate, and where the commissioner wanted to have a role in selecting the person to take his place, yes. I can only go to the appointment of Brian Bull, because I am not aware of circumstances before that, but I understand he was one of the people who was favoured to take that particular job. The Police Force is a special situation and in the latter days of our government we made certain that the opposition had a say in those sort of key apolitical appointments such as the Auditor General, the FOI Commissioner and the Ombudsman. In government we made sure that the opposition leader, or those people who wanted to have a say in those issues, were given the short list and had the opportunity to comment. To give credit where it is due, the Minister for Disability Services made certain that I and others who have a special interest in that area were given a list of those who applied for an executive position so we could put our views forward as to who should or should not be appointed. As it turned out, the person I would have chosen, Ray Young, was appointed. Is the Minister prepared to give a commitment, given the nature and importance in an apolitical sense of the appointment of the commissioner of police, that this Opposition will be given the opportunity not to select but at least to comment on the short list? It is important, given the nature of the Police Force in Western Australia, as with anywhere else in this nation, that that should be the case. If the Government wants to make certain that that particular job is seen to be apolitical, it must make certain that the Opposition is given at least some role in the selection process. That role probably would be more along the lines of making certain that the short list is sent to me so I can ask our members for comments in relation to the people who may be on that short list.

Prior to the election in February 1993 one of the key issues was law and order. There is no question in my mind that the campaign conducted by the Police Union, even though it stated it was not a political campaign, was done with the knowledge of the then opposition and was certainly targeted at the then government. The response of the then opposition was to make a range of pledges, including the appointment of those 800 new police officers. It pledged to provide a far safer state of affairs for the people of Western Australia and to ensure that law and order in this state was given some priority, but the consequence is that nothing has improved. If anything, one finds that more and more people are concerned about the issue of law and order.

During the course of the Glendalough by-election campaign we sought information on crime statistics, that I now understand are readily available on a weekly basis right throughout this state. One can get information on a street by street basis in Western Australia and certainly on a suburb by suburb basis. We were told during the course of the Glendalough campaign that information was not available. We now find that information was well and truly available. It is made available to journalists throughout the state when they ask for it. It is available to any police officer in this state by pressing a button on a computer. Yet we were told during the Glendalough campaign that it could not be obtained. We were deliberately misled during that campaign. There is no doubt that the Premier tried to make law and order an issue in Glendalough. He would have been extremely embarrassed by the crime figures in the Glendalough area during the time in which he has been in government.

Other issues must be addressed. In October 1993, the Ombudsman attacked the way in which police dealt with young people and urged them to understand that there were limits on their power to ask for names and addresses. At this stage, no response has been forthcoming. We are still waiting for the Government to consider legislation on the various legal rights of young people and others. We are still waiting for the Government to upgrade a range of lockups throughout Western Australia. We are still waiting for additional police to be made available. We are still waiting for a change of roles in terms of who should be responsible for lockups. In October 1993 those issues were going to be dealt with by the Government and they have not been dealt with. At that time, the Minister said he agreed that police contact with juveniles could be improved and that he would be keen to see the police relieved of the custodial role in lockups. I would like the Minister to address that issue.

Another matter of grave concern which relates directly to the issues about which we are talking was the call in October last year by the Police Union for an independent body to be set up, with no police involvement, to investigate corruption and other complaints against the police. That was an unusual move. As a Minister, and even after being a Minister, I said to the Police Union on a number of occasions that I thought it was on a hiding to nothing by having the police investigate the police. I tried to convince it time and time again that it should be calling for what it called for in October 1993; that is, to have an independent organisation carry out that investigation. If the Government did not want to set up another group, it could ensure that the Ombudsman was adequately resourced and given responsibility to do the job.

The union called for an independent investigation. The Minister's response was that he did not believe the union's proposal was serious or supported by its members. I believe that a real division would exist among members of the Police Force on this issue. However, the union representing police officers said publicly that that is what it wanted to see happen. The Minister has said in this place in the past that he intends to bring into the Parliament legislation dealing with a range of issues associated with policing in Western Australia. I hope that, when that legislation is brought forward, it will deal with the issue of who should be investigating the police. When the Police Union called in October last year for that to happen, that provided a real opportunity for the Police Minister to grasp the nettle and say, "Okay, if that's what you want, that's what we are going to give you." When I was a Minister, that was one of the tougher issues that I tried to address, I might say with a real lack of success. However, we now have the ability to achieve some real success because the union has made a public call for that sort of change.

The other issue I wish to address briefly relates to gun laws. The shadow Minister for Police raised with the Minister today the matter of the deaths that appear to be associated with the gun shop in Midland and the fact that it would seem that people are virtually able to rent guns for a period with no check on whether they are the type of people who should be using firearms. Western Australia has very strict gun laws that other states, perhaps with the exception of the Northern Territory, would wish to emulate. That has been achieved through a bipartisan approach. I expect that, being a Minister responsible for a country electorate and having a farming background, pressure would be applied to him to go easy on gun laws. I give him credit for not acceding to those requests; if anything, he has been tougher. There is a real problem which must be addressed. I hope that the Minister has obtained advice from the police on the matter. If he wants to introduce legislation to overcome that problem, I guarantee that, if he wishes to push it through this place in one day, he will be able to do that with our support. This issue must be addressed quickly and on a bipartisan basis rather than by taking political advantage of the issue. Quite rightly, our shadow Minister has raised the issue, and I am asking the Minister to address it.

A similar situation exists with pawnbrokers. I was astonished that the legislation on pawnbrokers that was brought before this House by our shadow Minister was wiped out in half an hour. The Minister's own members are calling for amendments to the Act and he has indicated that he will introduce new laws for pawnbrokers; yet he has said to our

shadow Minister, "Because it has come from you, it is unacceptable." An opportunity was provided, once again, to make certain that we could overcome the problem of which everyone is aware in Western Australia as to where the goods go and how they are sold. Often people are told by the police to go to the pawnbrokers' stores and see if they can find what was stolen. The people who run those stores have said to me, "We cooperate with the police. We try to make certain that, if someone acts suspiciously, we do something about it." That does not go far enough. In Western Australia, those stores have been used by people to cash in stolen goods. Once again, I urge the Minister to bring that legislation before the Parliament as soon as possible. As every day goes by, the Government starts to look sillier and sillier, having rejected the legislation put forward by our shadow Minister for Police.

I began by saying that the Minister knows I have the highest respect for him as an individual. However, many of the problems that we face today go back to the time when Cabinet, for reasons best known to itself, rejected the opportunity to appoint Ayton as deputy commissioner of police. That was a signal to the entire Police Force that the Government did not have its confidence. It is important that the Government get that confidence back as soon as possible and start filling the senior positions that urgently should be filled.

MR TRENORDEN (Avon) [4.18 pm]: I oppose the amendment to the motion. Members opposite will know that three or four years ago while they were in government I attempted to get through a pawnbrokers Bill. That Bill was totally rejected.

Mr M. Barnett: I thought it was quite good.

Mr TRENORDEN: I agree with the member. At least when a private Bill put forward by members opposite is rejected, they know that some action will be forthcoming shortly.

I wish to inform the Parliament about what is occurring on the international scene in that area. A well known and well regarded underwriter of insurance in Western Australia is putting together a program which has been operating in the United Kingdom for a number of years and is now operating in parts of Europe and in the United States. I am referring to a goods recognition system which is contained on a computer program. It is a data process underwritten by the insurance companies who receive benefit from the system by recoveries by the police of stolen goods. Remarkable results have occurred in England in the recovery of stolen goods. I know that this person put this procedure before the current Minister, because I was there. I am pleased to be able to tell the House that this program has been picked up in total by the Victorian police who went to England to examine the process. The major underwriters in Australia are also considering underwriting the same program in Australasia. Nine of the major underwriters are already on board, underwriting the system of identification of goods. Those nine underwriters have identified that their companies in the past year lost \$1m of insured items. That shows they would not require a high recovery rate to pay for their involvement in the system.

We should be looking seriously at this system because it has enormous potential. I know the Minister has put the system before the police in this state to examine. I believe that after this system has been operating for even a short period every Police Force in Australia will be forced to take it up, because its power of recovery is immense. That is not the point we are here to discuss today. However, I recommend that members take some notice of it. There has been some publicity about this system. If enacted in this state it would help substantially in the identification of goods going through pawnbrokers' shops. We all talk about pawnbrokers, but auctioneers must also be considered. They are in no different position from that of the pawnbrokers.

Mr Bradshaw: What about garage sales?

Mr TRENORDEN: Exactly. This system is proved and is working, not just on one continent, but in several continents. It is important that we watch it closely. This state should pick it up and run with it, because there would be no cost to the police; it would be paid for by the insurance industry.

I return to the amendment and the question of morale in the Police Force. Having spoken to people in my electorate, I accept that there is a minor problem with police morale. That must be recognised. Many police officers who work in my electorate and surrounding areas have a great concern about what is happening in the Police Force. One would be surprised if there were not some sort of problem with a force whose commissioner is on the way out and many of whose senior police members have gone. That would cause some concern in any Police Force; however, that position will be rectified quickly.

It must be recognised by this Parliament - it has not been recognised by the members opposite - that the previous government had a lot to do with this problem. In the past 10 years police officers have resigned from the force en masse, particularly the officers who served a seven to 12 year period. Many became disenchanted through the late 1980s and early 1990s. I am not blaming members opposite for that; in fact, it was part of the societal process at the time. Many of those officers were working hard, attempting to get people convicted; however, the courts were not doing the job properly and many of those people got off.

Mr Riebeling: Which courts were not doing the job properly?

Mr TRENORDEN: The District and Supreme Courts in this state.

Mr Riebeling: What is the evidence?

Mr TRENORDEN: I am talking about the perception of the police officers. Their perception was that they were doing the job; they were catching the people and bringing them forward, but the whole case was being reprocessed. The police officers themselves were feeling pretty low about that. I will not canvass now whether it was their fault or the fault of the courts. The point is that many police officers felt that way in the past 10 years and many of them resigned. My understanding - perhaps the Minister can correct me if I am wrong - is that a third of the Police Force has under two years' service. A huge number of our serving police officers are without experience.

The ideal situation of a two man patrol is an experienced police officer with an inexperienced police officer. That was the case through most of my life. In my younger days there was only one police officer. However, since I have been the member for Avon there has always been a two man patrol. When going about my duty as the member for Avon, I would often run into police carrying out their duties, and there would be a senior officer, or a seven to 12 year standing police officer, and a younger recruit working together. The direct, on the ground leadership came from those experienced officers who could give guidance to many of the inexperienced officers as circumstances arose.

Two years ago in my electorate I had enormous problems with young police officers extending their "enthusiasm". I believe that in a number of cases in my electorate people were put up on falsified charges. They were minor charges, but they still occurred. It meant that people in my electorate who did not commit the crime were charged for matters such as assault. A range of those people did not commit the crime, but when there is a police officer's word against an individual's word in a local court, it is a difficult circumstance. Many of those police officers believed they were doing the right thing because they perceived, whether rightly or wrongly, the individual they were dealing with to be a law breaker, and they got them by the means available to them at the time. That is, instead of charging them with the appropriate offence, they slightly bent the rules.

All of us would find that totally unacceptable. At one stage in my electorate I had a dozen cases of that type to some degree. They were of great concern to me. Some of the individuals in my electorate who were dealt with in this manner by the Police Force were the types of people who one would not be surprised to find were in trouble with the Police Force. However, I was surprised by several other sound members of the community who for one reason or another got into trouble with overenthusiastic young police officers.

I point out to the members opposite that part of this morale problem is due to an

inexperienced Police Force that is going through the process of learning. Perhaps there must be some pain with that. I suggest that in the recent drinking incident where the officers left the scene of the crime, and other such incidents, if experienced police officers had been with them the enthusiasm of youth would have been less likely to occur. That is something we will have to live with. The physical structure of the Police Force, as I understand it, is that there is a large number of new recruits and inexperienced police officers.

We must all concede immediately that being a police officer is not the easiest job in the world. Many officers in carrying out their duties are confronted with instantaneous and severe problems. For instance, domestic violence situations are nasty places for a police officer to be. It is a no-win situation. Many of those people ask the officers to be instant arbitrators of a confused scene. There is no substitute for experience. The sooner we settle down the Police Force and encourage our officers to work through the ranks, spend years in the Police Force, and become experienced to increase the base of knowledge of operations, the better off we will be. I heard the secretary of the Police Union on radio this morning say that he believes there is a problem with on site leadership, and I think that is very much part of the problem. Members opposite should at least give some credence to that situation and recognise that we have a young Police Force. As a result, unfortunately, some of them will make decisions which may not be appropriate or, because of their youth, may be carried away when undertaking certain activities. Those of us who remember our youth will be aware that as the years go by our behaviour changes.

The number of police officers on the beat can be increased without recruiting more officers. When I was in opposition I went to the East Perth Children's Court one day and I watched the children being brought into the court, under the supervision of the Department of Corrective Services, and delivered to the police officers to be looked after before appearing in the court. That is an appalling situation. I understand it has been altered but in that situation the blue or khaki uniformed police officers were the last people those kids saw when they came from the Department of Corrective Services to appear before the court. It was a totally inappropriate range of activities and the police should not be involved in that type of work. Also, the police undertake a lot of clerical work. The Minister for Police and the Government have been trying hard to provide resources for police stations, such as personal computers and other modern equipment, to release police officers for other duties. The use of modern technology is just as important as employing brand new recruits. Personally, I would rather see a senior or middle range police officer released from his desk and be on the job in place of a fresh recruit. I do not resile from the fact that many of the problems arise with brand new, fresh faced police officers who are trying to learn their skills from someone who has not much more experience than they have.

I thought all members opposite would applaud the fact that the Commissioner of Police is to be excluded from the selection process for the new commissioner. I listened to members opposite for the past 18 months say they were looking for direction from the Police Force. Surely the way to achieve that is not by carrying on with the same process and holding onto the same baggage and attitudes. If members opposite are looking for a new broom and new attitudes, why involve the existing system? It is totally illogical. The Opposition says the current system and administration are no good but it wants them to be part of the decision making process. It is very important that the decision making process in all of these key areas - police, Auditor General, and other departments - involve people who serve the people of Western Australia. It is important that they are seen to be at arm's length from the Government. I have no objection to the Opposition questioning the Government about the sincerity or political affiliations of those people. We should not allow these appointments to be made by the Government. Those appointed should be people of the public and not people of the Government, particularly as many will serve throughout a number of governments. I will work with any opposition or government member or any other person who wants to ensure there is a process whereby these people for the people are appointed without any political strings

attached. That is extremely important. The amendment to the motion does not require any support, although I appreciate some of the concerns raised. I do not believe the Minister for Police has any argument with some of those concerns, and he will address them in his reply.

MRS HALLAHAN (Armadale - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.36 pm]: I wish to place on record my very great respect for and commendation of the dedicated police officers who serve Western Australia in an outstanding way. I have personally worked with many of those people, although that was a long time ago when I was a woman constable between 1969 and 1972. Of course, since then I have maintained contact at various times with my former colleagues. Many of them are very hard working and dedicated to their careers, and they serve Western Australia well. I say that unequivocally because I very strongly support this amendment before the House today to the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's speech. In my view both the Police Force and the law and order issue have been exploited in a very sorry way by the present Government. When in opposition it campaigned very fully on this matter but has done nothing to remedy any problems since being elected. In fact, the Government was elected on the promise to rebuild a strong and well equipped Police Force, to halt the crime wave and introduce wide ranging reforms to make sure that crime did not pay. We have seen no action towards that end, but have seen only a devastating undermining of the Police Force since the coalition Government was elected.

The Budget allocation was a reduction in real terms, and we have witnessed an increase in the level of crime. There has been no response from this Government, except to undermine further the work of that force. It is extraordinarily important that in this year's Budget the Court coalition Government make an adequate allocation to the Police Force. If it does not do so, the Police Force will lose confidence in the Government as the political leader in this state. That confidence is already at an all time low. The coalition Government promised that in four years an additional 800 police officers would be recruited, yet the allocation in its first Budget was abysmal. When this year's Budget is released shortly I shall expect an allocation to allow for the recruitment of 400 additional police officers, so that the Government can move towards its election commitment of 800 additional police officers in four years. We all know of the costs associated with additional staff, and it will be a very large commitment; however, the Government knew that when it made the original promise and last year when it held budget discussions and yet did nothing. I cannot believe that a reduced allocation will be made in the 1994-95 Budget. Certainly, the police are looking very anxiously for support in the extraordinarily important work they do in our community.

Another undermining aspect of this Government has been the bypassing of the current Commissioner of Police, or his representative, on the selection panel to appoint a new commissioner of police. Again, it is a matter of great anxiety for members of the Police Force that they will have a mate of the Court coalition Government, probably of Liberal persuasion although it could be a National Party person, as commissioner. In most areas in which I have had portfolio interest, active Liberal Party branch members have been appointed to positions. We do not want any further undermining of the Police Force with that sort of appointment to this very important position.

Mr Wiese: How should it be done?

Mrs HALLAHAN: The Government will stand condemned if it does that. The Government has failed to support the current Commissioner of Police and that has caused a crisis in the leadership of the force. This has resulted in very low morale and a lack of discipline which has led to some of the problems highlighted in the Press. Those problems can be sheeted back to the leadership provided by the Government in this very important portfolio. I refer to the Minister for Police, the Premier and the Deputy Premier. They stand condemned for undermining the Police Force of Western Australia.

A very worrying situation exists at Armadale, where police staff numbers are not sufficient to carry out the job. That station has not received sufficient material allocations, and morale is markedly affected. We have a 24 hour police station at

Armadale, which includes a lockup. The minimum number of police officers required to operate the station is five. That number allows two officers to be allocated to the lockup; it allows two people to staff the only van on the road. One officer remains at the police station to attend the counter, answer the telephone and operate the police radio. If the officers in the van arrest someone, with this minimum allocation of five officers they must return to the police station; so the one and only police van no longer patrols the area. This situation has been the subject of letters of concern to the Minister for Police by local government authorities, through the City of Armadale and the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale, and from the general community. These bodies receive inquiries, complaints and letters of concern - as does my office - about the lack of police resources to take care of the various matters that arise in the community.

I understand that an in-depth survey of the situation at Armadale has been undertaken by the establishment branch of the Police Force. The survey indicated that at least another six police officers are needed to adequately cover demand in the area and to meet the operational activities at Armadale. I must refer also to the lack of criminal investigation branch staff because the region is two detective sergeants short. Apparently two transfers were made to the region but the officers ultimately went in other directions and did not arrive at Armadale. The CIB strength is seriously undermined. So both the uniformed police and the CIB are understaffed at Armadale-Gosnells. At the same time staff are instructed to take their long service leave but replacements are not available. At present influenza is a real problem for the staff and in a very real way that stems from stress and worry about not being able to keep up with the number of complaints being made by the public. Often complaints are not satisfied at the police station and people then come to my office, but the police are unable to do any more with the current resources. We have a serious situation in the south east corridor. It is a matter about which people have written to the Minister on a number of occasions, without receiving any satisfactory response.

I am led to believe that the incident figures for Armadale are a great deal higher than those for Fremantle and Midland yet the staffing level at Armadale is lower. No-one has been able to explain to me or to anyone I speak to in the Police Force why that should be the case. The matter has been drawn to the attention of the Minister but he fails to respond or in any way meet the needs of these communities. I am talking about Gosnells, Thornlie, Huntingdale, down through Westfield, Kelmscott, into the hills at Roleystone, through Armadale and the new area of Wungong, to Byford, Serpentine-Jarrahdale and Mundijong. There are police stations at Gosnells, Armadale and Mundijong and the CIB unit in one place covers the entire region. The whole area is understaffed, and although we have been led to believe that the Government will provide an extra 800 police officers there is no response yet in that regard.

Rostered days off, long service leave, sick leave and every other form of leave must be covered by the remaining staff. No replacements are available, so the officer in charge finds it impossible to cover staff absences. Stations are instructed that everyone should take long service leave and so on. The Armadale Police Station, which has a lockup, must be manned 24 hours a day but must operate with a minimal staff of five. The Armadale community is right to complain that the area is not adequately covered considering the crime rate, because once an arrest is made the van is taken from the roads when the officers return to the police station to investigate the matter. Therefore, police officers are tied up with the associated paper work and their supervisory role at the lockup. That leaves one officer to answer all inquiries at the counter, attend to the telephone and the police radio. It is an unacceptable and unsatisfactory situation. The earlier interjections by the Deputy Premier cannot disguise the lack of attention that this Government has paid to law and order in Western Australia.

Mr Cowan: And the previous government! All these problems manifested from 2 February? Don't be such a hypocrite!

Mrs HALLAHAN: I referred to the coalition's failure to support legislation to crack down on pawnbrokers trading in stolen goods -

Mr Cowan: It is the same legislation that was introduced by the member for Avon. And what did your government do then?

Mrs HALLAHAN: That is an extraordinary interjection. The Deputy Premier voted against that legislation. I think that under pressure the man is becoming manic as a result of ministerial responsibilities which he does not appear to cope with very well.

Mr Cowan: Look at *Hansard*.

Mrs HALLAHAN: Regardless of the Deputy Premier's behaviour, we have a Government operating under very poor leadership. It is doubly poor leadership. I thought the Premier had trouble keeping up with his responsibilities but it seems the Deputy Premier is getting into the same boat. No wonder we have a leadership crisis in the Police Force and the resultant problems with staffing, discipline, morale, and law and order.

I commend one officer retiring this month after a long career; namely, Superintendent Valma Doherty. When I joined the Police Force she was a sergeant and a respected member of the force, and she gave great support to those of us recently recruited who looked for strong and capable leadership. She will be sadly missed, not only as a capable officer but also as an active member of the International Police Association, at which she represented Western Australia and Australia at many international forums. She also hosted many international visitors on police business, bringing their perspective to police work in this state. Valma has been a most constructive citizen in this State, and she has served the Police Force and Western Australia well.

In conclusion, I strongly support that this amendment should be conveyed to the Governor in response to his speech. I make a plea to the Government that in the forthcoming Budget it will overturn its poor record in last year's Budget and make a significant allocation to the Police portfolio. In that way staff numbers can be increased in the Police Force, so that the rising incidence of crime can be satisfactorily tackled. I make my plea in the full knowledge that this Government faces a real dilemma; that is, it has never really demonstrated an understanding of the complexities which lead to crime and, therefore, how to deal with it. The Government has demonstrated only an ability to politically exploit a serious social problem. It has made empty promises and has failed to fulfil them; it has failed to judge the seriousness of the issue, and how it impacts on people's lives.

MR THOMAS (Cockburn) [4.53 pm]: In supporting the amendment I will make some observations on the administration of the police service. My comments are largely directed to my electorate, the problems faced as a member of Parliament and the issues brought to me on police matters. However, some of my observations have general application. I will make some suggestions for a review of direction hitherto pursued in the administration of the Police Force.

My comments are not a criticism of the current Commissioner of Police. His term is coming to an end and he has done an excellent job. He has introduced the community policing initiative and advanced the concept to a large extent. He has made a great mark on the administration of the police service in this state, and all Western Australians should be grateful to him for his contribution. I am sure we all will wish him and his wife well in his retirement. However, a leadership change is also time for review of the policy and direction of an administration. It is a matter to which the Minister might like to turn his mind. It is not often that he has an opportunity to direct the Police Force in this way. A substantial area of the force is operational matters, on which the Minister is not able to direct the commissioner. In most areas the relationship between a Minister and the head of a department means that the Minister advises on direction rather than merely being advised. An opportunity exists for a review of previous directions in the Police Force, and the Minister might like to turn his mind to some policy directions to which I will refer.

My electorate of Cockburn is a fairly typical suburban electorate. It comprises half a dozen suburbs served by three police stations. These are old neighbourhood-type

stations, not the modern large complexes serving larger areas. Hilton Police Station serves the surrounding suburbs, including Coolbellup. The Cockburn Police Station is known in the vernacular as the Spearwood police station, and it serves the newer suburbs of South Lake and Bibra Lake. The Fremantle Central Police Station, as opposed to the divisional headquarters, serves the Hamilton Hill part of my electorate. With three stations in my electorate, I must deal with three sergeants in charge when dealing with various constituents' concerns.

The issue brought to me most frequently is that of police numbers. Currently the question is being raised with this Government, and it was certainly asked when members opposite were in opposition, as this was reflected in their election policies. This arises because when people make a complaint to the police about response time they have experienced they say, "It took an hour for you to turn up. Why is this so?" They are told, "We do not have enough police. If we had more officers, we could respond more quickly." That is so, but not necessarily very helpful to the complainant. When one is trying to govern the state, a finite number of police are available. The Government must make a decision on whether the money available for the Police Force should be spent on salaries - that is, more personnel - or on hardware and capital for better police stations and better facilities for the officers.

Some of the police stations in my electorate are primitive. The Cockburn station does not have a shower. If officers have been on duty for eight hours, or whatever length shift, the only way have a shower is to go to the sergeant's house next door. They do not like to invade another person's home, but I understand that shower is made available. It is an unsatisfactory situation. It is a small, outdated police station built at a time when it was servicing a rural market garden community. No doubt fewer officers would have been occupying the premises at the time. It has the ambience of a small country police station.

Mr W. Smith: How many officers does it have?

Mr THOMAS: I could not tell the member, but there are three on a shift.

Mr W. Smith: Has it increased in the last couple of years?

Mr THOMAS: Not since I have been around for the last decade. Certainly not to the best of my knowledge, but I could stand to be corrected on that.

Mr W. Smith: I know you are interested in policing and police stations in your area and you have done what you could. What happened during the previous government?

Mr THOMAS: Nothing.

Mr W. Smith: Did you make any efforts then?

Mr THOMAS: I wrote letter after letter in that regard. Invariably I received a response that whether officers are assigned to community policing, to Fremantle central or divisional or to Spearwood is an operational matter, and that is up to the commissioner. I received replies from the commissioner indicating, "We would love to have more officers at Cockburn station, but we are making do with what we have been given. The resources are allocated in that way." There has not been an increase in that area in any of those stations in the time I have been there and for some time before that, as I understand it. I do not ascribe a great deal of seriousness to that, because they do a good job under difficult circumstances. The main concern of the members of the public is the response time. People who have been burgled and ring the police want to see a policeman there very quickly. If it takes an hour they are disturbed. I have been on Friday night patrols with the police when they have a priority system and respond straightaway if there is an offender on premises. I have never had a complaint that the police have not responded straightaway to an incident of offenders on premises. They have an arrangement with other stations and they in turn can go to a neighbouring area if the need arises. In some circumstances it might be better to spend more money on stations and better equipment, at least for a year or two, to bring them up to date. The officers in Cockburn and Hilton are operating in primitive conditions, which most government workers would not be prepared to work in. The union has an insatiable appetite for more members and puts pressure on governments, the Opposition and everyone else for more officers and

therefore more members, but it might do its members more good if it concentrated for a year or two on conditions under which the officers work.

Mr Kierath: I agree with that.

Mr THOMAS: Another matter frequently raised in my electorate is that the police are not often seen in the area. People feel that police should be more visible. I put a proposition to the commissioner when I went to police headquarters the year before last to attempt to persuade the police to install a neighbourhood police station at a shopping centre at Coolbellup. I negotiated with the proprietor of the shopping centre, who was prepared to make space available free if the police could start a shop front police station. Unfortunately, the police were not prepared to do that. That was a mistake. No doubt their reasoning was that an officer sitting in a shop and taking complaints would be largely in a public relations position and he would be better deployed in a car enforcing the law. People want to see the police, but that is probably counterproductive to the police work of arresting offenders, because offences are usually committed at times of the day when visibility is minimised. As a consequence, of course, police are not visible to members of the public, although there are of course many thousands of police in the Perth metropolitan area and throughout the state.

Apart from the fact that residents of my electorate want to see the police being effective, some incidents have occurred recently in areas close to my electorate in the Fremantle police district where the police have been brought into disrepute. I refer to the bashing of a young man in 1992 at the Fremantle police station which received a great deal of adverse publicity. It was brought to light because of a video and, had there not been that video, it probably would never have been believed and action would not have been subsequently taken. I do understand that police officers work under very difficult circumstances. I mentioned earlier that in many cases the physical conditions are quite primitive. Additionally, they are dealing with criminals and the seedier side of life by the very nature of their work. That is likely to cause frustration which could lead people to behave in the way the officer who bashed Dethridge did. That, of course, is totally unacceptable. Many young people from my electorate spend Friday and Saturday nights in Fremantle; some of them misbehave, are lairy, and for the most part are not the sort of people one would want to join. Nevertheless, most of them do not break the law and, if they do, they do not do so seriously. Most are a threat to no-one except themselves. As well as that youth culture which has developed in the Fremantle area there has developed a police culture.

A young man known to me came to me at one stage in the lead up to that period in 1991, I think, and complained that he had been arrested for some trivial offence - probably being drunk. He alleged that in the course of being dealt with at the police station he was bashed up. I am aware that a lot of people who get taken to police stations claim to have been bashed up, when it is not the case. However, he described it to me in graphic terms. I sent him on his way and said that I did not believe his story, because I did not believe the police behaved in that way. I have no illusions about what the police are capable of doing or have done in Western Australia, but it did not seem to me that anyone would behave in the way he alleged. Had he been treated in that way, as certainly Dethridge was in similar circumstances some time later, he would have gone away very much alienated from authority. He was a young man of 16 who had probably had more to drink than he should have on a Friday night, but that would have been no way to treat him. He then came to a person in authority, namely me, and I said I did not believe him. Essentially that is what happened. Between the Police Force and myself we might have gone a long way to contributing to the alienation of that young man from authority, which could have lasting consequences. We should all acknowledge the fact that the police work under difficult circumstances and that there are pressures on them, but the standards the community demands of them must be rigorously enforced.

Another incident which received some currency recently is one about which my colleagues will be speaking later. A brawl erupted at a basketball game in a sporting arena and one of the participants, who was a police officer, in company with some of her colleagues raided the other person's home in the early hours of the morning, apparently

as an act of retribution for an act of violence at the sporting venue. That, to me, is an act of abuse of power which cannot be tolerated under any circumstances. I regard that as a very serious offence. One of the people is Aboriginal - let us be frank - and people may think that because it was women's netball and seems removed from the circles we move in, it is the sort of thing about which we are not particularly concerned. Let me give the following analogy: I am involved with a football team in which one of the footballers, Marty Atkins, is a police officer in Fremantle. He is a good player and, according to all reports, a good policeman. Suppose he was involved in a fight on the football field, which could easily happen; it happens to many players all the time. Suppose he went out that night and raided the home of the person on the other team who was involved in the brawl and threatened to disadvantage him in some sense because of what had happened on the sporting field. We would regard that as an outrageous abuse of power and the newspapers and everyone else would come down on him very strongly. That is precisely an analogy of what occurred in this case. If something untoward occurs on a sporting field there are umpires and referees, and sporting codes have their own internal mechanisms to deal with that. That should be where the matter ends. The rights of a person on a sporting field who feels aggrieved by the actions of someone who has been a bit rough should be the same whether one is a carpenter, a policeman or in any other field. In this circumstance we have seen a very serious abuse of power.

The House and the community should acknowledge that we call on our police officers to do probably the most unpleasant duties the community requires of any public officer. We should all therefore strive to see that they are paid well, work under supportive circumstances and are of sufficient numbers to do the job well. The other side of the coin is that we should expect standards of conduct by which they do not abuse power in a way which, apart from anything else, is likely to be counter productive to their mission. The young lady whose home was raided as a result of an incident on a sporting field will be alienated from the Police Force. She will not be encouraged to be a law abiding citizen and to respect the law if the upholders of the law are likely to abuse their position in such circumstances. The same goes for the young people who have been mistreated at the Fremantle Police Station. We should require of our police officers the highest standards of conduct.

MR RIPPER (Belmont) [5.12 pm]: I take up the case my colleague, the member for Cockburn, has been talking about because it is accepted throughout the House that the confidence in which the Police Force is held in the community is very important for the civil rights of members of the community as well as for the maintenance of law and order. Unfortunately, the case my colleague was talking about is the sort of case that does much to undermine confidence in the Police Force in sections of the community, particularly among Aboriginal people. This case reveals much about the present state of our Police Force.

I make no apology for the fact that I will tell the story, principally, from the point of the innocent member of the public who was subjected to an abuse of police power. I tell the story of Mrs June Stack of Balga who is a netball player. She and her three sisters belong to the Flamingos team. On the evening of 13 April 1994 the Flamingos played another team, the Magnificent Seven, at the Ballajura sports centre. Unknown to any member of the Flamingos team, one member of the Magnificent Seven was a police officer. Towards the end of the game a dispute developed on the court. One of Mrs Stack's sisters asked a member of the Magnificent Seven team to comply with a netball rule. I am no expert on netball, but I understand that rule required a player to stand out of play. The Magnificent Seven player, even then unknown to everyone else as a police officer, responded to Mrs Stack's sister with racist abuse. That was the genesis of the argument that developed on the netball court.

Mrs Stack was not involved in any pushing or shoving, nor was she involved in any further altercation after the netball game had finished. She simply asked the Magnificent Seven player, whom she later discovered to be a police officer, not to speak to her sister in the racist and abusive way in which she had addressed that person. I believe that what happened later that evening was extraordinary and disgraceful. Between 11.45 pm and

midnight four police cars arrived at Mrs Stack's home in Balga. Three of the cars were marked and one, I am advised, was unmarked and six police officers were in attendance. It is fairly extraordinary to have four cars go to an address -

Mr Bloffwitch: That is more than we have on patrol on a day in Geraldton; it is a lot of policemen. You are quite right.

Mr RIPPER: That is an interesting comment. People in my electorate complain that they see only one patrol car at night; yet four turned up at that address. Mrs Stack was called to the door by her husband who answered the knock of the police officer and found herself confronted by the Magnificent Seven goal defence player, this time dressed in a police uniform, shining a torch in her face. It was the person who had spoken to her sister in an abusive and racist fashion. She was then questioned by the police officers about whether she had assaulted the Magnificent Seven police officer. She denied she had been involved in any assault on the officer. She did, however, agree that she had been at the netball game. She was then arrested and placed in the police van. After that her house was searched, without a search warrant but apparently on the basis that the police felt they were entitled to search her house in connection with finding evidence relating to the commission of a criminal offence. Of course the offence relevant to this occasion was an alleged assault at a netball match earlier in the evening.

Mr Wiese: From where do you get your information?

Mr RIPPER: I have spoken to the legal representatives of the person concerned. I said at the beginning that I was telling the story from the view of the citizen. I am quite prepared to have the Minister provide some other information relating to these events which should be put before the public. Later, I will give the results of the internal affairs investigation on the allegations made on this matter. This person has not been charged with any offence and she tells a convincing story. I, as will the Minister, have seen her on the media. I see no reason to doubt the information I am putting before the House. As I was saying, her house was searched, an act I regard as being of doubtful legality in the circumstances. She was then taken to the Nollamara Police Station. Her legal representatives say on her behalf that the vehicle was driven in an erratic manner. If one is in the back of a police van and the vehicle is being driven in an erratic manner one is thrown about and it is a very uncomfortable, possibly dangerous, ride in which to be involved.

When she arrived at the police station, officers insisted that she sit on the floor, a fairly unusual practice I would have thought, but I am now advised it is not that unusual at the Nollamara Police Station. One of the causative factors for this insistence by officers is the lack of proper interviewing facilities at the station, and it might be quite common practice for offenders to be asked to sit on the floor. Mrs Stack found that an offensive request, as I think most of us would. She asked for pen and paper to write the badge numbers of the officers dealing with her, and this request was refused. She attempted to take a pen from a pocket of an officer to note down the numbers of the officers who were treating her in this way. Following this, she was pushed hard against a wall by the Magnificent Seven goal defence player-cum-police officer. She was gripped hard by another police officer, pulled to the floor, then abused and threatened, in a manner which I regard as disgusting. I will not quote the precise words used, but make use of the convention that was used in the Nixon Watergate tapes when expletives were deleted. I will quote using the term "expletive deleted" for the language used. This was said to Mrs Stack -

If you don't "expletive deleted" co-operate I will make your life hell. I will get search warrants to search your "expletive deleted" place every week and tear your husband and family apart.

This is the sort of treatment given to someone who is suspected of being involved in a minor incident on a netball court and who is later released and not charged. It is extraordinary. I am advised that the Magnificent Seven goal defence player-cum-police officer then distinguished herself by standing over Mrs Stack while she was on the floor and stating, "Now it's just one on one, not one on seven, you nigger breeding". That was

all Mrs Stack could remember in her distressed condition. What occurred in the Nollamara Police Station that night is not acceptable. It is a disgraceful incident on the information which has been provided. Later Mrs Stack was told she would not be charged and was released. At 3.40 am Mrs Stack received medical treatment at the Wanneroo Hospital. This is a disgraceful incident revealing disgusting racial prejudice and an abuse of power. An internal affairs investigation has been conducted, and I advise the House of my understanding of that investigation. I read from an Aboriginal Legal Service Press Release listing the allegations and outcomes -

1. Female constable shone torch in June Stack's face. Not sustained.
2. Unlawful search of Mrs Stack's home. Not sustained.
3. Home raided in the middle of the night by unidentified police officers. Sustained in part (counselling for three officers)
4. Police van driven in erratic manner. Not sustained.
5. Mrs Stack made to sit on the floor in police station. Sustained in part (Counselling for female police officer)
6. Female police officer assaulted Mrs Stack in police station. Not sustained.
7. Male police officer assaulted Mrs Stack in police office. Sustained (two disciplinary charges.)
8. Female police officer abused position of authority. Sustained (counselling).
9. Senior officer failed to ensure independent investigation. Sustained (counselling).
10. Senior officer permitted verbal and physical assault. Not sustained.
11. Complainant police officer present at raid on home. Exonerated.

I am not happy with the internal affairs investigation. It seems to be an inadequate outcome, and I look forward to the Ombudsman's report. On the information provided, the response of the Police Force on this matter appears to be unsatisfactory and inadequate.

Today the Government's position is being discussed and what the correct response of Ministers and parliamentarians should be to events like this. The Minister will state that these are isolated incidents, and that every organisation has people whose conduct is not satisfactory. The Minister will state, and I believe correctly, that police work involves high levels of conflict and stress. I agree; it is difficult work, and individuals who do not behave properly exist in all organisations. The problem is that from the public's point of view far too many of these incidents occur. They are not seen by members of the public as isolated incidents, but are seen as symptomatic of broader problems within the Police Force. These include problems of morale, leadership, organisational culture and resourcing. Although the Commissioner of Police has operational responsibility for the Police Force, the Minister's position cannot be without effect in the Westminster system. The Minister must accept ministerial responsibility.

I referred to one event which is one aspect of this disgraceful incident, where the alleged offender was made to sit on the floor of the Nollamara Police Station. This involves ministerial responsibility because of the insufficient resources available to allow proper interviewing facilities at that police station. Lack of resources was a contributing factor to this incident. The Minister's responsibility goes beyond the provision of resources, because although the Minister may not have operational responsibility, he has a responsibility to provide moral leadership, to explain what the community, the Parliament and the Government expect of the Police Force by way of satisfactory conduct and integrity. If firm leadership or a clear vision does not exist in the Police Force, then problems like this arise. It may seem at the time that each one arises as an isolated incident, but when a pattern of incidents occurs across Western Australia, people stop viewing them as isolated incidents and view them as indicators of problems in the

Police Force - problems of leadership and morale. These problems have implications for law and order; not only are the civil rights of people involved, but also the maintenance of law and order depends on public confidence in the Police Force. For example, if there is a breakdown in the relationship between the police and young people or the police and Aboriginal people numerous law and order problems will occur. The way in which a police officer approaches a young person or an Aboriginal person could create a situation whereby it is very difficult for them to have any confidence in the Police Force. It can result in ill feelings towards the police not only from those people, but also from the wider community. The answer to these problems is firm leadership from the top to ensure that incidents like the ones I have cited do not continue to occur. Unfortunately, I fear that we will have more incidents like that involving Mrs Stack. It was a disgraceful exhibition of racism and an abuse of police powers. The problem can be resolved by strong leadership from within the Police Force and from the Minister. It will be one of the things that will prevent these kinds of incidents becoming a regular occurrence.

MR BRADSHAW (Wellington) [5.32 pm]: I oppose the amendment. The Opposition has a hide to bring this issue to the House. Members are aware that law and order has been the number one issue in the community and it always will be. The problem will not go away simply by increasing the number of police officers by, for example, 3 000. It would certainly help to have more police officers, but that alone will not stop crime. Regardless of the number of police officers crime will always be a major issue in the community. Confidence in the Police Force has been eroded by the Opposition continually raising the issue of low morale in the force. It is time it and the community got behind the Police Force and acknowledged that the main job of police officers is to catch criminals and to make this state a safe place in which to live.

Mr D.L. Smith: Have you spoken to your local senior constable about why he is resigning from the force?

Mr BRADSHAW: Of course I have.

Mr D.L. Smith: It was not to go into business.

Mr BRADSHAW: It is a combination of a number of things. A police officer is similar to a politician - he is always being criticised by the public.

Mr D.L. Smith: He was one of our best officers and we have lost him.

Mr BRADSHAW: Senior Constable Mark Dennis was an extremely good officer.

Mr D.L. Smith: I was not going to name him.

Mr BRADSHAW: I do not think he would be upset with my naming him in this place. The member for Avon said that senior officers were being lost to the force and it was left with very young officers who needed some sort of guidance. For as long as the Opposition and the community continue to criticise police officers the morale in the force will not improve. The community must be 100 per cent behind police officers so that they can do their job. If they are continuously attacked by the community they will not be in a position to protect Western Australians or their property. I really feel sorry for the police officers. People do not become aware of the importance of police officers until they are put in a situation where they need their assistance. About three weeks ago I left this place and arrived at my two storey unit at approximately 1.15 am to find that it had been burgled. I was not game to go to the second storey in case the burglar was still there. I rang the police and when they came they found that he had gone. Having been confronted with this situation I appreciate our police officers. They will retreat from doing their duties properly if they are criticised by the community.

The second part of the amendment states that the morale within the Police Force has collapsed, due largely to the incompetence of the Minister for Police. That is rubbish. I can recall several Ministers for Police being questioned in this House about their right to interfere in management of the Police Force. On each occasion they have said that they remain at arm's length from directing the force and the Director of Public Prosecutions. Under the existing legislation the commissioner is responsible for the management of the Police Force and the Minister is responsible for ensuring that the force is run in

accordance with the legislation. He has no right to interfere in its management. Until the management of the Police Force has the confidence of the people there will continue to be low morale within the force.

The coalition Government did promise additional police. Its promise will be fulfilled, but that cannot occur overnight. There has been a slight increase in the number of police officers. Approximately 70 clerical officers have been appointed to the Police Department to undertake the clerical duties previously done by the police officers. This has given the officers the opportunity to get out on the beat. More clerical assistants should be appointed to police stations. On many occasions officers must type reports and it takes them a long time because they type with two fingers. It would be far better if they could dictate their reports to a secretary. It is interesting to note that the former government removed the clerk of courts from Harvey -

Mr D.L. Smith: Has this Government reappointed him?

Mr BRADSHAW: Not at this stage, but I am working on it.

Mr D.L. Smith: I wish you luck.

Mr BRADSHAW: If a clerk of courts is not appointed there, a clerical assistant should be appointed.

Mr D.L. Smith: You and I should work to increase the number of traffic officers at Harvey.

Mr BRADSHAW: The number of traffic officers will remain the same at Harvey. Even though the numbers in the Police Force have not increased as greatly as I would like, the Government is working towards achieving during its term the goal that it has set. As members opposite would know, when one gets into government, one cannot do everything overnight. We will introduce a young offenders Act, which will tighten up that area and help prevent the revolving door syndrome. We will put more pressure on parents and guardians in our community to be aware of what their children are doing and to be responsible for their behaviour. If parents and guardians do not take responsibility for their children's behaviour, we will not be able to overcome the problems of law and order in this state. The amendment refers to the Minister's inaction and inability to convince Cabinet colleagues of the need for priority funding for the police portfolio. That is not correct, because it has already been announced that \$2.5m will be put into resourcing the police. Under the previous Labor government, the resourcing of the Police Force was atrocious. The police did not have fax machines.

Mr D.L. Smith: We increased the number of police to the highest ratio in Australia.

Mr BRADSHAW: It is time the police had the resources and proper accommodation.

Mr Taylor: Why not do something about it?

Mr BRADSHAW: That \$2.5m is a start. Members opposite did nothing for 10 years. We will give the police the resources and accommodation that they expect.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Day): Order! I suspect the Hansard reporter is having a great deal of difficulty hearing the member for Wellington. The member for Wellington has the call and no-one else.

Mr BRADSHAW: The amendment refers also to the Commissioner of Police or his representative being excluded from the selection process for the new commissioner. Opposition members have stated that they are not happy with the way that the Police Force is being run in Western Australia. Under those conditions, why should the Commissioner of Police, who has been the boss of the Police Force in Western Australia for about eight years, have the opportunity to comment -

Mr D.L. Smith: What are you trying to say?

Mr BRADSHAW: I do not think the police have been run properly for the last eight years. What I have to back up that statement is the Arthur Andersen report, which states that the management of the Police Force needs to be overhauled. The commissioner or

his representative should not have a place on the selection committee. We want to ensure that we select the right person, not one with a political bias to any political party but one who -

Mr Graham: Are you suggesting that the current commissioner has a political bias?

Mr BRADSHAW: The perception in the community is that he has.

Mr Graham: I am asking you.

Mr BRADSHAW: That is not my opinion. I am saying that because the amendment states that the Government is trying to choose a new commissioner with a political bent towards the coalition. We want the best person for the position, not a person with any political bent. We want someone who will give some backbone to the police to ensure that they look after the people and property of Western Australia.

MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell) [5.45 pm]: It is unfortunate that I have to spend some of the short time that is allocated to me in this debate to respond to the comments of the member for Wellington. Those comments must represent the most disgraceful attack on a serving police commissioner that has ever been made in this Parliament. It is absolutely untrue that in any way the competence of the current commissioner can be questioned. The current problems of the Western Australian Police Force have nothing to do with the commissioner but everything to do with the Government of the day and the Minister of the day.

Mr Trenorden: Is that right? In one year, we have turned it on its ear!

Mr D.L. SMITH: The member for Wellington, this hypocrite, says it is amendments of this kind by the Opposition which bring the Police Force into disrepute. He then sets out to say that their most senior officer is incompetent and politically biased.

Mr Bradshaw: I did not say that.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Read *Hansard*, my friend. I say emphatically that the commissioner is known to me as a man of strong religious convictions and practices and of absolute integrity. The only desire he has had in his term as commissioner is to promote the Police Force in the best way possible. It is the attitude of this Government and people like the member for Wellington which have undermined the Police Force. I have many friends in the Police Force, and I have had a great number of dealings with members of the Police Force over the 25-odd years that I have been a solicitor. The vast majority of the police are honest, hardworking, compassionate and caring officers, who do their best to provide a valuable role in public service to protect the community and its institutions.

The annual report to the Parliament prepared by the Commissioner of Police for 1992-93 refers to the fact that there are almost one million contacts between members of the public and the police every year, and in the year that was the subject of this report, about 1 254 official complaints were made arising out of those one million contacts. That is an indication that the conduct of individual officers in the force is exemplary in 99.9 per cent of cases. The fact is that recently there has been a spate of very serious breaches of conduct by serving police officers, and very low morale within the force. Just in case the member for Wellington feels that it is only those on this side who have concerns about that, let us look at what the Minister for Health said in *The West Australian* on Friday, 19 November 1993 and contrast it with the miserable performance of the Minister for Police in question time today. In the newspaper article the Minister for Health said -

The people of WA had to take back control of their police force, a senior State Government Minister said last night.

Health Minister Peter Foss said State Parliament had for too long neglected its responsibility to oversee and maintain the accountability of the WA police force.

Supporting a motion to establish a parliamentary committee to look into the police force, Mr Foss said police commissioners had almost become independent authorities because Parliament had for decades avoided drawing a clear line of responsibility through the Police Minister.

What did this Police Minister say today? He sat there and refused to draw that line. When the police are in trouble, the attitude of this Minister is to say, "I take no responsibility; it is a matter of police operations and I cannot interfere." The Minister for Health correctly identified that the major malaise in the Western Australian Police Force is the failure of the Minister of the day to draw the line properly between his responsibilities to this Parliament and the people of Western Australia and his responsibilities to the Police Force.

His plea was the correct one: It is time that this Parliament, on behalf of the people of Western Australia, took control of the Police Force in the proper way.

Mr Trenorden: Do you think Parliament should control the Police Force? That is great stuff for a lawyer.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I am quoting, in my view, the only competent lawyer on the Liberal side of the House - or in the other place - whose view is that it is time the Parliament took control.

Mr Cowan: How does your colleague the member for Eyre respond to your remark?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I said the lawyer on the Liberal side of the House.

Mr Cowan: I heard you say "of the House".

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Minister for Health said that the people of Western Australia had to take back control of their Police Force. That is not a statement by a member of the Opposition, but by the Minister for Health. What does the Minister for Police say about the current situation? In the article in *The West Australian* Mr Wiese agreed that merit based promotion and a lack of resources, poor working conditions and frustration at lenient court sentences have caused low morale in the force.

Mr Cowan: Of course it did. Do you know what caused that? The failure of your people to attend to that issue. That is what caused it.

Mr D.L. SMITH: There is the admission. Not in 1992, 1993 or in January 1994, but 15 months into the life of this Government, this Minister for Police acknowledges that morale in the Western Australian Police Force is low.

Mr Cowan: It has been low for 10 years. For 10 years they got a flogging by your mob.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Morale in the Western Australian Police Force has never been lower than it is under the supervision of this Government. There are a number of reasons for that low morale. The first and foremost reason is that the Government has demonstrated that the Police Force cannot believe a word it says. Prior to the 1993 election, the Government made a number of promises ranging from an extra 800 policemen to funding of \$700 000 or \$800 000 for a new police station in Bunbury. Coalition members went around the state making all sorts of promises and all the Police Force got was a net increase of about 42 officers.

In the *South Western Times* last week the member for Bunbury said, "I am sorry; you will not get it in this Budget; maybe you will get some planning money in this budget. You make promises and sometimes it is hard to deliver them." The fact is that when promises are made and they are not kept, and when a force is starved of resources -

Mr Cowan: All this has been since 6 February!

Mr D.L. SMITH: - morale begins to fall. I have no hesitation in saying that there were some problems in the force in 1992, but we have gone from having some problems to having a crisis.

Mr Cowan: You are incredible.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The greatest demonstration of that crisis was put by the member for Wellington. There has been a total lack of confidence by this Government and this Minister in the commissioner, and in the force itself. It might even be said that, looking at the results of his investigations in recent years, Mr Ayton did some very good work on behalf of the then Opposition, not in a political way but because he is a very good police

officer. He was a popular choice of the police commissioner and the Government was not even prepared to make him assistant commissioner for a long while.

Mr Catania: The Minister wanted to go to Cabinet and recommend him.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Minister wanted to recommend him and people knew that members of Cabinet did not want to appoint him. What does that indicate about a Government that says, "You should not have political interference in the operations of the Police Force"; that is prepared to use its influence to override the commissioner and the Minister just because some people in Cabinet without any responsibility for the Police Force are prepared to ensure that their views are heard, rather than those of the police commissioner or the Minister for Police? All people who are keen to see that the police have proper respect and that they are doing their job, must be concerned about current events. If the Government will not at least amend this motion in some way which demonstrates its concern, we must question seriously whether it was just prepared to lie about what it would do for the Police Force prior to the last election, whether it was prepared to allow the morale of officers in the Police Force to get into the quagmire in which it is today, and whether it is serious about lifting morale in some way.

I do not want to spend my time running through the litany of cases which demonstrate the problems in the Police Force today. Quite clearly, they are the sorts of problems which we could expect from people who are unhappy in their occupation. They feel that they are not supported by the Government of the day; that the officers from whom they must take orders do not have the confidence of the Government; and that the Government is not prepared to resource the Police Force in a way which will enable it to deliver the services and protection to which the community is entitled. It cannot be good for the morale of the Police Force -

Mr Cowan: When the Opposition keeps denigrating the force, of course it cannot be.

Mr D.L. SMITH: - when the officers of the star group, if one likes, within the Police Force, the tactical response group, have received the adverse publicity we have seen in recent months; when they hear about what happened to the driver of the car involved in the collision after the Sinatra's incident; and when they hear of a raid on the flat of a young woman, a supporting mother, after an altercation with a policewoman in a sporting arena.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

Mr D.L. SMITH: I have a good deal of respect for the current Minister for Police as a person and, without wanting to be the least bit patronising, I have absolute confidence in his integrity, application to his task, and care and concern for what should be the objectives of his portfolio. While he was the National Party spokesperson on justice matters I always found his contribution on legal matters quite substantive and meritorious, even though they were more often than not the views of a bush lawyer. I think, quite honestly, that in his portfolios he was handed the poisoned chalice. The various portfolios require particular skills, and I do not think he was identified as being the person with the most appropriate skills for the Police portfolio. He was seen by some people as some sort of fall guy. The Government knew it could not honour the commitments it had made for extra resource for the police. It knew there would be problems that had to be dealt with as a result of its commitment. Frankly, I think he was considered to be an appropriate person to take the blame for that and then either exit Cabinet altogether or be pushed to some other area. That has been a great disservice to him and to the Police Force. The clear fact is that at this time the Police Force needs a Minister with all the skills that a Police Minister requires to be able to deal with the police, the public, and the Parliament in the most appropriate way. Above all he needs the absolute confidence and support of the entire Cabinet in terms of resources and supplying the direction for the Police Force.

I do not want to overstate the matter, but I believe that at present the Police Force is in crisis and it very much needs the question of leadership of the force to be resolved as quickly as possible in a non-political way. The fact that the current commissioner is

being excluded from the process indicates that there is a political view about who should be the future commissioner. That would be the worst possible outcome. I am a great believer that if one really wants to select people who know what are the problems and the solutions one often is better served selecting someone from the current force rather than taking someone who has never been a police officer before, or has come from another state without a clear understanding of the nature of the problem or the resources that are available to solve them. Most importantly, the police need to be absolutely confident in the commitment of this Parliament and this Government to the resources that the force requires to discharge its functions properly. Any independent assessment of the growth of the force in the last four or five years of the Labor government would recognise that its manpower increased by 46 per cent. It went from having the lowest to the highest ratio of police to members of the public of any state in Australia. That should not be the end of the matter. We still have ongoing law and order problems.

The other area, apart from numbers, which the police need most, is to be absolutely confident that in an operational sense its budget is secure and there should not be constraints constantly worrying officers about whether they can do overtime, what they can do overtime for, and who can do the overtime. It should be a simple matter. When the police have the demands, and when senior officers decide that overtime is required, the Government should provide the excess funds that are required to make sure they are met.

Mr Bradshaw: The constraints were there when you were in government.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I will not talk about what was happening 15 months ago. The crisis is occurring now. The other issue of resources is in providing police with the appropriate technology. In this day and age where a tremendous range of technology of a forensic type is available to assist the police in their work, we should be ensuring that this Police Force is the best equipped with what modern technology can offer to it and in the investigative and shared information from states and overseas that is available to it. One area of public concern is the solution rate in two areas of crime. Although in my view the level of crime has stabilised over the past couple of years, the solution rate of breaking and entering and motor vehicle theft crimes has not been decreasing. We must divert some resources to that area as well.

MR HILL (Helena) [7.40 pm]: I support the amendment to the Address-in-Reply moved by my colleague which addresses the questions of law and order and the handling of the police portfolio by the Police Minister. In seconding the amendment, the Leader of the Opposition referred to what he believes was a major mistake of the Minister and the Government last year in declining to appoint Les Ayton as deputy commissioner of police. I would go back further than that. Without disagreeing entirely with my leader, the biggest mistake that the Government made was promising more than it could deliver when it was in opposition. The then opposition, now the Government, sought to make the question of law and order a big issue at the last state election, and did so successfully.

Mr Blaikie: How was it you were moved sideways from the police portfolio?

Mr HILL: I might come to that. The member should wait with bated breath to see what happens. I know the inside story; the member does not.

Last year, the then opposition chose to beat up the question of law and order as a major issue in the election campaign. That was a major mistake. It raised community expectations to the point at which it expected a great deal to happen almost overnight. As we all know, there is a need for attitudinal change - apart from meeting the commitments and the promises made about police numbers and various other matters - not just within the community but also within the Police Force about the way in which it operates. Those changes will take many years to occur.

Although the Government came into office promising the world - promising to reduce the level of crime and the level of recidivism -

Several members interjected.

Mr HILL: Could members keep their talk down to a whisper so that I can think clearly?

The SPEAKER: Order! If the members behind the member for Helena are distracting him, I will call them to order. From where I sit, it is not possible to hear them.

Mr HILL: The Government came to office promising to reduce the level of recidivism. It talked about the revolving door syndrome constantly during the state election campaign. It said that it would stop the revolving door syndrome. That created a level of expectation within the community that simply was not possible to meet, certainly not in the short term. The other major promise that was made that clearly has been reneged upon and cannot possibly be fulfilled within the time frame that the Government - the then opposition - set itself, was to increase the numbers in the Police Force by 800 officers. That is a laudable promise. However, governments, oppositions and political parties should not make those promises unless they know they can deliver them. To make those promises on the basis that it will help them to gain office is immoral and unethical. During the course of the election campaign, the then opposition made law and order a major issue. It made the rules on the issues that it wanted the campaign to be fought upon and now must suffer the consequences for not delivering. Clearly, it has not delivered; it was never going to be able to deliver.

The Minister has one of the toughest portfolios of any Minister. I speak from personal experience and feel sympathy for the Minister, as it is his first portfolio. It was my first portfolio, also. I held that portfolio for a couple of years and believe it to be a particularly difficult one.

By way of interjection, the member for Vasse made reference to the fact that I was shifted from the Police portfolio after some two years in that position. That may have been because I had fairly frequent arguments with the Police Union at the time. I had arguments about issues such as promotion on the basis of merit. We have seen that advanced. Whether it is the right system is a matter for others to judge. I am not in a position to be able to make a judgment about that. At least it was brought forward and introduced. I also had an argument with the Police Union about a section of the Police Act which I believed should be removed. Many young police officers today would agree with me that that section of the Police Act does no more than serve the interests of the Police Union to try to increase its membership. That section was introduced by Ray O'Connor when he was Minister for Police.

Mr Lewis: A bit of a worry.

Mr HILL: The Minister said it, not I. That provision sought to arrange a nexus between the number of commissioned officers and noncommissioned officers in the Police Force. For every 25 noncommissioned officers in the Police Force, there must be one commissioned officer. In other words, if an extra 100 police officers are recruited, four almost automatically have to be elevated to commissioned rank. In this day and age, that is absolutely ridiculous. I did not support it at that time, I still do not support it and I think it should be removed. That is one of the reasons this Minister will have the same types of problems that I had with the Police Union when I was Minister for Police. I tried to have that section removed, but I was unsuccessful. I believe the Minister will have the same problem. I understand he has attempted to put resources into other areas of the Police Force rather than simply increase police numbers.

I am not in any way letting the Minister off the hook for not increasing police numbers. That was a promise made by the opposition at the time and it should follow through that promise in government. However, what the Minister is doing in putting resources such as equipment into other areas of the Police Force and in public sector support for police officers is laudable. That is one of the directions that I was keen to pursue. In fact, in my second budget as Police Minister, I increased the number of public servants substantially to undertake many of the mundane roles that police officers undertook in police stations.

Mr Blaikie: Did the Police Union support you on that, or did it oppose that, as well?

Mr HILL: It opposed it. That is the point I am making. The Police Union opposed that initiative because I was shifting resources and increasing public sector numbers rather than police numbers. I was freeing highly trained police officers, who should have been

out on patrol in the streets, from the mundane duties in police stations. In other words, it would have created a real increase in available man hours. If that is what the Minister is attempting to do, I support that. However, I warn him that, if he continues on that course of action, he will have a problem with the Police Union, unless he takes the bold step to remove that section of the Police Act to which I referred. That is one of the things that I set out to achieve as Police Minister, but did not manage to do. I wanted to touch on that point to mention to the Minister that, although promises have been made that have not been fulfilled, I support some of the actions that he has taken.

One of the issues that has come to light recently is the low morale within the Police Force. This issue was raised some years ago. Every Police Minister has had to confront it from time to time. When a problem has emerged within the organisation, the union and members of the Police Force have claimed that there is a problem with morale within the force. There is no doubt that issue is raised as a matter of convenience from time to time.

Mr Cowan: Who says that?

Mr HILL: Many Police Union officials say that from time to time.

Mr Cowan: You are in the Opposition; you would be about right.

Mr HILL: They said it when I was the Minister for Police and also when the present Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Police. Government members when in opposition also said it. That matter is trotted out sometimes as a matter of convenience by political parties, or indeed by members of the Opposition. There can be no mistaking the fact that the Liberal Party was strongly supported by the Police Force at the last election. We all know the nature of the campaign that was under way at that time. The Police Force is now understandably disappointed that the commitments that were made to it 18 months ago have not been fulfilled. It is disappointed and it is reacting accordingly. Members will hear that comment made. Perhaps to some extent it is true; however, it is also true that the Police Force needs a sense of discipline. I have observed from time to time that that sense of discipline is lacking in the organisation. That cannot be ignored. One also cannot ignore the offences that have occurred in the Police Force, however minor they might have been.

The community expects that those who are meant to enforce the law on its behalf should be the first to uphold the law, and should be seen to be upholding it. On several occasions recently we have seen a lack of discipline within the organisation. That discipline must be instilled from senior levels, and must permeate through the force. I have been critical of senior officers within the Police Force for failing to instil that sense of discipline within the organisation. That does not mean that following a call for stronger discipline one simply puts out an edict that police officers shall salute those of a senior rank. That is laughable. It is necessary to instil discipline within the force by taking some action against those who break the law, however minor those infringements might be. The community expects that, and is entitled to expect it.

I recall that when I was the Minister for Police I suggested that certain matters were the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police, and that the Minister should not become involved in those areas. I have heard the current Minister say that occasionally since he has had to face questions from across the Chamber. That does not mean that the Minister does not have the responsibility to answer those questions. Of course he does. However, he is right in saying that operational matters are firmly the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police. A High Court judgment some years ago stated that the Minister for Police and members of Parliament should not interfere in operational matters; that they are the total responsibility of the Commissioner of Police. I support that, as I am sure all members do. We should not see any political interference in operational matters. However, there is a saying that if one makes his own bed, he should lie in it. If the Minister for Police raises an expectation that people will see him taking action on certain matters, he has the responsibility to follow through with that action. This Minister must be careful of that and of what he says on issues that arise, whether they be operational or policy matters.

I will close my remarks by referring to an issue within my electorate which has been of concern to me for some time, even when I was the Minister for Police. I refer to the question of a police presence in the Forrestfield-High Wycombe area. At the time I became a member of Parliament for the Forrestfield area in 1983 I was involved in a campaign to increase the police presence in that area. I became a member of Parliament in 1982, but Forrestfield was not included in my electorate until 1983. In 1986 I became the Minister for Police and became more familiar with the Police Department's regional operational methods. I also became familiar with the way in which the police patrolled areas in marked and unmarked cars - the 79 division and others. I used to spend time with them on patrols in the evenings and on weekends. I made it my business to go out and visit police stations. In my first year I set myself an objective to visit every police station in the state. I got to about three-quarters of them! I spent a great deal of time going out on patrol with police officers in my electorate. I began to appreciate how the Police Force worked at the grass roots level and some of the problems it experienced.

My government attempted - I want to question the Minister to see whether that is continuing - to establish a stronger police presence in the Forrestfield-High Wycombe area. In a question to the Minister for Police on 30 September last year I asked whether the police station situated in the Forrestfield Forum shopping centre had been closed. It was a police post, not a station as such, and did not have all the responsibilities of a police station. I asked what was the reason for the closure and whether the station would be reopened. The Minister stated that the police facility at Forrestfield Forum was temporarily unstaffed from 6 September to 19 September 1993, and that the facility had been restaffed since 20 September 1993. That answer was given on 30 September 1993, but as at today the facility still has not been reopened or restaffed. The Minister's answer to me and to the Parliament was wrong, and is still wrong. The Minister would have received a letter from the Forrestfield Residents' Association, dated 30 April, which states -

We refer to our letter dated 13 September 1993 which was responded to by you on 26 October 1993 in which you stated: "The Commissioner of Police has advised me that between 6 September and 19 September 1993, the police facility at Forrestfield Forum was temporarily unstaffed due to unforeseen additional leave commitments. The Police Post was subsequently re-staffed on 20 September 1993 and efforts will be made to ensure a continual police presence."

The post still has not been reopened, notwithstanding the fact that the Minister made that comment in his letter last year. The Minister is obviously receiving incorrect advice. The Minister's letter, which was drafted by the Police Department, is wrong. The Commissioner of Police, or whoever gave the Minister that advice, obviously had not checked thoroughly enough on that issue. The letter from the Forrestfield Residents' Association further states -

Please be advised that the Police Post has not been open since its first closure and this is causing some alarm among the community - particularly in view of the very high crime rate, worse, we believe, than Lockridge.

The letter further stated that an article in the *Echo* newspaper on 27 March 1994 reported that Forrestfield had experienced a 50 per cent increase in burglaries since November last year. I am told by the local police based in Kalamunda that more effort and police time is taken up in the foothills area than in Kalamunda itself where there is a police station. There is not one in Forrestfield. I urge the Minister to consider this matter carefully and to take whatever action is possible to ensure that a permanent police presence is established in the Forrestfield-High Wycombe area.

MR GRAHAM (Pilbara) [8.00 pm]: The proposed amendment to the Address-in-Reply debate points out that the Liberal-National Party coalition in the last election campaign made a series of commitments on law and order. It made particular commitments about the Police Force, which are outlined in the preamble to and body of the amendment.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Glendalough that one of the practices of this House is that a person shall not pass between the member on his feet and the

Speaker. I am sure that the member for Glendalough inadvertently did so, but reminding her may be of benefit to other members.

Mr GRAHAM: In essence, the amendment is about the administration and morale of the police and a series of law and order issues. Law and order campaigning by the conservative coalition over the last decade has been raised to an art form, to the extent that the federal Liberal leader, with no authority and no responsibility for community law and order, has picked up on the polls and sought to make it a national issue. He has no answers, and members will find that not having answers is a significant part of the Liberal and National coalition parties' way of dealing with questions of law and order.

The other part of this amendment relates to the ability of the Minister to control his portfolio. I have some sympathy with him because it is an extraordinarily difficult portfolio to handle. Let us consider how the Minister has gone about it. I am unable to find in the business introduced into the first session of the thirty-fourth Parliament any legislation that bears the name of the Minister. I am unable to find on the Notice Paper for this session of Parliament any legislation that bears the name of the Minister. I am prepared to be corrected with regard to the 1993-94 session should the Minister be able to produce some. I have had limited time to research this matter but certainly none is listed on the current Notice Paper. That gives some indication of the priority the Minister attaches to the laws the police must administer.

The member for Helena raised the question of leadership in the Police Force and was quite right to do so, as a previous Minister for Police and Emergency Services. The leadership requirement goes beyond the police and the officers and should come from the Minister for Police. I shall go through the means by which the system starts to become twisted. It has been raised before. I was quite angry that throughout the Glendalough by-election when people sought crime statistics from the Minister for Police, this side of the parliamentary system was advised those figures were not available. I was very cranky because in my first election campaign I was a victim of the Liberal-National Party attempt to deal with law and order problems by way of public meetings and operatives of the lay Liberal Party beating up the law and order issues in Port Hedland. They did it very well, but the predator was Hon George Cash, a member in another place, asking a series of questions about law and order statistics. Every by-election in my five years in this place has been preceded by that man, who was shadow spokesman on police matters, getting statistics on crime, the effect of crime and the number of offences, and producing them in a campaign on law and order. I include in that the Geraldton by-election. It is interesting to note what happened after the election in Geraldton when law and order became a real issue and the candidate of the day found himself confronted with real law and order problems. He came squawking to the Parliament with please help me petitions. I will show quite clearly the difference between the two parties and how law and order issues are dealt with.

White collar crimes do not ordinarily get the headlines. The sorts of things that seem to attract people's attention are crimes of violence, which the statistics show, despite the headlines, are marginally declining. The offences that attract attention are breaking and entering and stealing vehicles. Generally speaking, white collar crimes attract little attention, apart from those that involve people such as Laurie Connell. The people in the Police Department tell me they have little or no resources to enable them to chase white collar criminals; they have problems accessing vehicles and they have difficulties getting money through their department for title and corporate searches. Believe it or not, there is demarcation between the police in the white collar crime area and federal departments, where the state department is unable or unwilling to approve payment to a federal department for searches through the federal system. That is absolutely insane because white collar crime is the most rapidly expanding area of crime in Western Australia. It is not dealt with by this Minister because it is not glamorous.

I was told by police after my house was burgled not long ago that stolen goods from breaking and entering in Western Australia are regularly transferred to the Eastern States and franchised through hock shops in the Eastern States. I am told the reverse traffic is the same. Goods stolen interstate are transferred to another state and used by hock shops

to establish franchises. I do not know whether that is accurate, but I know the legislation dealing with hock shops is grossly inadequate. They are supermarkets. There is no control, the police are unable to check, and I am reliably informed that unless possessions to the value of at least \$5 000 are stolen, the police do not bother to check. I have no way of confirming that either, but operatives in the insurance industry say that is the case.

To date the Minister has taken no action whatsoever in this Parliament on any of those issues. No requirement exists for an 18 year old youth to be photographed when he tries to hock a \$2 000 computer. The defence the Minister usually gives on matters such as this - as the Government usually does with any matter raised - is that the mob on the Opposition benches did nothing for 10 years, but the present Government is addressing the whole question and will fix it. Government members then hop into their helicopters and disappear over the horizon. I will deal with that defence later.

Mr Trenorden: Not too much later I hope.

Mr GRAHAM: It is variable and it is all in the hands of members opposite. I have no axe to grind with individual police officers. I have had a long association with them in my electorate and it has been a healthy and comfortable association. But the Minister must learn that he is not the defender of the Police Force. He is the public's man in the Police Force, not the Police Force's man in Parliament. There is a significant difference. If the Minister is not sure, he should dig out copies of "Yes, Minister" and see how Jim Hacker dealt with the situation.

In the Minister's defence, when he is confronted with issues he takes one of three lines. First, "I am advised that this is the case", and this has arisen out of a series of questions when the Minister was poorly advised and had to apologise to the House for misleading it, albeit on poor advice. The second line is that it is an operational matter and therefore out of the Minister's control. The third example is the one I cited earlier where the Minister says, "You did nothing for 10 years. We are here to fix it." But when pressed on any issue to do with police and/or law and order the Minister very quickly slips out to the fringes of the debate and says, "Would you rather have a politician interfering in the operations of the police?" That is nonsense because that is not the area of debate; it is back in the middle ground where the Minister must, with the commissioned officers and the Commissioner of Police, determine a course of action. He tells the police that as Minister he does not approve of their actions or he tells the police that they are to do certain things. The operations are still in the hands of the commissioned officers, quite rightly.

I will give some quick examples of how to deal with issues. I will use Port Hedland as a classic example. I felt sorry for the Minister on the day the electricity went out in Western Australia and he was put in a position by the police of making a statement based on their advice. He said there was a policeman on every corner. Parliament, including his colleagues, broke out in spontaneous laughter because no-one saw a policeman on every intersection. On that day he was poorly advised by his commissioned officers. I do not blame the Minister for that. I blame the Minister because he does not have a group of officers in a position where he demands and commands their respect. The important point I am trying to make is about the administration by the Minister of the Police Force, and I will use Port Hedland as an example. In 1988-89 a large public meeting was organised in Port Hedland by the Liberal Party candidate to address the problem of law and order in that town. There were considerable problems. We had the highest crime rate of any town in Western Australia. The then Minister for Police, the member for Kalgoorlie, turned up at a meeting of some 550 people in Port Hedland. It is a shame that he is not here at the moment because I could get some brownie points. In a town of between 12 000 and 13 000 people it was a relatively large public meeting. The then Minister for Police took the right approach. Initially, he accepted that a problem existed, and that it must be dealt with. The point was made that the Minister provides the budget and the coppers do the hard work. We will deal with that matter. He put together a series of initiatives in Port Hedland which the police initially opposed, but as a result of his ability to manage his portfolio the police agreed.

I will outline some of the initiatives: First, we got more police. That is an operational matter and the Minister answers questions weekly, and says it is an operational matter. The member for Kalgoorlie met the Commissioner of Police and said, "That is not good enough. There is a problem. How will you fix it?" The Commissioner of Police found some extra police officers. As always happens when pressure is applied by the Minister on the commissioner, the commissioner found the extra police officers. There was no great drama.

A community policing officer was appointed five years ago when such positions were relatively new. Inside one year, that man was voted Citizen of the Year in Port Hedland in recognition of his work. That was a proposal the police were not prepared to accept at that time. The Police Department thought community policing officers should go to the high crime areas in the city. The then Minister followed his procedure of working with the commissioner and the police, but it was always an operational matter. Had he taken the line of the current Minister for Police, he would have stated that it was an operational matter and that he could do nothing about that.

Second, we started Blue Light Discos. Third, we set up the Aboriginal visitors scheme, and, to the eternal credit of the police, there is yet to be an Aboriginal death in custody in Port Hedland, largely as a result of that scheme and the police. Fourth, we had a series of break and enters, at a rate of around 57 a week, and in a tiny town that is a lot. The nearest forensic officer was 1 500 kilometres away. The police response was that it was an operational matter. Again, by working with the police, an officer was made available, and that rate declined. The Police Force changed its working hours, and that is clearly nothing more than an operational matter. It was directly related to the officer in charge of police but the hours were changed, not because the Minister told them to do so but because both the Commissioner of Police and the Minister showed leadership and were prepared to meet the community and address community issues. I applaud them for that. At the time, outstanding changes were made.

Fifth, we put in truancy patrols. Sixth, we reduced the sale of bottled alcohol in South Hedland. As a result we experienced an amazing increase in the morale of the police in Port Hedland because they felt like people in the community, working for and with the community. Even better, in the first year we had a reduction in the rate of stealing offences to 37, and break and enter offences also decreased. Finally, we then introduced the first street patrol system funded by the Department for Community Services. That system is applied now in a number of areas. Port Hedland is now the town with the lowest crime figures in Western Australia.

I do not raise these matters in order to blow Port Hedland's trumpet but to indicate to the Minister that people can sit down and approach a problem and take into account all its factors and components and work through each of them in a methodical way. When the Minister faces up to his ministerial responsibilities as the public's man in the Police Force and not as the Police Force's man in the Parliament, he can work through each issue and arrive at a resolution which is satisfactory to all. On each of those grounds, with the relevant legislation he will find success. Perhaps I should not use the word "legislation", because after 18 months he has yet to introduce legislation.

We have great difficulties in this state with law and order which stem from, and revolve around, this Minister's inability to win his argument in the Police Force and in Cabinet to obtain the money required to enable the police to do their work. On any account, the Minister has shown himself to be incapable of winning those arguments. The Budget must contain significant increases in the allocation to the Police portfolio. I have never argued that anybody should receive an increase before, but this man's portfolio must receive that increase. Is this the Minister to get the money out of Cabinet? I doubt it.

MR BRIDGE (Kimberley) [8.21 pm]: An exchange which took place about five minute ago captured the basis on which any attempt to deal with law and order might succeed. The Minister for Planning said to the member for Pilbara that it was not realistic to command respect and, in fact, that respect could only be earned. Therein lies the problem with this country.

We have developed an unfortunate attitude as a nation in indulging at great length in condemnation of others, particularly the youth. The young ultimately comprise a large part of the people causing a concern over law and order. Once we were taught basic values and many of us still adhere to those teachings. However, we have failed to maintain a strong grip on the realisation that if one continues to tell people how bad they are, they will dislike and disrespect the critic. If I said to members opposite, or my colleagues on this side, that I did not like things about them as individuals -

Mr Trenorden: You would not do that.

Mr BRIDGE: Suppose I did. I would expect that members' respect or regard for me would dissipate. Ultimately, instead of being cooperative in pursuit of important matters to society, members would tend to rebel in reaction to the comments.

Over several of years of debate what has been said to the youth of our nation? It is said that we need stiffer penalties, boot camps and other institutions and a process of harsh remedies to deal with juvenile crime. This reflects a hardened attitude towards that group of people. The end result is that this group of people has a disrespectful attitude towards society and a reduced regard for the likes of members of Parliament, as decision makers, and the police, who must administer law and order.

Police officers are caught up in a particularly difficult situation in our society at the moment. No amount of heavy-handed attitudes and policy directed to that core of our society will change the state of play. If anything, more problems will develop as a result. A police officer who has the respect of his community, works in a community which is in good shape. He has that respect not because he is aggressive or aims to scare people; people simply afford him respect. Consequently, the attitude of the community at large responds to the orderly process required of it. This principle applies to not only law and order, but also other areas of deficiency in our nation. If we do not change these attitudes, we must brace ourselves for the future problems, and the utterances about the need for stiffer penalties and police reinforcements will continue.

Take the case of Nelson Mandela. He went to gaol for 20-odd years because he was doing what the authorities thought he should not be doing. Look where he is today. None of us will become scared by losing respect. I have learnt in this Parliament that if one talks aggressively and advocates the application of extreme processes, people will not be scared and run for cover - logically, quite the reverse is true. If I speak to you, Mr Speaker, in that way, you will not be scared and run for cover. I might believe that I have achieved some notable success in winding you, so to speak, but that is a false position. Mr Speaker will take the other view and invariably he will square the deal with me.

Society must change its approach. Talk back radio programs these days are sordid in many respects. They are a continual assassination of the integrity of our young people - they are condemned and ridiculed. As a society we are very good at deflection. We say, "Yes, I have made this critical comment, but it is about a sectional group and not the entire community." However, one cannot say that others should not take exception when criticising a core group because the criticism is a generalisation with a general application.

I do not know whether the Minister and the Police Force are capable of doing what the previous government was unable to do, but it would be tremendous if they could: They should mount a campaign which calls on society to look on others as decent people. In turn, with that approach to each other, the respect which should be afforded to police officers and society generally will return. If the Minister were able to do that, it would be an accomplishment superior to anything we have embraced in my time in this Parliament. It would be a major step in the right direction of reducing dramatically the incidence of disorderly conduct and law and order problems. Also, it would support society generally.

Too often today there is condemnation rather than promotion that people are good. The reality is that our society is made up of decent people and not people of ill-repute. The Minister speaks of the majority. If we believe that the majority are in that category, is that not a choice worth taking? That is a pretty good bonus, because it is not a minute

percentage. We must do something different. I have been absolutely against many of the procedures adopted in this Parliament and I have not had much success in pursuing a different point of view. I have never hesitated to criticise plans which have emanated from this Parliament from a series of governments because they were the wrong approach. I liken our approach to society to what an old bloke once said to me, "It is always better to tease a fool than please a fool." If one thinks about it, it means it is not too hard to get people liking one in the end. If we can get young police officers, like the young fellow in the gallery, to commit themselves to an approach which is not the rigid enforcement of law, as it is capable of being applied, but a bona fide attitude to try to persuade people to another view, we will get the public response we are seeking. The successful schemes, summarised this afternoon by the Minister, such as the Aboriginal force, the patrols and the Aboriginal visitors scheme, have been successful because they involve a commitment by all concerned. The Aboriginal counsellors, the patrol officers, the police and the community have tried to instil pride, dignity and respect. That is why we have cooperation from the recipients of those programs.

Mr Prince: You said, "with dignity".

Mr BRIDGE: Just about everything I have heard in this place in recent times has been completely off the track, although we argue and put forward reasons why we are at fault or we should be proud of our effort. Whether we are off track on the railway line, we will get to the destination. It is as simple as that. I do not know how we can change this whole process because many people in the community have been victims of some fairly unpleasant incidents. It is difficult to say to them that, notwithstanding the difficulties and trauma they have experienced, they should adopt another point of view to this issue. However, in the end it will be worth the effort. There is scope for us as politicians to change because in the end, Mr Deputy Speaker, really all that you and I and our colleagues do is to sound tough and pretend to be tough and have self-fulfilling, egotistical thoughts. The result will not reflect the way we promote it. There is a great inability on our part to get to the basic and important factor of the role of the human race in law and order. If we do not change we will have a very much more conditioned youth than we had years ago. Our youth know many of the parameters within which they can work and they give a lot of thought to this. They are in a position to obtain considerable information and ideological presentations on all that is happening around the world. If they choose to defy society they are well versed and able to do it. We should be backing off and not pushing, because our youth is able to respond in a very aggressive and forthright manner to any pressures we apply.

When dealing with this issue we say that everything in our society is wrong. It is wrong because essentially you and I, Mr Deputy Speaker, say that the people out there are no good. If we tell them for long enough that they are no good, why should they be law abiding citizens? We are not displaying any respect for them but are condemning them. Yet those same people who are indulging in some activity we do not like are the people whose respect we are endeavouring to get. That is a joke and is where the problem lies. While we continue talking about dealing with criminals and juvenile crime by aggressive means, we are kidding ourselves. There is no way it can be done, irrespective of our best endeavours and those of the Police Force; we have not Buckley's chance of changing the situation very much. Society is not helping us. That is why the Minister for Police is promoting policies and sets of ground rules by which we can deal with these instances. What do we do as a society? We create an environment which makes it almost impossible for people. There is a lot of folly in this place and in society. Unless we as a nation are prepared to come to grips with reality and commit ourselves to gain the respect of these young people, as the Minister for Planning has said, we will not change anything. When we do gain that respect, we will surely be on the way to bringing this situation under control and, for the first time, enable the police to gain respect.

Without the police being able to sustain respect, there is no way you, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Johnson), and I, irrespective of the legislative program we might set up in this place, will do any good at all. They remain close to the problem and it is they who must address it on our behalf. Therefore, it is up to us as legislators and as members of our

society to create an environment in which they can work and where the public at large says it likes and has respect for these police officers. If that happens we will find that, in many instances, aggressiveness in administering the law will not be required. Gentle persuasion, understanding, cooperation, goodwill and respect will take the place of aggression and we will have a far better society. I make those points because they are very important and they are too often forgotten in our debate.

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park) [8.40 pm]: I support the amendment moved by the Opposition this evening. The assumption within this amendment is that policing can make a big difference in combating crime in our community and that a very effective policing strategy, properly based, researched and resourced can make a big impact on the way our society functions in order that the majority of the people can go about their lives peacefully and unaffected by those who wish to engage in crime.

Indeed, during the time of the Labor government a very clear message was sent to the Police Force that a central part of that strategy must be the development of community policing. The resources were put into that area and the Commissioner of Police embraced, supported and developed the concept within Western Australia. His legacy to the Western Australian Police Force will be his support for, and his commitment to, community policing. That support could not have been carried through within the Police Force without the commitment of the then Labor government to that concept; support which went into the Neighbourhood Watch program and more recently into the Business Watch program. On this side of the House we believe community policing can make a difference in combating law and order. However, three ingredients are absolutely vital to that objective: The first is there must be a proper strategy; secondly, the resources, which can only come from the Government, must be available for the police to carry out that strategy; and, thirdly there must be unambiguous and clear leadership from not only the commissioner and his senior officers, but also the Police Minister and his Government.

In Western Australia we currently find confusion about what the central strategy is. The messages from the Government about the direction the Police Force should follow are not clear. The commitment to provide resources needed for the police to carry out their functions is not available, and the expectations that were developed before the election and given to the Police Force by this Government are not being fulfilled. Most importantly, in the context of the retirement of a Police Commissioner, there is a vacuum within the Police Force in regard to clear direction and leadership. It is not being filled by the type of leadership that a Minister for Police can give - a different type of leadership than would come from the Police Commissioner and his senior officers, but it is a leadership that is needed.

On the question of strategy, if members talk to police officers in the system, they will find they are not clear in their minds whether this Government is unambiguously behind the strategies pursued by the previous Police Commissioner in, for example, community policing. They are not sure, because the Government sends out signals that it does not like or trust the retiring commissioner. The evidence of this is that it will not support him in the process by which the new commissioner will be chosen. Contradictory signals are going to the police officers in the community, which this Government does nothing to amend because it is not clear whether it is committed to the strategies put in place by the previous Police Commissioner. If it were committed to those strategies it would have shown much more support for the commissioner in his dealings with his force and in respect of the role he could have played in selecting a new commissioner of police. Those sorts of signals impact on the morale within the Police Force.

In relation to resources, we know only too well the expectations created by the then Liberal-National opposition concerning the money it would plough into the Police Force if it gained office. Not only have those expectations been dashed, but the reality is, given the job that the police must do in the community, they have less resources to do that job. I am not arguing in general terms, but in specific terms and I refer to my own electorate as an example. The resources provided to the Victoria Park Police Station are the same as they were before there was a change of Government. Community policing resources are the same as they were before, but the need to expand that, for example, to include a

truancy patrol as part of the normal activities of my community policing strength, is not being backed up by commitment from the Commissioner of Police.

Mr Wiese: Were you not at the opening of the community resource centre of Victoria Park?

Dr GALLOP: That commitment was made by the Commissioner of Police to my electorate, not by the Minister.

Mr Wiese: You have just said no resources were put into your area in the past 12 months.

Dr GALLOP: I did not say that. I said there has been no diminution of resources provided to the Victoria Park Police Station and for community policing. However, I am coming to the part of the equation that is of great concern to the people I represent; that is, the CIB strength in my electorate. Many people telephone after they have approached the local CIB and been told it does not have the resources to follow their complaint until its officers deal with the ones they already have. Following those sorts of complaints I examined the resources level required for the CIB in my electorate and I can tell the Minister what they are. The allocated strength, according to the population and the police understanding of the need in my electorate, is 17 officers. How many officers are currently employed in the CIB in my district? There are 10 - about half the requirement needed to service that area properly. The people in my electorate then come to me and ask what is going on.

The answer is that insufficient resources are available to employ the staff required to carry out the job. That has nothing to do with the way the police allocate resources, but it has everything to do with the amount of revenue that this Government makes available to the Police Force. The Minister should not talk to me about extra resources in my electorate. Community policing was developed and supported by the previous government through the State Government Insurance Commission and through the general moral commitment and support the Government gave to the Commissioner of Police, which he then backed up with an office in my area. That came from him, not from the Minister. The Minister was fortunate to open the station and I was at the opening, but he should not tell me that it was his responsibility, because if he does it will make a mockery of the standards adopted by him on the need for a separation of operational and policy matters.

In the criminal investigation bureau in my electorate, 10 officers are employed out of an allocated 17 officers. If that is not an under allocation, I would like to know what is. The Minister is responsible for that and should be ensuring that the Government provides adequate resources to see that the discrepancy between allocated and current strength is overcome.

That leads to the third issue of vital importance, which is the question of leadership. The Police Force should have operational autonomy but it is fundamental that the Parliament of Western Australia make it clear to the people who have operational autonomy that there is a distinction between proper and improper behaviour. The Minister for Police must make it absolutely clear to the Police Force that their duties will be carried out with a full understanding of the distinction between right and wrong. There is no contradiction between operational autonomy as a concept and the Minister making clear to the Police Force what the Parliament and the community expect of the Police Force. That is where the Minister makes a mistake. When the police engage in improper behaviour he should fully express the views of the community that he and the Parliament represent; he should indicate clearly the community's distaste for that behaviour.

The real problem regarding leadership is the transition from the current to the new commissioner. Two aspects of that transition have not been handled well by the Government and the Minister. The first is the clear signal that has been sent by this Government to the Commissioner of Police. In a sense, the Minister cannot be blamed for this because he may be a victim of the Liberal Party that surrounds him. They have sent a message to the Police Force that they do not like, do not trust, and do not respect

the retiring Commissioner of Police. It is a disgusting message, and that has made it very hard for the senior officers of the Police Force to maintain discipline. If the Minister does not understand that message, he does not understand anything about politics. That is what members of the Police Force believe the Minister and the Government think about the retiring Commissioner of Police. There should be no mistake about that at all - that is what the Minister thinks about the retiring commissioner.

The second aspect concerning leadership is the bipartisanship relating to the new Commissioner of Police. The previous government had a very clear policy on bipartisanship regarding major appointments to positions that required authority in relation to the community: There would be no question as to any political involvement in appointments.

Mr Lewis: Come on!

Dr GALLOP: I refer to the appointment of the Auditor General, the appointment of the Ombudsman, and the appointment of the Freedom of Information Commissioner. The policy that was adopted by the previous government regarding those was that the short list was given to the opposition. The then Leader of the Opposition, the retired member for Jandakot, Barry MacKinnon, was given a short list regarding the appointment of the Auditor General and the Ombudsman. I am sure the Minister would agree that as a result of the policy and approach that was adopted we have two officers who are respected by all sides of politics, by the Parliament, and by the community for the fearless way they carry out their functions. The Opposition wants to say the same thing about the Commissioner of Police and the challenge is thrown out to this Government. Have members opposite got it within them to ensure that the process we followed in respect of the Ombudsman and the Auditor General -

Mr Cowan: Because the Act requires it. Don't be silly.

Dr GALLOP: It is not a question. Let us consider whether the Government will follow that process regarding the next Commissioner of Police.

Mr Cowan: Is it in the Act?

Dr GALLOP: Let us not talk about the Act.

Mr Cowan: It is not in the Act. There is no requirement to do so.

Dr GALLOP: The Opposition is getting the second set of messages from this Government, that the next Commissioner of Police will be a political appointment, that it will be someone who suits the purposes -

Mr Cowan: For a person with your academic experience and intellectual ability, far too many rash assumptions are made; it is totally illogical.

Dr GALLOP: Why will the Minister not involve the Leader of the Opposition in that process?

Mr Cowan: Why should we?

Dr GALLOP: So that when a new Commissioner of Police is appointed, there is no question about the bipartisan support of the community.

Mr Cowan: Let me suggest something to you. The Minister for Police in good faith offered the Opposition spokesperson on police matters and the Leader of the Opposition an opportunity to examine a particular document.

Dr GALLOP: That is a separate issue altogether.

Mr Cowan: The principle remains the same. The member destroyed any good faith the Minister for Police had in the Opposition by that action.

Dr GALLOP: Rubbish.

Mr Cowan: Therefore, the Opposition is not to be trusted.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Dr GALLOP: The time has come to summarise the essential points on this amendment. Firstly, there is absolutely no clarity from this Government as to the strategic direction it wishes to see policing go in this state. That is understood and felt by every police officer in Western Australia. Secondly, there is absolutely no support for the police in the community, and I have instanced that point in my electorate. The CIB in my electorate has an allocated strength of 17 and only 10 officers are there. Everybody in my electorate knows that, and it undermines their faith in this Government and the Minister. Thirdly, and fundamental to the whole proposition we are putting forward, the disgraceful way that this Government has undermined the authority of the retiring Commissioner of Police and sent a message right through the Police Force that it does not have respect for that individual has led to a fundamental problem of authority in the Police Force which is reflected in the behaviour we see today. Only one person is responsible for that; that is, the Minister for Police. Only one government is responsible for that; that is, the Liberal-National Government in Western Australia. They cannot absolve themselves of the responsibility of a failure to set up proper strategic direction, a failure to give adequate resources to the Police Force and a failure to give authority to the very person whose job it is to carry out the operational functions of the Police Force; that is, the Commissioner of Police.

MR RIEBELING (Ashburton) [9.01 pm]: I worked with hundreds of police officers in the 20-odd years I worked in the courts and I learnt to respect the ability and integrity of the vast majority of them. For most of that time I worked in the bush and I relied on the police and trusted them in every aspect of their work. However, working as close as I did with them for 20 years I did come across the odd policeman who made it difficult for his colleagues, and that is one of the problems confronting the Police Force today.

I am aware of a number of other problems within the Police Force and I will share them with the Minister in the hope that he will listen to me and try to resolve some of them. I have already told the Minister that one of the problems is that there are in excess of 700 nonoperational policemen. I understand a report which has just been completed goes somewhere towards addressing this problem. The 700 nonoperational policemen are fully trained police officers who should be on the streets doing the work they are trained to do. Instead, they are answering telephones and acting as court orderlies and court prosecutors, and there are police in this building now who are trained for duties far beyond what they are doing here. All these police should be redirected to the jobs for which they were trained.

Another problem within the Police Force is its promotional system. Under the existing system a good operational police officer will apply, for economic reasons, to become a superintendent or administrator after he has gained a certain amount of experience or reached a certain age. These officers are not equipped to be good administrators or accountants. In my 20 years of experience with the Police Force I have seen outstanding operational policemen go into the inspectorate or superintendent range and be most unhappy, and after a couple of years they pull the pin.

Mr Prince: What is the alternative to the present system?

Mr RIEBELING: The alternative is to make the operational arm the elite arm of the Police Force and to change the promotional structure so a sergeant of police can be financially compensated without his rank being affected. In other words, a sergeant in charge of a police station could receive the same income as the superintendent of a region.

Mr Wiese: Are you aware that that is already in place?

Mr RIEBELING: It is not in the Pilbara. In that area the officers who want promotion apply for it, but many of them do not want to leave the operational arm to go into the superintendent or inspector range.

Mr Prince: From where would we get inspectors and superintendents?

Mr RIEBELING: In my view administrators, accountants and staff clerks within the Police Force should be expert in those fields. After all, they are controlling a large group

of people and a person who one thinks would be good at the job should be appointed to supervise them - an administrator, accountant or a staff clerk should be employed to do that. We should not remove the opportunity for officers in the Police Force to improve themselves financially.

Mr Prince: You are talking about people with management training and not necessarily people from the operational arm.

Mr RIEBELING: Yes, and it happens in every government department. Therefore, it should happen in the Police Department. When a person is promoted from the operational area of the Police Force into a non-operational area, two problems are created: Firstly, it takes away the experience which is badly needed by junior officers and, secondly, junior officers are advising even more junior officers. In the last couple of years that the Labor government was in office 1 000 officers were recruited to the Police Force. Even today those recruits have not had a great deal of experience. When we take those 1 000 officers and the 700 non-operational officers out of the 4 200 members of the Police Force there is a major imbalance in the number of officers with experience on the ground.

The operational problems have led to low morale throughout the Police Force and, like it or not, part of the reason for it is that this Government has chosen, for whatever reason, not to appoint a deputy commissioner. Police officers know that the commissioner is resigning and they look to their leader for stability. It is important that stability within the Police Force is returned as quickly as possible. It is unfortunate that the Minister for Police was convinced by his colleagues not to appoint at least an assistant commissioner. That decision will make his job more difficult in the future.

The member for Avon suggested that part of the problem confronting the Police Force has been caused by the court system. It is a simplistic look at the situation because there are several problems. One of the problems the member for Avon identified is that too many charges are dismissed. The majority of criminal charges laid in this state are heard in the Court of Petty Sessions and the Children's Court. The majority of cases which are dismissed are also heard in the Court of Petty Sessions. One of the reasons for that is the way the police operate in the lower jurisdictions. The solicitors in this Chamber who have operated in the criminal area would agree with me that if a person is arrested on a minor matter it is not unusual for him to be charged with a string of offences even though the police are of the opinion he is probably guilty of one or two of up to five charges. That gives the police the ability at the trial, or shortly before, to say, "We will drop three of these charges if you plead to the two which we always knew you were guilty of." That works well, until such time as someone insists upon defending all the charges, when that sort of ploy comes unstuck and charges which were never able to be founded are defeated in the Court of Petty Sessions. The police get annoyed about that sort of ploy. One of the other reasons for that is that the police, who in my view are trained only minimally in prosecutions, are expected to take on lawyers, who have extensive training in the law, and to win. In most of those cases, a lawyer attends the hearing. The only way to address that situation would be to give the Police Department greater funds to enable legally trained prosecutors to be positioned in, say, the Central Law Courts and the major courts throughout this state.

Mr Prince: Come on! You and I both know that the problem lies in the nature of the charging, not in the conduct of the case.

Mr RIEBELING: If one of the morale problems is, as the member for Avon said, the number of cases that the police lose, one of the solutions would be to have better qualified prosecutors. That would release police officers back into the field from where they came and would improve the quality of prosecutions throughout the state.

Mr Prince: It has long been acknowledged that 90 per cent of cases are won or lost on the facts; and of the other 10 per cent, perhaps five per cent are won or lost by advocacy, and with the other five per cent, one never knows.

Mr RIEBELING: What number of petty sessions charges are defended successfully?

Mr Prince: Very few.

Mr RIEBELING: That is right. If only five per cent were successful, and those were the ones where clients were represented by lawyers, then my argument would stand.

Mr Prince: That is the point I make. I do not think your proposition has any weight because so few of them are successful.

Mr Catania: Not only have police funds been frozen, but also this Minister has depleted the funds of the Police Force. Police officers cannot even get petrol for their cars. The Government has no idea how to run a Police Force.

Mr Cowan: Will you get your Mafia mates -

Mr Catania: Will the Deputy Premier repeat that? To what are you referring?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Johnson): Order! Would members please refrain from cross-Chamber dialogue when a member is on his feet.

Mr Catania: That was a very irresponsible comment by the Deputy Premier, who should have the good grace to apologise.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I formally call to order the member for Balcatta.

Mr RIEBELING: There is an extreme lack of respect by 18 and 19 year olds for the police, and I believe that can be explained in part by reference to my area. A number of youths have come to my office and complained that when they were on P plates and driving around small country towns, they were picked up on a weekly basis, their cars were checked, and they were breathalysed for no apparent reason. However, once they were off P plates, they were no longer picked up. By the end of that 12 month period, those young people tended to dislike the police, by whom they appeared to have been harassed. Young people also appear to be picked up for relatively trivial matters. Young people have said to me on a number of occasions that after being picked up for some drink-related disorderly offence, they would be given a clip behind the ears or some sort of minor assault would take place. What many of these youths argue about is not the fact that they deserve to be picked up but that the police should not have the authority to also administer some sort of punishment while they are in the cells.

Many of these youths are reluctant to complain about these assaults. They think that their lives would be made unbearable if they chose to dob in a policeman, so to speak; and from what I know of the police, that is probably correct. For a minor matter such as an assault in custody or on the way to a police van, a person of that age must weigh up whether to proceed with a complaint against the police. In 90 per cent of cases a young person will choose not to proceed. Some people may say that is an exaggeration. However, that matter was highlighted recently in my area when four people who had complained to the police about \$4 000 which they alleged had been taken from them by the police were charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. After the expense of a lengthy hearing, they were found not guilty, and the case against them was dismissed. I asked the Minister for Police some time ago for more information about that matter and I have not received anything. I hope this will prompt the Minister's memory about that matter.

MR BROWN (Morley) [9.18 pm]: In the interests of time, I will be brief. However, that brevity should not undermine the seriousness of the matters which I will raise. Firstly, I tabled in the Parliament recently a petition from residents in the Bassendean area, which contained just under 1 000 signatures and sought a police station in that area.

Mr Bloffwitch: I hope you did not get the same sarcasm that I got from one of your members for the petition that I tabled. I hope you did not get the same disservice that was shown to me.

Mr BROWN: I am trying to be brief, so I will not get into a dialogue with the member for Geraldton about that. I followed up that petition with a letter to the Minister, in which I invited the Minister to meet the residents of Bassendean, and I have received a pro forma acknowledgment of that letter. To save time, I will not elaborate on the

reasons. They would be known to the Minister, they are known to me, and they are certainly known to the residents of Bassendean.

The second point I make, again very briefly in the interests of time, is that too much emphasis has been placed on the issue of juvenile crime. I do not understate the issue of juvenile crime but a great deal of emphasis has been put on it, particularly when one looks at other crime with which we are faced. The Minister should know the problem with organised crime in this state. It is a major problem. I have been told that in relation to the files concerning organised crime, currently when allegations are made, the file is opened and it goes to the bottom of the pile, and it sits there. We are not talking about someone who is involved in petty larceny; we are talking about some real heavyweights in organised crime in this state who are now infiltrating significant parts of the business community. We are seeing an infiltration and a laundering of money which has significant implications for Western Australia. The Minister would know what I am talking about and would have been advised, I am sure, by police intelligence of those methods. Yet we see this single, focused vision on juvenile crime. When it comes to that form of organised crime which involves far greater risk to the financial institutions of this state, and to the reputation and the revenues of this state, insufficient resources, expertise and attention are being levelled at that both in a legislative and a resource sense. It is something which needs to be given far more attention.

Juvenile crime, although not underestimating its importance, is overestimated. We placed a number of questions on the Notice Paper about Operation Sweep, and the Minister's recent statements show the type of resources that have been put into that operation. What happened during Operation Sweep? Already in some areas we have an alienation between young people and the police for one reason or another. How better to reinforce that alienation than by picking up young people who are in the community, not breaking the law and not at risk, and putting them in the back of a police van and taking them to a police station? The Minister provided some statistics in response to a question that I asked about the number of people who were charged. From memory, it was about 25 per cent. No-one objects to very young people being approached by police late in the evening in some place where those people are at risk. If very young people are soliciting for money outside hotels, no-one would say that the police officers are doing a wrongful act by picking them up. If young people are outside a betting agency, no-one would say that police are doing anything wrong by picking them up. If young people are outside R-rated bookshops or movie houses and are seeking to engage in some dialogue for illicit purposes and the police pick them up and return them home, no-one would say the police officers are wrong. If the police officers see what look to be drugs being peddled or alcohol being used or abused in the street by young people, and move in and break it up and take those kids home, no-one would say that the police officers are doing the wrong thing. But when young people are sitting and talking at shopping centres at about eight o'clock on a late night shopping evening, specifically when two young girls of 14 years of age happen to be talking to Aboriginal boys, when their parents are only just up the street, when their parents know where they are and the girls are picked up and bundled into the police van, people say that that is wrong, that that causes animosity, mistrust and dissension within the community.

That is not the fault of the individual officers. I do not blame them. I do not say that it is due to the zealotry of the individual officers; it is the policy that those officers are being required to follow. Obviously there is a responsibility on individual officers; but as in most professions police officers represent a broad cross-section of the community. As with prison officers, whom I represented over many years, the vast bulk of police officers want to do the right thing all of the time. Like people in any other group, they might do the wrong thing when they are under pressure, or because of exasperation or frustration. Just like those in groups anywhere else in society, there will be the bad eggs. Police officers are no different - no better and no worse than society as a whole - although there is an expectation that they will adhere to a significantly higher standard.

It is only fair to those officers that they have clear policies and are not placed in a position where they will be ridiculed or disciplined by their supervisors as a consequence

of not taking action which their supervisors expect them to take but which will place them in public disrepute and which will cause animosity between young people and police officers. Let us face it, we should be encouraging respect for law enforcement agencies and a better relationship between the law enforcement agencies and young people, rather than alienation. At another more appropriate time, I will raise those matters. In the interests of time, and not because I do not attach importance to the subject, I will leave my comments at that point.

MR WIESE (Wagin - Minister for Police) [9.27 pm]: One of the marvellous things about the Police and Emergency Services portfolios is that everybody knows how the job should be done and what policing is all about. Everybody has problems in their electorate. It is true; there are a lot of problems in the community. Crime is scattered throughout the community. To try to lumber all of those problems either on me, as Minister for Police, on the Police Force, or on this Government is totally and absolutely unrealistic and shows a total and absolute lack of understanding of what is going on in the community. In fact, I do not believe that many of the members who have made comments here tonight could accept some of the things they have said about this Government, the law and order situation and me as Minister. What is happening in this community is a whole of society problem. The roots of the problem go back a long way, perhaps to family backgrounds, to the school years and to what has happened in the community long before these people about whom we are talking, be they juvenile or adult, came into conflict with the law.

Many speakers have touched on matters that are quite correct. I wish I had the time to acknowledge some of those areas; however, I will touch on some of the comments in the speech made by the member for Kimberley. I think he issued many words of wisdom when he talked about the fact that respect can only be earned. He was talking about juveniles, and how the community handles its juveniles. He could also be talking about our Police Force and members of Parliament in this House tonight. The member for Kimberley said that we would not solve all the problems of the community with more police, more penalties, and more heavy handed treatment in dealing with these problems. He is absolutely correct, but in order to deal with them in the long term we must go back and look at how we got into the situation, and look at the family structures and things like that.

As the Police Minister I must deal with the realities. The reality is that it is a difficult job and the Police Force does that job under very difficult circumstances. The other thing the member for Kimberley talked about, and we all need to think about this, is how in some areas we have managed to get the community and the police working together. One of the best examples is community policing, and if anyone has any doubts about whether I or this Government supports community policing, let them be dispelled, because community policing is absolutely essential. The Aboriginal people have shown us some of the best examples of communities working together to deal with those problems. The Kullari patrol is a classic example of community policing at its best. It was initiated by the Aboriginal people in Broome and supported by the police and the community. It has been one of the real success stories of dealing with some of the problems within the community. The Yamatji patrol is very similar. The member for Pilbara also highlighted Port Hedland, which is another area where some very strong progress has been made in getting a community to work together with police to address problems. The reality is that where a community has worked with the police they have been able to tackle some of the problems in the community.

In debating the amendment before the House I will show respect for the Opposition and speakers who have made comments tonight. I cannot show respect for some of the comments that have been made. The reality of what I and this Government faced when we came to office was a Treasury which had been pillaged and a Police Force which had been decimated by 10 years of under-resourcing.

Mr Catania: How can you say that when the Police budget was increased each year during the term of the Labor Government?

Mr WIESE: I will give the member for Balcatta examples later. The decimation of the Police Force is highlighted by the fact that in the past five years, the percentage of police funding given to resources dropped from 27 per cent of the total Police budget to 17 per cent.

Mr Catania: That was because we appointed 1 000 extra police.

Mr WIESE: When I became Minister for Police the Police Force was virtually unable to function due to the lack of the basic tools and resources.

Mr Catania: We provided the bodies; you should provide the resources.

Mr WIESE: The member for Balcatta says that what I am saying is not correct. I will run through the situation from 1989-90 to 1992-93. Certainly salaries in the Police Force went up from \$168m to \$202m. I will run through other areas: Other staffing costs decreased from \$11.2m to \$10.6m; communications, \$6.7m down to \$5.2m; services and contracts, \$9.4m down to \$6.8m; consumable supplies basically just about held their own, \$11.009m in 1989-90 and \$11.072m in 1992-93; maintenance of assets actually went up - it had to because everything was falling apart - from \$3.5m to \$5.6m; and purchases of assets, decreased from \$21.8m in 1980-90 to \$3.5m in 1992-93. In those four years the overall Police budget ranged from \$232.7m in 1989-90, to \$242.3m in 1990-91 and back to \$230m in 1991-92. In 1992-93, coincidentally an election year, expenditure increased to \$246m. That is why the Police Force is in the situation it is at present.

Mr Catania: How much increase was there in paying police personnel, the human resources?

Mr WIESE: I have acknowledged that human resources increased from \$168m to \$202m, but they did not have the resources to do the job. They were unable to do the job.

Mr Catania: Is policing labour-intensive? Don't you think the majority of your budget should be allocated to personnel?

Mr WIESE: Policing, without the resources, is an absolute joke; that is the situation now.

Mr Catania: It is your duty, and part of your promise of "better management" to provide the resources.

Mr WIESE: From a budget of \$246m in 1992-93 this Government increased expenditure to \$261m in its 1993-94 Budget. I can assure the House there will be another increase in this coming financial year. In addition to that, in the last month and a half we have given the police another \$2.5m.

Mr Catania: You have put fuel in their cars; it is a miserable \$2.5m.

Mr WIESE: That comment highlights the stupidity of the member for Balcatta when he opens his mouth. He shows a total and absolute ignorance because not one cent of that money is going into fuel; every bit of that money is specifically allocated to the purchase of resources such as fax machines, computers and essential basic equipment which the Police Force needs to do its job. The other \$1.5m has been put into another area that was totally and absolutely neglected by the Labor Government; that is, to try to upgrade the working environment of police officers. Some basic furniture, a coat of paint and a bit of carpet has been provided which they have not had in police stations. I would be the first to admit it is a token effort in comparison with what is needed. The identified building needs of this Police Force when I became the Minister for Police were well over \$100m. That is the situation that we face. I am the first to admit that there is no way in the world that we will be able to provide or upgrade those accommodation resources adequately over the next five years, or perhaps over the next 10 years. However, I assure the House that we have started.

When I came into this job, I had to make some hard decisions. One of the first decisions was whether we should put in extra police officers or whether we should give the officers who were there the resources to do their job. One of the first things that I had to do as Minister was to take a submission to Cabinet to fund an extra 100 police officers and

70 civilians. I did that, and the Government picked up that commitment and those police officers have been put into position. Then I had to decide whether we should go ahead in the 1993-94 Budget and do more of the same or whether we should give the police more resources. Based on what I could see of the Police Force - this is long before the McCarrey report came down - I decided that it would be insane to put more police officers on without giving them resources. That is what I have done, and it is what I will continue to do.

In June or July last year, 50 of the most senior police officers throughout Western Australia attended a three day meeting and came to the conclusion that they needed to change the way in which they were doing things. They have started that process. The McCarrey report highlighted the need to make those changes. Following on from that report, this Government and I decided that we needed to support this initiative that the Police Department had started. We carried out an initial review of the Police Force, which I do not need to tell the House any more about at this stage. That review was put in place to identify the strategy that should be adopted to bring the Police Force into the twenty-first century. It laid out the start to the process. It had never been done before in the Police Force. It has the potential to take the Police Force into a totally new era because it identifies all the problems that we must address in relation to the way in which the Police Force does its job. It is not just a matter of having resources and personnel; it is a matter of doing the job more effectively and more efficiently.

Mr D.L. Smith: What is your view of the commissioner?

Mr WIESE: I will give the member my view of the commissioner shortly. That process has been started. It is one of the most significant things that has ever been done and will lead to the enormous changes that the Police Department must make.

I wish I had the time to address many of the other matters raised by members opposite. I apologise for not referring to some of them. However, I wish to address the last aspect of the amendment. The hypocrisy that has been shown in this Parliament and in the public arena can be identified in the last clause of the amendment which talks about the process of appointing a new commissioner. Some of the comments by the member for Balcatta highlight the appalling situation.

Mr D.L. Smith interjected.

Mr WIESE: If the member wants to know what I think of Commissioner Bull, I inform him that I have had a great deal of pleasure working with him. He is an honest man and I have had a good working relationship with him. We have discussed the appointment of a commissioner to follow on from Mr Bull. We have spoken about whether he should be on the review panel. He has agreed that he should not be on that panel, which makes a mockery of the media statement that has been put out by the member for Balcatta.

I have put in place, again for the first time, a proper system of selecting a new commissioner. That system involves advertising Australia-wide. It involves, if it is necessary, seeking nominations from outside Australia to fill the position. As well, it involves a selection panel chaired by the Public Service Commissioner, who will select the members of the panel.

Members should contrast that with what has occurred in the past. It will highlight the total hypocrisy of what has been said in this place. The present commissioner was selected by a vastly different process. I give credit to members opposite in that at least the position was advertised Australia-wide. A short list of candidates was selected by the previous commissioner. That list was conveyed to the Minister of the day, and he conducted interviews himself and took the name of the selected person to Cabinet for promotion.

The process that we have put in place is above any suspicion or political interference.

Mr Catania: Are you going to take it to Cabinet?

Mr WIESE: I will consider that, but I guarantee that what I do will be totally proper. The process that we have put in place is absolutely above any sort of political

interference. It is essential that the people of Western Australia and members of the Police Force are aware of that. That appointment has the potential to set the direction of the Police Force for the next five years at least, and probably a long time beyond that. It will be a difficult job. The new appointee will need all the support that he can get from me as Minister, from the Government and from the Parliament. However, I am determined that the person who goes into that position will be the best person available in Australia.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (20)

Mr M. Barnett
Mr Bridge
Mr Brown
Mr Catania
Mr Cunningham
Dr Edwards
Dr Gallop

Mr Graham
Mrs Hallahan
Mr Hill
Mr Marlborough
Mr McGinty
Mr Riebeling
Mr Ripper

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

Noes (26)

Mr Blaikie
Mr Board
Mr Bradshaw
Mr Cowan
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 Strickland
Mr Trenorden
Mr Tubby
Dr Turnbull
Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Wiese
Mr Bloffwitch (*Teller*)

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MRS van de KLASHORST (Swan Hills) [9.52 pm]: To change the atmosphere, I will find something positive to talk about. I congratulate the Premier and the Government on our first year in office. I bring to the attention of the House some of the positive aspects of our first year in office.

Firstly, there has been an increase in employment. The unemployment rate has been cut to 8.3 per cent compared with the national average of 10.3 per cent, which is a credit to the policies of the Government and it also supports the policy that the Government promised prior to the election. Western Australia is leading all of the states in employment growth. There has been a major increase in teenage employment and in the participation rates of teenagers in the employment field. This state has a sustained recovery, so much so that the gross Western Australian domestic demand growth was 5.2 per cent compared with Australia's growth of 1.8 per cent. Even the cover story in the *Business Review Weekly* refers to Western Australia as "The State of Recovery". Its leading paragraph states -

Western Australia is emerging as a manufacturing base, workforce participation is at a national high and the goldfields are booming. Tim Treadgold reports on an economy waiting for the world to wake up

Further in the same edition it is stated, "Excitement spreads as pulse quickens" in Western Australia. Generally the first year of this Government has been positive for Western Australia. This is what we promised when we came to office and is what we are delivering.

On a personal note, I thank the Ministers, Mr Speaker, and the Acting Speakers for their assistance during the year. I also thank my peers on this side of the House and the opposition members whom one meets in the corridors and who pass on snippets of advice on how to survive and cope with one's first year in Parliament. I also thank the members

of the two committees on which I have served this year, the Delegated Legislation Committee and the Joint House Committee. One's first year as a member is a time of learning, and everybody's joint effort helps to make life so much easier and solves many of the problems one comes across. It is also important I thank the staff of Parliament House. The staff everywhere go out of their way to assist new members and, indeed, to assist all members. I want after my first year to record my thanks to the staff in all departments of the House for their assistance.

I turn to Swan Hills. In my maiden speech approximately a year ago I talked about the diversification of Swan Hills; the different types of people and the different problems in the area. In this learning curve life has been interesting. This diversification makes it exciting, frantically busy, but never boring! I wish to bring several issues to the attention of the House. The first issue is that of education, which is always important because it sets the tone for our young people. The Government announced in the Budget the upgrade of the Middle Swan Primary School. I am pleased to say that the upgrade is well on its way and is something of which we as a government can be proud. It is certainly needed in the area of Stratton, a growth area, and is a positive step towards assisting the children of that area. The Government also purchased extra land for the Stratton primary school which is being used as part of its grounds. The upgrade of the Herne Hill Primary School which was started by the previous government has been completed. It is a positive initiative for the children and was very much needed. One of the ways in which I assisted the Mundaring Primary School was to organise its water system with a bypass valve and several other things that were needed so that when it lost the electricity power supply the school could at least use the toilets and their water.

I am lobbying the Government this year to upgrade the Midvale Primary School. This school was built in the early 1960s and is still using the dilapidated old toilets which are pretty well akin to the old dunnies. The students must walk across the playground, which is unreasonable to expect when it rains. The toilets are built out of slats, so that as the teachers and pupils use them when it rains they get wet. The whole toilet system at the school is old and dilapidated. Evidently the previous government had been asked since the 1970s to replace the toilets. That has not happened, so I have taken up the cudgel from the previous member for Swan Hills in order to ensure that this problem is solved. I have asked the Government as a priority to include it in the Budget if possible.

The Swan View Primary School also needs an administration upgrade. I have taken the Minister to the school and pointed this out to him. The Wooroloo Primary School needs a parking area, and the Sawyers Valley Primary School needs a new library and preprimary centre. All of these matters have been brought to the attention of the Minister for Education. I have informed the Minister that I will continue to bring them to his attention until the Government attends to these areas.

Both ends of my electorate include high schools. At the Bullsbrook end there is a small senior high school. This school is requesting assistance so the Government does not downgrade it by losing the year 11 and 12 students. At the other end of my electorate the Eastern Hills Senior High School is requesting that the Government build another school to take away some of its pupils. I wish that somehow I could meld the two schools together, but that is not possible. I have managed to persuade the Government to immediately consider purchasing land in Parkerville. It is checking on the possibility of a 40 hectare site for the new high school. It must then determine how soon this school can be built, and when it will be built.

I now move to transport matters which are of major importance to Swan Hills as it is the second largest metropolitan electorate in Australia in area. It has problems with its roads. I am not completely in agreement with the Minister for Transport and his decision to allow road trains to travel through the Swan Valley and Swan Hills. I am still lobbying him to make sure that if the trial is not successful, they will no longer continue but I want to record my appreciation to the Minister for Transport for his actions following the major accident at Greenmount Hill just after Christmas. A group of people from bodies such as the Main Roads Department, the Royal Automobile Club of WA, the Traffic Board of Western Australia, the heavy haulage association, and anyone with an

involvement, went to the site. We investigated the problem and the Minister moved very quickly to get in touch with the federal Minister, who came to Western Australia. The Government has started fixing the arrester beds, and signs have been erected on all the incoming roads. Also, all trucks must now stop in the truck bay at the top of the hill, and the Government is acquiring land so that it can move buses from the main highway, thus avoiding the need for the trucks to stop behind or drive around buses with the possibility of causing further accidents. I commend the Minister for Transport for the way he recognised the dangers of that hill and moved almost immediately to attend to these matters.

Furthermore, the Government is very seriously considering the orange route. I thank the Minister for Planning for arranging for the amendment which has now been made public and proposes to put aside the land needed to build the orange route. He has taken into consideration the comments of the Gidgegannup people and has allowed for the route to be moved behind the Gidgegannup townsite. As a result, that route will not go through the centre of the town and become a danger to the residents and schoolchildren. This is forward planning - looking at these issues long before the roads are built so that land is acquired and set aside. This minimises public concern. The orange route amendment also allows for six lanes to be built at the dangerous incline at the bottom of Greenmount Hill, and is also part of the major amendment.

Sewerage is another issue in Swan Hills, which is one of the caretakers of the water supply for the metropolitan area. The Mundaring townsite sits on three different water catchment areas, and the Government should be congratulated for recognising this and including Mundaring in the first year's sewerage system construction. The ratepayers of Mundaring were trying to gather together enough money to do this when this Government first took office because they recognised the value of the water supply in their area. I took the shire council to meet the Minister, who realised the value of this to the metropolitan area, and the sewerage system will be commenced in the coming year. Greenmount will also be provided with a sewerage system because it is on the water escarpment. Water from this area is collected under the Gngangara mound for use in the metropolitan area. These are vitally important areas. After 10 years of Labor government neglect, in some areas of Viveash, Swan View, Middle Swan in winter sewage rises above the ground. I am lobbying the Government to give consideration to these areas as soon as possible. The main work which, of course, is protection of Perth's water supply, will be carried out this year.

The other election promise kept by the Government was the formation of a committee to investigate the preservation of the Swan Valley. The Swan Valley protection legislation is being worked on at the moment. We need to preserve the whole of the Swan Valley for future generations as a green lung for Perth. We have received tremendous community support for the work done by the Swan Valley committee, under the chairmanship of Hon Derrick Tomlinson from another place, and the public consultation period has just finished. The next process will be the drafting of the legislation. The Minister for Tourism went with me on a whistlestop tour of the Swan Valley with a view to this area being developed as one of the top 10 tourist areas in the state. Last year one million day visitors went through the Swan Valley. In conjunction with the Tourism Commission, we have managed to arrange for private companies to advertise the Swan Valley in international and interstate tourist areas, so that people who spend only four or five hours in Perth can go to the Swan Valley and visit the wineries.

The other major achievement of the Government since taking office relates to the Midvale area. When I first became a member of this place I approached the Minister because Midvale is a very old area and it had been pointed out at the Midland community meetings it had no green areas on which children could play. It was an old Homeswest area and did not have any facilities. The Government has formed a plan to redevelop some of Midvale to make it much more attractive for the Homeswest people who live there. It will set aside land for the elderly people, and the whole area is under consideration for upgrading. Many of the older people have moved from that suburb and it now has many more young people and children. It is important that we provide

aesthetic places in which people can live. The Minister for Police said earlier that policemen need to work in decent areas; it also could be said that people need to live in decent areas. Some areas at Midvale are being sold so that the Government can help the area to grow and become a much more pleasant place for people to live in.

Midland is taking off at a cracking pace. Members will have heard me ask questions about the mammography clinic for which the community has been asking for a considerable time. This clinic will be opened in July and it is a major enhancement to the area. The Midland Speed Classic was recently arranged by the Midland business community, and it is destined to become an annual event, attracting people from overseas. I have been working with the Blind Association and hope to announce soon that a clinic for its members will be operating in Midland one day a week. Many of these facilities are in place in the northern suburbs but, due to the small population, these facilities have been lacking in Midland.

I am working with the business and social communities to get some of these facilities. We must build up Midland and make it into a regional centre. Midland also has a law and order problem, that will be partly addressed by the Young Offenders' Bill. I commend the Government on the way this has been put together. We need more police and more resources in Midland, as do most other areas. The Minister is considering this in conjunction with the whole metropolitan area, with a view to building up police numbers in Midland. One problem is that many of the areas covered are outstations without police, and the police must patrol those areas. The long distances involved add to the problems in this area. Community police are being used to solve some of those problems.

Using these community police, I have called a public meeting which will be held next week with the business people of Midland to see if they can help solve these problems themselves. We will end up with the community working with the police to minimise the problems. This is something we need to do, because we must make sure the community is involved in assisting the police in this way. This partnership can also work in many other ways. I re-emphasise that this has been a positive first year of government. It has been a very busy year. We have all been working very hard. My children and the children of other people in Swan Hills, and indeed our state, have gained from this hard work to achieve positive things. We can look forward to a positive future for Western Australia.

MR RIPPER (Belmont) [10.11 pm]: Purchasing by state government agencies is a major enterprise of the Government. Each year \$1.5b is spent on goods and services purchased by various state government agencies and departments. Problems with the purchasing system were revealed by an article in the *Sunday Times* of 27 February headed "Taxpayers hit as rules are ignored". That article dealt with a draft report prepared by the office of the Auditor General. It said, in part, that the final version of the report was expected to be released in about a month. That did not happen. The final report was tabled in the House today. I am sure members will forgive me if part of my speech is drawn from the draft report because the speech was prepared before the final report of the Auditor General that was tabled today. Nevertheless, the major findings of the report remain the same.

The Auditor General examined the purchasing practices of seven agencies, including the Environmental Protection Authority, the Ministry of Sport and Recreation, the Department of Minerals and Energy, the Education Department, the Crown Law Department, Westrail and the Water Authority. In his draft report the Auditor General reached some serious findings. The draft report reads -

The examination has concluded that the legislative and administrative framework regulating Government purchasing of goods and services has limited effectiveness and:

- . assurance cannot be given that the State is getting value for money from Government purchasing and the scope for efficiency gains could be considerable;

- . private sector suppliers of goods and services are not all getting an equal opportunity to compete for government business; and,
- . the ability to use Government purchasing to help achieve broader social, economic, and environmental objectives is limited.

As I read the body of the report, I think the findings are justified. The body of the report has not changed a huge amount in the production of the final draft. One area that has changed is that those particular findings, which are serious, have been dropped from the final report presented by the Auditor General to this House. I wonder what has been going on behind the scenes and whether the various departments and agencies, and perhaps even Ministers, have sought to neuter the strong report prepared in draft form by the office of the Auditor General. I would like to know what influence the Ministers responsible for the agencies may have had on the final report prepared by the Auditor General.

Mr Prince: None.

Mr RIPPER: The member is not the Minister involved so how can he say that?

Mr Prince: You looked at me and asked the question; I gave an answer.

Mr Cowan: Fifteen main government agencies were examined.

Mr RIPPER: It was seven in the draft report. Others may have been examined. The report draws attention to agencies evading State Supply policy particularly with regard to the purchase of services. That is an important matter because expenditure on services is often in advance of expenditure on goods, yet controls on the purchase of goods tend to be more rigorously honoured within the public sector than the controls on the purchase of services. The draft report states -

The examination found that few public authorities are purchasing services in accordance with State Supply Policy . . . The purchase of consultancy services is a frequently neglected area.

But that was not the only area of serious concern. It is very important when the state is purchasing goods and services totalling \$1.5b each year that we receive value for money. State Supply policies have a number of requirements in order to ensure that we receive value for money and to ensure fair competition between suppliers. Some of those very important requirements have been ignored. The draft report, confirmed by the final report, states -

In five of the seven public authorities reviewed there was insufficient evidence indicating that written quotations had been regularly obtained.

Of course written quotations are required where goods are being purchased to the value above \$5 000 per line item, but where the goods are valued in excess of \$50 000 tender requirements are obligatory in almost all cases. Failure to obtain written quotations led to some absurd purchasing decisions. The draft report provides some examples. For instance, 300 reams of letterhead were purchased by one agency at \$17.50 a ream when a comparable purchase price was in the range of \$6.50 to \$7.00 a ream. One agency upgraded a requisition for 30 boxes of envelopes to 500 boxes resulting in delivery into a public authority store of an estimated 13 years' usage by the cost centre. So 13 years' worth of envelopes were purchased as a result of a lack of application of required controls within that agency. The draft report referred to the evasion of tender requirements. The draft report, confirmed by the final report, states -

In four of the six non exempt and partially exempt public authorities examined instances were found where goods of a value in excess of \$50 000 were purchased without going to public tender.

The report draws attention to the resistance of some public sector officials to the application of the required tender procedures. The report also draws attention to what it calls "order splitting"; in other words, where a series of orders are made for goods or services of a similar type from the same supplier, totalling more than \$50 000, but where, because the orders were split up, the tender requirements have been evaded.

Another of the irregularities which the report and the draft report identified is agencies purchasing beyond the limits of their authority. That occurred in both of the non-exempt agencies reviewed by the Auditor General. Only two of the agencies reviewed were in the non-exempt categories; namely, the Crown Law Department and Westrail. Although the report does not say so explicitly, the Crown Law Department and Westrail officers were purchasing beyond the limits applicable to those agencies. The report also indicated that this practice must be widespread. Apparently the State Supply Commission purchases about \$20m-worth of goods and services for these non-exempt agencies, but some individual non-exempt agencies subject to these rules alone have purchasing budgets to that amount. A number of agencies, apart from Crown Law and Westrail, must be purchasing beyond the limits of their authority.

A matter of great concern in government purchasing is the ethics which are honoured or not honoured in relation to purchasing policy and action. Interestingly, the draft report deals with this subject, but a quick examination of the final report indicates that that section appears to have disappeared. That is a pity because the draft report contained some interesting information in this regard. It reads -

During the course of this examination it was found that staff from one public authority had made a number of irregular purchases from two companies. A total of 69 purchases made from these two companies contained 97 separate instances of potential purchasing irregularities. Observed irregularities included:

- failure to obtain quotations;
- varying cases of inappropriate quotation practices;
- paying for goods before they were received;
- failing to raise orders or raising orders after invoice/goods were received;
- missing and incomplete documentation;
- excessive prices paid for some goods;
- unusually large orders placed for some goods;
- deliveries directly to an inappropriate cost centre.

The draft report then lists a number of disturbing examples of breaches of purchasing ethics. It is disappointing that this section of the draft report appears to have disappeared in the final report. Breaches of purchasing ethics should be a matter of concern for the Parliament and the relevant Ministers.

The draft report is very critical of the State Supply Commission and its management and implementation of supply policy across government. I have obtained a copy of the response to the draft report by the Supply Commission. Upon reading both documents it appears that the draft report has been unfairly critical of the commission as the commission's response has some merit. It points to the weakness of the system of management in individual agencies, and it argues that individual agencies must ensure that officers are following government endorsed supply policy; that is a valid argument. The response reads -

It is the responsibility of individual agencies to ensure that the internal policies, procedures and controls are in place to minimise opportunities for officers to avoid calling competitive quotes/tenders.

The commission regards the failure of some agencies to abide by these requirements as serious. It will be interesting for the House if I further quote from the Supply Commission statement. It reads -

The fact that some agencies continue to ignore the requirement to call competitive tenders or quotes for this major area of government expenditure is of great concern.

Indeed it is. It is something about which the Minister for Services and other relevant Ministers should be advising the House. The agencies in which the irregularities have occurred should be named. Which agencies have failed to obtain written quotations; failed to go to tender with goods and services with a value in excess of \$50 000; have evaded their purchasing limits; and have allowed rorts to occur and breached purchasing

ethics? The Auditor General's report does not go far enough. It is not good enough to simply state that an examination of seven agencies occurred, and then say that something happened in five agencies, something else in four, and another matter applied to two agencies. The Parliament should have information about which agencies have been responsible for these irregularities.

The Supply Commission shares this view. In response to the draft report the commission states that the agencies should be named. The commission hints that one agency may be responsible for most of the irregularities. The response reads -

Much of the report is in fact based on the purchasing practices in several individual agencies, and in particular the Ministry of Education where the major instances of non-conformance with policy were highlighted.

That information should be made available explicitly to the Parliament. If major irregularities are occurring at the Education Department, this Parliament should be advised and the Minister should be explaining the action taken to overcome the irregularities. Ministerial responsibilities apply to this area. The Minister for Services should make a statement on purchasing irregularities revealed by the Auditor General's report. The irregularities arise in a sample of only seven agencies over three months. What is happening in all the other agencies? If such irregularities are found in only seven agencies, it is a matter of concern. A wider sample must be taken to determine what is taking place in other agencies.

I was going to argue that the Minister should end the attempts of agencies to neuter the report, and that he should do what he can to have the Auditor General's report presented to Parliament. That argument has become irrelevant through the presentation of the report today.

Mr Prince: Does that mean you have finished?

Mr RIPPER: No. It simply removes some of the flavour of my speech. I still wonder why it has taken so long for the final report to reach Parliament as the draft report was circulated to the agencies in late November last year.

Mr Prince: You refer to the draft report of the Auditor General?

Mr RIPPER: Yes.

Mr Prince: How did you come by a copy of the Supply Commission's response?

Mr RIPPER: From the well known truck.

Mr Prince: It fell off the back, did it? Was that recently?

Mr RIPPER: Yes. I came into possession of the document in the past couple of weeks.

Mr Cowan: Should you not be taking up the issue with the Auditor General?

Mr RIPPER: I am raising the matter in Parliament. Perhaps I could take up the matter with the Auditor General directly about whether a sample of purchasing policy should be taken of other agencies.

Mr House: I do not have any objection to your taking it up in Parliament, but it seemed that you were starting to direct your remarks to the Government. You must address your remarks to an officer of the Parliament.

Mr RIPPER: I am directing my remarks principally to the Government because it is for the Government to take action now the information is available.

Mr House: You are not being critical of the length of time taken for the report?

Mr RIPPER: I am surprised at the length of time it has taken.

Mr House: That is a matter for the Auditor General. What is in the report is a matter of challenge for the Government.

Mr RIPPER: It is a matter for the Auditor General. What happens when a draft report like this is published is that agencies run around feverishly trying to take the rough edges

off it, although others might see them as trying to neuter the report. The agencies' response tends to delay the final draft. If the agencies with the help of their Ministers mount a particularly strong resistance to the report it tends even more to delay it. The length of time that has elapsed between the circulation of the draft report and the final report leads me to suspect that that is what has occurred.

Mr Prince: I am concerned with the points you raised. Are you prepared to table the report that has fallen off the back of a truck, so that I can see it?

Mr RIPPER: I do not see any problem with that. I do not have any power as an Opposition member to table a report, but I can make it available to members.

Mr House: For the duration of the sitting of the House you can.

Mr RIPPER: I am quite happy to do that and leave on the yellow sticky labels so the Minister can be directed immediately to the more interesting parts of the report.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ainsworth): You can lay it on the Table of the House at the conclusion of the speech and it can stay there for the balance of today's sitting.

Mr RIPPER: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I said that I believed the Minister for Works and Services should make a ministerial statement to the Parliament on this situation and there should be a further sampling of agencies beyond the seven reviewed by the Auditor General. It is something the Auditor General could undertake or the Minister for Works and Services could organise. In the end the Minister for Works and Services has the responsibility for the purchasing policy across the Government, so if the Auditor General is not going to do it the Minister for Works and Services should take that action. The agencies responsible for the errors and irregularities in this report should be named. Other Ministers have some responsibility, and I want to know how long those other Ministers have known about these irregularities within their agencies. I want to know also what action those Ministers have taken to deal with the irregularities revealed and what independent inquiries into their own agencies they will set up to determine whether these practices are more widespread than the sample has so far revealed. Ministers owe this information to the Parliament. We need two further processes of inquiry: Further sampling to take us into agencies beyond the seven reviewed and more inquiries into the seven whose irregularities have been dealt with in this report.

There is also the question of misleading the House. The Supply Commission in its response draws attention to the following requirement. It states -

It should be noted that agencies sign off their annual reports as having complied with relevant written law, which includes the State Supply Commission Act.

Indeed agencies do have to sign off their annual reports to that effect. The agency reports for 1992-93, which is the relevant period, have been tabled in the Parliament with that certification. Ministers have allowed these reports to be tabled, despite the fact that those compliance certificates are shown by the Auditor General's report to be wrong for most of these agencies. The House has been misled by the tabling of those reports with those certificates of compliance. The report of the Water Authority was tabled on 10 November last year; the Environmental Protection Authority on 3 November last year; the Ministry of Sport and Recreation on 19 October; Westrail on 21 October; the Department of Minerals and Energy on 19 October and the Crown Law Department also on 19 October. The report was circulated to agencies on 23 November 1993. Sharp members will pick up that that was after all these annual reports had been tabled in Parliament. We all know what happens. Agencies would have known well before those tabling dates and the formal circulation of the draft reports that the Auditor General had discovered those irregularities. I believe that Ministers would also have known this. It is not possible for the Auditor General to investigate an agency and find serious irregularities without the chief executive officer of that agency or the Minister knowing about the irregularities and investigations well before the formal circulation of the draft report. I believe too that Ministers have allowed their agencies to mislead the House by presenting these annual reports with compliance certificates which are shown by the Auditor General to be wrong.

In one agency the situation is more explicit. The Minister for Education's annual report was not tabled until 30 November, a week after the formal circulation of the draft report of the Auditor General. Given that the Supply Commission hints that the Education Department is the major culprit in these irregularities, it seems the Minister for Education has misled the Parliament by allowing his annual report to be circulated with the certificate of compliance with relevant written law when he must have known the Auditor General had uncovered serious purchasing irregularities within the department. The Minister for Education is clearly the most guilty of misleading the House. Other Ministers responsible for the agencies which have these irregularities would have also known informally and have therefore misled the House. All the Ministers have failed in their responsibilities to correct misleading information given, even if inadvertently, to Parliament. Even if Ministers cannot be held responsible for the tabling of those annual reports, once they knew these irregularities had been uncovered they should have come to the House and corrected the compliance certificate information included in the annual reports. Ministers of those agencies revealed in the Auditor General's report have a responsibility to explain what goes on in their agencies, say what they have done about these problems and commit themselves to establish independent assessments of purchasing practices within their agencies. It is not good enough for the Ministers to rely on the advice of their departments or have internal inquiries. We know that with internal departmental inquiries the department is always found to be innocent or, if guilty, excused for one reason or another.

This report is sufficiently disturbing in relation to most of the agencies listed to require Ministers to establish some sort of independent assessment of purchasing practices within their own agencies. The Minister for Works and Services should make a statement to the Parliament. He should take responsibility for initiating a wider sampling of purchasing practices across government. The individual Ministers responsible for most of these seven agencies reviewed should make statements to the Parliament about what is going on in their own agencies and what they have done about the problems, and commit themselves to independent assessments to determine whether the rorts go beyond those revealed by the report of the Auditor General.

I conclude by saying it is unfortunate that all seven agencies have been tarred with the same brush. Although all seven agencies were reviewed, it is possible that not all agencies were guilty of these irregularities. It is difficult to determine from the Auditor General's wording which, if any, agencies were free of irregularities. However, I suspect that at least one agency is free of taint from any of these irregularities. It is unfortunate that the agencies responsible for rorts and breaches in irregularities have not been named in order to allow us to view in their true light the agencies which are not responsible. I look forward to the response by the Minister for Works and Services.

[The document was tabled for the information of members.]

MR RIEBELING (Ashburton) [10.41 pm]: I add to the Address-in-Reply and put on record the impact of this Government over the past 12 months, firstly on my electorate and, secondly, on my areas of responsibility of local government and seniors. Many people in this place may well be surprised to hear what impact the Government has had on my electorate. They must remember it is the most productive area in this state and, arguably, one of the most productive areas in Australia. In the past 12 to 18 months, since this Government took office, we have witnessed a steady decrease in the number of workers who are employed in the major industries in the electorate of Ashburton. We have witnessed massive decreases in the iron ore industry, mainly at Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd, and major reductions in the oil and gas industry, principally through the reduction of Woodside Offshore Petroleum Pty Ltd operations. We have also witnessed, more recently, a major reduction in employment in the area of small business, which also is disturbing.

The main reasons for the reduction of workers in the larger industry are the changes to the industrial relations policies which have enabled the major companies to restructure in the way they have. Companies in my area these days like to call redundancies a process of downsizing; nonetheless the impact is the same. Large numbers of workers are being

made redundant and the population of the area is decreasing. Reduction of the population is somewhat of a puzzle to the people in my area. We read daily the rhetoric of this Government that while it has been in office thousands of jobs have been created, the economy is lifting and the Pilbara is helping to drive the state out of a recession. However, people in my area continuously attend going-away parties and notice with great stress that the towns are emptying rather than filling up.

Hon Norman Moore, the Minister for Education, recently attended a function in Karratha where he was presenting awards to students at our local college. In his speech he referred to what he called the downsizing of the work force in the area. He attributed that not to the industrial relations changes that had occurred but to the completion of the construction phase of, presumably, the Burrup Peninsular project. If the Minister, who is supposed to represent the same area as I do, had known anything about the area he would have known that the actual construction phase had been completed prior to the last state election and the reduction of the work force had nothing to do with the end of the construction phase. In fact we are experiencing the start of a new construction phase; yet the Minister said it was finishing. That is a bit of a problem for the Minister. However, the simple fact is that the people who attended that function all knew he was talking rubbish. He showed his ignorance of the area. The truth of the matter is that in the past 18 months, for the first time that I am aware of, this Government has caused a reduction in the number of people who live in the Pilbara. For the first time in 50-odd years, the size of the population in the Pilbara has decreased. This has caused great concern and is an area the Government must tackle if it is serious about the future of the state and the Pilbara. However, I am not all that convinced it is keen to do that.

We have witnessed not only the changes in industrial relations which have affected the area; but also a number of other changes which have had a major impact.

Mr Kierath: Two out of three of the workers in the iron ore industry are on workplace agreements. It will ensure the survival of the industry.

Mr RIEBELING: I hope the Minister is happy about that. The Minister well knows that the industry was not in danger of collapsing.

Another effect on the Pilbara area which this Government is currently endorsing is 24 hour retail trading. It has been implemented in the Karratha area under this Government and its effect on small business has been disastrous. The small retail traders in Karratha are being wiped out in large numbers and the only benefactor from the changes to trading hours has been the large, multinational company which takes all the profits out of the area and puts very little back, other than the wages the workers earn. In recent times, we have witnessed only one new shop opening in our shopping centre, and that one new shop happens to belong to the Minister for Education, Hon Norman Moore. He is the only person who can afford to rent space in the shopping centre. Numerous other small businesses are closing because they cannot compete with the pressure of 24 hour trading. The specialty shops are losing the passing trade component of their previous market.

This Government has also shown a lack of support in my area for the tourism industry. That industry, which is of growing importance to the region, has been snubbed by this Government in the major area of coastal management. The Government has also shown a lack of support for the fishing industry. This very important industry, which is being expanded by the local fishermen, has been retarded because the restriction to access the fishery off Point Samson has not yet been eased.

Mr House: What restrictions do you want eased?

Mr RIEBELING: The area in which the most expansion has occurred is the fishery where the Chinese used to have access for long line fishing. That access is still on a limited basis, as I understand it. That restriction on some fishermen to have access to the fishery for only eight months of the year creates problems for those fishermen who create a market and then for a period have to let it go. I will have a chat with the Minister about it later.

Mr House: You do not need to sit down and chat with me about it. You are saying that they should allow access to a resource. First of all, you must prove that the resource is capable of handling the access.

Mr RIEBELING: That is right, but how long does the department need to prove that? It has been fished for the past three years on that basis. It has shown that it is capable of sustaining much greater catches than it has been.

Mr House: By what method?

Mr RIEBELING: By the volume that the fishermen are taking.

Mr House interjected.

Mr RIEBELING: Perhaps the Minister can tell me what investigations his department is carrying out. The fishermen do not believe that any investigations are being carried out. The department is just restricting their ability to build up a market.

Mr House: That is not so. We are constantly monitoring those fish stocks.

Mr RIEBELING: That is what they tell me. The other problem that the fishermen in the Point Samson area face relates to the control of the wharf area. It is a real problem which should be addressed. The management of the coastline around Point Samson has been severely downgraded by the removal of the Department of Marine and Harbours officer. Only a couple of months ago a large barge was rammed ashore and went unnoticed by the state authorities for several weeks. It was only after I brought it to the attention of the department that it was removed. That caused a huge amount of environmental damage. It is another job that the Department of Marine and Harbours officer had which is now supposed to be done as efficiently, but is not.

Mr House: Have you spoken to the Fisheries Department with regard to access to the resource?

Mr RIEBELING: I have spoken to them on a number of occasions, but not for some time. The fishermen say that the problem still exists. The next matter I mention is the withdrawal of support for the Department of Land Administration office in Karratha. That office is to be closed for no apparent reason. As well, the Government has withdrawn support for the housing industry. A very limited building program is taking place in the Pilbara. Unless some state funds are injected into the housing industry in the Pilbara, many problems will arise in years to come when the housing that is available for rental is taken up. Even though Karratha, Dampier and Wickham have excess housing, those houses are not available to the private sector. The empty houses belong to companies and the companies are not releasing them into the general marketplace. As I said earlier, there has been a withdrawal of support for small business by the decision to allow 24 hour trading. It has devastated small business operators. Most of those operations are run by only one or two people.

Mr Cowan: Has your party developed a policy on that now?

Mr RIEBELING: I am not sure. I personally oppose 24 hour trading.

Mr Cowan: You might recall that when you were in Government you were in favour of deregulation.

Mr RIEBELING: As I recall, that was an issue during the Glendalough by-election and the Government supported the introduction of 24 hour trading.

Mr Cowan: I am aware of that. But you did have a policy of deregulation at one stage. Now you have shifted away from it.

Mr RIEBELING: We have tried it for 12 months in my electorate and it has been an absolute disaster. If its impact were multiplied throughout the state, 50 000 jobs would be lost in 12 months. All the shortcomings that I have mentioned have contributed to the downturn that has occurred in my electorate. It would require a huge amount of guts for the Government to address some of the major problems that are occurring in the Pilbara. Some of those problems have been present for a number of years - since its inception in some cases.

I turn to the agreement Acts which form the basis of the iron ore industry. If the Pilbara is to develop, those Acts must be looked at. After the announcement of the Woodside redundancies, I spoke with the Deputy Premier and a task force was set up to investigate the impact of the redundancies and to address some of the problems that the redundant workers faced. I was disappointed at the structure of the committee and the scope that it was given to look at the problems of the Pilbara. A clear problem which should have been addressed was the housing problem faced by the people who were made redundant. No effort was put into examining that matter. When I addressed the committee, I was told that it was an area that it could not look at because the housing was subsidised by the company and the company was not going to continue that subsidy. The committee failed to appreciate that a large number of people wished to remain in Karratha. Many of the spouses of people who were made redundant still worked in the Karratha area and wished to remain there. They would have paid market rent to stay in their accommodation. Since the workers have left, that accommodation has not been filled by other workers from Woodside. The houses are empty and, as I understand it, they will remain empty for a considerable time.

Because the committee has failed to address that specific point, the vast majority of redundant workers have now left the Pilbara area. The impact of the recommendations which will be coming out in the next couple of days will have missed the boat in what the committee should have achieved. I understand that the committee has identified a number of problems and restrictions relating to development of the Pilbara. I was a member of the Pilbara 21 study and the member for Pilbara was the chairman of the committee. That study identified a large number of problems which industry and the community faced with future development. I believe that much of the work of the new task force will be to rehash those recommendations and come up with a document which offers few new solutions to the problems. I hope I am wrong in that understanding, but I will know within the next couple of days when the Deputy Premier releases the report.

Most people in the Karratha, Dampier and Wickham areas are bemused when they read that the Pilbara is the powerhouse of the state and an area which should be expanding in a number of directions. After 18 months of this Government, we find that prospects for the Pilbara are at their lowest level in the past 20 years. This Government's policies to date have not benefited the Pilbara in any respect. The prospects of the Pilbara at the moment are that the recession it seemed to have avoided because of its economic development throughout the 1980s has now hit when the recession is over for the rest of Australia. That is where I will finish on the positive aspects that this Government has had on my area. This Government has put its motto in the Pilbara as "Profit at any cost"; if profit can be made, and the workers pay for it, that is fine. The Governor should have mentioned that line. The profit at any cost line is run time and again, and companies are encouraged to so-call downsize and to reduce the return to the area. When the Pilbara was set up there was a component of agreement between the State and the companies, although not in agreement Acts, that a certain number of people would be employed in those industries. After 30-odd years it is time to review what the state requires to be returned to it by way of jobs and royalties. I do not advocate an increase in taxation which some members on the other side may think that means. I just think it is time to have another look at the mix of return to the state and recalculate whether we want a work force to be based in the Pilbara. If so, we must tell the companies what we need so that they can plan for the future.

I now turn to one of my areas of responsibility; that is, local government. I will consider the impact that a group of Ministers, especially the Minister for Local Government, has had on this area. He is not the only Minister who has had an impact on local government. The Deputy Premier has had quite an impact, which is probably natural as he is a National Party member and is responsible for a large number of country constituents. However, one area which concerns me is the area of V-rock agreements. Over the past eight months or so the Deputy Premier has mentioned the V-rock concept at a number of ward meetings. The impact of what the Deputy Premier is saying is that any groupings of councils that enter into V-rock agreements should do so with the knowledge that the state is not supportive of those agreements.

Mr Cowan: That is not true.

Mr RIEBELING: I am just repeating what a number of councillors have told me the Deputy Premier has said.

Mr Cowan: You can tell them that it is not true. You can repeat what I said.

Mr RIEBELING: That is pleasing to hear. I am just repeating what I have been told by several councillors. They also say that the Deputy Premier is telling groupings of councils that if they enter into V-rock agreements he will endeavour to reduce loan fund moneys that will be paid to councils.

Mr Cowan: I told them that the V-rocks have been around for a long time. Many councils in country parts of Western Australia have joined together for resource sharing for the efficient delivery of services that are expected of local government, and which they are required to deliver under the Local Government Act. Under no circumstances would any government discourage the continuation of that practice. If V-rocks were to be formed for the purpose of economic development, which was clearly the responsibility of regional development commissions, that would not be supported by this State Government. Should they establish a V-rock for the purpose of getting funds directly from the Commonwealth for economic development purposes, I would do my level best to see that they were not able to double dip.

Mr RIEBELING: Many of the councils which the Deputy Premier has told that to must have misunderstood him.

Mr Cowan: I hope you didn't.

Mr RIEBELING: The Deputy Premier would have read the publication of local government's "Councils West".

Mr Cowan: I try not to.

Mr RIEBELING: The Deputy Premier should read that because it gives the distinct impression that they did not understand what he said.

Mr Cowan: That is highly likely.

Mr RIEBELING: Does the organisation not represent a large proportion of local government? Is this not the Western Australian Municipal Association's paper?

Mr Cowan: That is all the more reason why they chose to misunderstand it.

Mr RIEBELING: Is WAMA one of our groups? Is it a Labor group?

Mr Cowan: No. I am having a dispute with WAMA over this issue.

Mrs Roberts: Apparently they just chose to misunderstand the Deputy Premier.

Mr RIEBELING: I think they possibly have. I will quote from the report of the President of WAMA in "Councils West". Under the heading of voluntary regional councils he states -

At the recent Executive Meeting of CSCA and WAMA, many ward delegates sought more information about the implications of forming regional councils. There are an increasing number of councils forming themselves into regional groups and many of these groups sent a delegate to a WAMA meeting I called to discuss the issue during January.

The delegates at this meeting made it clear they would deal directly with the Commonwealth Government if finance was available.

I thought that meant that they were relatively unhappy with the State Government's stance. The article then refers to the relationship between the State Government and local government, and between the Federal Government and local government. I thought that would have been a disaster for those relationships. It sets out that although the Deputy Premier is firmly of the view that what he said was in reference to double dipping, these councils are firmly of the view that the State Government is trying to take funds from them and that, if they can, they will deal directly with the Commonwealth

Government. That is an interesting concept. Coastal management is another area where the State Government has seen fit to object to the Federal Government's involvement in a vital area of the economy. For many years coastal shires have prepared coastal management plans in the hope that one day state or federal money would be channelled towards them so that this important area of conservation could be undertaken. It provides two important areas of influence. Firstly, the money would be spent on improving the coastline and ensuring that the assets on our coastline are maintained and managed in a way that their deterioration is minimised. It would maintain an asset so that tourists in years to come would be keen to visit the scenic spots throughout the state. Secondly, it would involve a large increase in employment in those areas which choose to undertake realistic and serious coastal management plans. This State Government has been offered a place on a national group which will coordinate coastal management throughout Australia.

This Government is so paranoid about making sure that the Commonwealth Government does not take any credit for the money it spends in this state that it has refused to join the task force and its action puts at risk its share of \$70m the Commonwealth has allocated to coastal management. This Government's argument is that it is in a better position than the Federal Government to know what is happening on its coastline and it will set up a similar body and pay for the work required. It is virtually telling the Commonwealth to nick off and it will spend taxpayers' money on this project instead of on other important projects; for example, roads and sewerage schemes or even on debt reduction. I guarantee that the next time the Premier goes to the Premiers' Conference he will whinge about the money the Commonwealth allocates to this state, but he will forget to mention that the Commonwealth Government offered this state a share of \$70m which he did not accept simply because he thinks the Federal Government will get some political advantage out of it. It is a disgrace.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mrs Hallahan (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

LAPSED BILLS

Restoration to Notice Paper - Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read requesting that consideration of the following Bills be resumed at the stages which they reached in the previous session -

1. Acts Amendment (Petroleum) Bill 1993
2. Secondary Education Authority Amendment Bill 1993
3. Acts Amendment (Coal Mining Industry) Bill 1993

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION - COUNCIL PERSONNEL

Appointment

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by the House.

BILLS (4)

Message - Appropriations

Messages from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the following Bills -

1. Commission on Government Bill 1993
2. Public Sector Management Bill
3. Iron Ore Processing (BHP Minerals) Agreement Bill
4. Acts Amendment (Mount Goldsworthy, McCamey's Monster and Marillana Creek Iron Ore Agreements) Bill

House adjourned at 11.15 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS - ASIAN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, FUNDING

42. Mrs HALLAHAN to the Premier:

Referring to the recent Council of Australian Governments meeting in Hobart where the recommendations of the workings groups on Asian language development were endorsed with implementation to begin in 1995, and which will require funding in the 1994-95 Budget:

- (a) will extra funding be provided for Asian language development in 1994-95, in line with the Premier's commitment;
- (b) which languages will be given priority;
- (c) will funding increases come from a cut back in other areas or from an increase in education funding overall?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a) This will be determined as part of the Budget process. The working group recommended that the Commonwealth contribute 50 per cent of funding requirements. The Commonwealth has reserved its position on this recommendation pending consideration in the context of its overall budgetary circumstances.
- (b) Mandarin, Japanese, Korean and Indonesian.
- (c) To be determined as part of the Budget process.

MINISTERIAL TRAVEL - PREMIER *Singapore Visit, Appointments*

79. Mr GRAHAM to the Premier:

What were the Premier's appointments on his recent visit to Singapore?

Mr COURT replied:

Information concerning my appointments is confidential.

STATE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE - MEMBER REPRESENTING PILBARA REGION

91. Mr GRAHAM to the Premier:

- (1) Will the Premier advise which of the members of the newly appointed State Employment Committee is representing the Pilbara region?
- (2) Will the Premier advise what qualifications that person has to be representing the Pilbara on such a committee?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) The committee's job is to create employment. It is marshalling private sector leaders and the facilities and services offered by the public sector to create new jobs. All regions of the State, including the Pilbara, are taken into account.
- (2) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT MEDIA OFFICE - EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS *Geraldton Contract; Further Media Contracts, Regional Areas*

96. Mr TAYLOR to the Premier:

- (1) Will the Premier rule out letting further media contracts in regional areas following his decision to award contracts in Geraldton and Bunbury?
- (2) Who was awarded the contract for Geraldton?

- (3) Who was on the selection panel?
- (4) What was the value of the contract?
- (5) How many media officers are currently employed in the Government Media Office?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) No further media contracts in regional areas are planned at this stage.
- (2) Brian Abbott Media Services.
- (3) Government Media Office director Barry Thornton, Acting Special Projects Officer with the Office of State Administration, Veronica Kerr, and Rod Alderton, Manager, Policy Research and Development, Department of Services.
- (4) \$40 000.
- (5) The Government Media Office employs 15 media secretaries, plus a director.

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT - EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

97. Mr TAYLOR to the Premier:

Who is employed in the communications unit established by the Premier?

Mr COURT replied:

At this stage there are no staff employed in the communications unit.

LEE KUAN YEW - PERTH VISIT

98. Mr TAYLOR to the Premier:

- (1) On what dates will Mr Lee Kuan Yew visit Perth?
- (2) Has Mr Lee been invited by the Western Australian Government?
- (3) If so, when was this invitation issued?
- (4) Has Mr Lee been specifically requested to brief the State Government on law and order issues?
- (5) Has Mr Lee agreed to such a briefing?
- (6) If so, who will attend the briefing?
- (7) Who will meet the cost of Mr Lee's visit?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) 21-23 April 1994.
- (2)-(3) No. Mr Lee Kuan Yew was invited to Australia by the Commonwealth Government which proposed he also visit Western Australia.
- (4)-(5) No.
- (6) Not applicable.
- (7) Mr Lee Kuan Yew was the guest of the Commonwealth Government. The Western Australian Government will meet costs of any hospitality organised by the Western Australian Government.

POTATO MARKETING BOARD - TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD, CHAIRMEN

102. Mr HILL to the Premier:

- (1) Who is the Chairman of the Potato Marketing Board?
- (2) What qualifications, if any, does this person have to warrant appointment to the board?

- (3) Who is the Chairman of the Totalisator Agency Board?
- (4) What qualifications, if any, does this person have to warrant appointment to the board?
- (5) Are the chairmen of these boards also chairmen of any other government boards?
- (6) If so, which boards?

Mr COURT replied:

This question should be directed to the Minister for Primary Industry and the Minister for Racing and Gaming.

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE - GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES
SUPERANNUATION BOARD**
Properties and Buildings Sold to Consolidated Press

108. Mr GRILL to the Minister representing the Minister for Finance:

With reference to an article on page 64 of *The West Australian* of Wednesday, 30 March 1994 -

- (a) which properties and buildings were sold by the SGIO and the GESB to Consolidated Press;
- (b) from whom and at what price were the properties originally acquired by the Government agencies;
- (c) when were they acquired by the Government agencies;
- (d) what were the terms of sale to Consolidated Press;
- (e) how does the Minister calculate that \$50m to \$60m had been forgone by the SGIC and the GESB as stated in the article?

Mr COURT replied:

The Minister for Finance has provided the following reply -

Since the member for Eyre was part of the Cabinet that approved the purchase and sale of the properties in question he is no doubt aware of the prices and other details sought in the question. Notwithstanding this, I provide the following details -

- (a) Initially in March 1988 SGIC and GESB jointly sold the Westralia Square properties to Consolidated Press Holdings Pty Ltd (a company controlled by Mr Kerry Packer) and Tipperary Developments Pty Ltd (a company controlled by Mr Warren Anderson). In June 1988 this contract was replaced by a contract of sale of the same properties by SGIC and GESB to Sharland Pty Ltd and Skeat Pty Ltd. These two companies were beneficially owned by Consolidated Press and Tipperary Developments respectively. This contract was supported by a performance guarantee by Consolidated Press. The properties comprising the Westralia Square properties were -
 - (i) The Perth Technical College site;
 - (ii) The West Australian Newspapers/Royal Insurance site; and
 - (iii) The West Australian Trustees building site.
- (b) (i) a 50 per cent interest in the Perth Technical College site was purchased by SGIC in two stages -
 - half from L.R. and E.J. Connell; and
 - half from Bond Corporation Holdings Limited and related companies.

The total cost to SGIC for this 50 per cent interest came to \$59 960 000.

- (ii) The other 50 per cent interest in the Perth Technical College site was purchased by GESB from the Western Australian Development Corporation for \$16 750 000.
- (iii) The West Australian Newspapers/Royal Insurance site originally comprised two separate properties purchased by the Bell Group Limited. The total cost to SGIC for this purchase was \$52 444 000.
- (iv) The West Australian Trustees building site was purchased by the SGIC from West Australian Trustees Limited for \$14 600 000.

Thus the total cost to SGIC and GESB of the Westralia Square properties was \$143 754 000.

- (c)
 - (i) The West Australian Newspapers/Royal Insurance site was purchased by SGIC from the Bell Group of companies on 13 November 1987 as part of a large property deal.
 - (ii) The West Australian Trustees site was purchased by SGIC from West Australian Trustees Limited on 29 June 1988.
 - (iii) The purchase of a 50 per cent interest in the Perth Technical College site by SGIC resulted from a series of transactions starting on 22 October 1987.
 - (iv) The purchase of the other 50 per cent interest in the Perth Technical College site by GESB took place on 20 December 1985.
- (d) The purchase price under the contract of sale was \$270m of which a deposit of \$90m was payable on 30 June 1988 when title of all of Westralia Square would be transferred to Sharland and Skeat with the balance of \$180m payable in two instalments of \$90m each, the first due on 30 December 1989 and the second due on 30 December 1990. Sharland and Skeat had the right to postpone payment of the two instalments to 30 June 1995 with interest accruing from the date of postponement on each instalment at an agreed rate and capitalised at intervals.
- (e) While the Westralia Square properties were bought by the State bodies and sold at a substantial profit, two subsequent developments resulted in that profit being eliminated and an overall loss of between \$50m and \$60m being incurred. The one development was the renegotiation of the payment terms for the \$180m plus interest outstanding on the sale of the Westralia Square properties. This renegotiation was necessary in the face of allegations that the guarantee by Consolidated Press had been undermined by duress and improper conduct on the part of the Dowding government.

The other development was the repurchase of the land on which the construction of the Westralia Square building had begun and the construction of that building. This action was apparently required in order for the government bodies to extricate themselves from a harsh rental guarantee they had given to Sharland and Skeat. On my calculations taking into account this initial profit and the subsequent loss of profit and depreciation on Westralia Square, the dealings resulted in an overall loss of \$54m.

HEALTH REGULATIONS - AMENDMENTS APPROVAL, STANDARD OF CLASS 1 AND 2 PREMISES OR HANDLING OF FOOD, CONSULTATIONS

112. Mr HILL to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

Was the Minister consulted by the Health Minister before that Minister approved recent amendments to the health regulations in relation to the standard of class 1 and class 2 premises, or those involved in the handling of food?

Mr COWAN replied:

No.

SMALL BUSINESS - REGULATORY CONCERNS, REGULATION REVIEW PANEL'S REPORT

113. Mr HILL to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Has the Minister received a report from the working group established to examine regulations which impact adversely and unnecessarily on small business?
- (2) If so, will the Minister make the report public to enable proper scrutiny by small business?
- (3) What action has the Minister taken to reduce the number of regulations that impact on small business?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) I have received updates on the activities of the regulation review panel which was established by the Small Business Development Corporation to offer a forum in which small business could express its regulatory concerns.
- (2) No. The updates are merely advice of the regulation review panel's activities.
- (3) I have put out a call to the small business community, urging it to come forward with its regulatory concerns through -
 - (a) the regulation review panel;
 - (b) the Ministerial Advisory Council; and
 - (c) issuing press releases.

This is in addition to seeking similar input from government departments and agencies and the Small Business Development Corporation.

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU - ESTABLISHMENT

114. Mr HILL to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Has the Minister taken any action to honour the Government's pre-election commitment to "help set up a Better Business Bureau"?
- (2) Does the Government intend honouring this commitment?
- (3) If so -
 - (a) when;
 - (b) who will the Government "help" set up the bureau?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) The Small Business Development Corporation is in the process of reviewing the range of services provided to small business and as part of its review will give consideration to the nature of services offered by a Better Business Bureau.

- (2) Should investigators reveal that the services of a Better Business Bureau would prove beneficial for small and medium sized enterprises, these services will be introduced in due course.
- (3) To be determined in the light of the investigations currently under way.
- (4) Not applicable.

BILLS - ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENTS

115. Mr HILL to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

Why has the Government abandoned its pre-election policy to "adopt as a practice, the tabling of an economic impact statement with each Bill introduced into Parliament"?

Mr COWAN replied:

The Government will furnish such statements whenever it thinks appropriate for particular Bills.

SEWERAGE - INFILL PROGRAM

Meetings with Premier and Minister for Finance

148. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Water Resources:

On what dates has the Minister met the Premier and Minister for Finance, collectively or individually, to discuss the Government's sewerage infill proposals?

Mr OMODEI replied:

There have been numerous meetings and discussions held to consider a financial package to address the \$800m infill sewerage program.

SEWERAGE - INFILL PROGRAM

Documents Tabling

151. Mr RIPPER to the Premier:

- (1) Why will the Premier not live up to his high standards of accountability by tabling all documents in his portfolio in relation to the sewerage tax?
- (2) Given that the Premier's staff have given journalists access to copies of the State Government's submissions to the Commonwealth on its sewerage infill plan, why will the Premier not table the submissions and responses for the information of members of Parliament?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) The Premier has already explained in detail to the public how the infill sewerage program will be financed.
- (2) As the member is aware, the State Government is still seeking Commonwealth support for the infill sewerage program and we would welcome the member's support in this matter rather than trying to score cheap political points, as this question suggests.

MOTOROLA - LOCATING IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA, GOVERNMENT INDUCEMENTS

153. Mr THOMAS to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the multinational electronics and communications firm, Motorola, recently announced its decision to locate software and electronics research and development facilities in Adelaide and Sydney?
- (2) Did the Western Australian Government offer any inducements to Motorola to locate in Western Australia?

- (3) Is the Minister able to advise what attempts were made to induce Motorola to locate in Western Australia, and how, if it is the case, South Australia and New South Wales outbid Western Australia?

Mr COWAN replied:

(1)-(2) Yes.

- (3) A concerted effort over a long period of time was made to have Motorola facilities located in Western Australia. This effort included an incentives package offer of approximately \$7.5m.

It is believed that a bigger offer was made by South Australia and that this, combined with benefits likely to flow from the focus of the Multifunction Polis at Adelaide's Technology Park, influenced Motorola's location decision. In the case of NSW the decision was made as a result of contractual obligations between NSW and Motorola contained in a multimillion dollar sales agreement.

SOUTHERN PROCESSORS LTD - VEGETABLE GROWERS, GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

156. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Exactly how much in direct assistance did the State Government provide to vegetable growers affected by the difficulties experienced by Southern Processors?
- (2) (a) which vegetable growers received assistance; and
(b) how much?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$499 993.73.
- (2) (a) 64 vegetable growers identified by Southern Processors as direct suppliers to the company received assistance on a pro rata basis, calculated on grower credits to 20 September 1993. One grower credit of \$6.27 was not claimed.
(b) \$499 993.73.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

FIREARMS - UNLICENSED PERSONS' EASY ACCESS, GOVERNMENT ACTION

12. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the appalling situation in Western Australia where people without gun permits - and therefore who have not passed through a police check - can easily gain access to high-powered weapons from gun stores?
- (2) Is he aware that there have been three recent deaths in this state directly caused by guns hired or obtained from the same Midland store?
- (3) What urgent action is he taking to prevent any future tragedies?

Mr WIESE replied:

- (1)-(3) I am not aware of the circumstances that the member for Balcatta outlined in that question. I would be extremely disturbed if what he is saying or intimating in that question were to be the fact.

Mr Catania: Where has the Minister been in the last three months?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WIESE: I can assure this House that I will immediately investigate the allegations that the member for Balcatta has made and I will ensure a response is provided to him and to the House on those matters. That sort of thing is outside the scope and intent of the firearms legislation. I assure the House I have a very strong commitment to tighten the gun laws within this state. As members in this House are aware, the gun laws in this state are stronger than those in any other Australian state, and it is my intention to ensure that that situation remains. I shall follow up the matter that the member has intimated in his question and ensure that the answer is relayed to him and, if necessary, to the House.

MAMMOGRAPHY UNITS - MIDLAND

13. Mrs van de KLASHORST to the Minister for the Environment representing the Minister for Health:

Some notice of this question has been given to the Minister representing the Minister for Health.

Following the question I asked yesterday about the Mammography Clinic proposed for the Midland area, could the Minister please advise -

- (1) Is it intended that this will be a free service to women over the age of 50?
- (2) What sort of advertising will be done to publicise this service?
- (3) In what way will the women in the catchment area be advised of the existence of such a service?

Mr MINSON replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)-(3) Yes, it will be a free service and available to women over the age of 50.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MINSON: This question is not a dorothy dixer but a question of which some notice has been given. If I wanted to have a dorothy dixer, it would not be on the health area, but on my own area. Initially there will be no paid advertising, but consideration will be given to it if it becomes obvious the message is not getting out. The Government finds that the community radio and newspaper services give a very good coverage to press releases which announce services of this kind. The Government believes that will be sufficient in this case. However, the situation will be monitored and if paid advertising is necessary it will occur.

The strategies that will be put in place include direct mail invitations to eligible women residing in the catchment area inviting them to attend the unit. The Government will be enlisting the support of local doctors and health professionals. In addition to the local media releases, notices and pamphlets will be left in strategic places and distributed by community groups. Organised talks will be given by people staffing the centre and their services will be available to local clubs and agencies. The member can convey to her constituents that this service will be free and the women in the catchment area will be contacted. When the service becomes operational, people in that locality will be made aware of it.

POLICE - STACK, JUNE, CASE

14. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Given that the Western Australia Police Force is currently under increased pressure due to the failure of this Government to fulfil its election promise

to increase police numbers, will the Minister advise how it is possible that five police officers were available to attend the home of June Stack at 11.45 pm following a relatively minor incident in a netball game?

- (2) Does the Minister believe that counselling for four of the officers involved is adequate punishment?

Mr WIESE replied:

- (1)-(2) Every member in this Parliament would agree that this incident which took place at Nollamara was not a good and acceptable example of how the police should enforce policing in this state.

Mrs Henderson: What are you going to do about it?

Mr WIESE: The matter has been investigated by the internal investigation branch of the Police Force and the officers involved have been dealt with.

Mr D.L. Smith: By being counselled?

Mr WIESE: All of those matters come within the province of the Commissioner of Police. The Act states that he is responsible for -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balcatta just interjected and I took no exception to what he said because it was relevant to the question he asked. However, several other members of the Opposition interjected and it was not possible to hear either the Minister or the member for Balcatta. It is impossible to allow interjections if every member of the Opposition tries to interject at the same time.

Mr D.L. Smith interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call the member for Mitchell to order.

Mr WIESE: The responsibilities of the Commissioner of Police in relation to disciplining members of the Police Force are quite clearly spelt out in the legislation. If the member for Balcatta were to obtain a copy of the Police Act and educate himself he will save himself a lot of embarrassment by not asking questions like this.

Mr Catania: You should get information on what the Police Force is all about.

Mr WIESE: The Leader of the Opposition is cracking a wry smile. He has a very good understanding of the situation which confronts any Police Minister on these matters. I suspect that like me he believes the responsibility detailed in the legislation is exactly as it should be.

Mr Ripper: Is that responsibility being exercised properly?

Mr WIESE: It would be an appalling situation if the government or the Minister of the day were put in a position whereby the Minister was directing the police in matters like this, particularly if the legislation clearly and precisely spells out that that cannot and should not happen.

POLICE - RAVE PARTIES, GOVERNMENT ACTION

15. Mr W. SMITH to the Minister for Police:

Notice of my question has been given. With regard to the recent spate of rave parties and the considerable inconvenience they impose on the community - this was seriously reflected upon recently in my electorate of Wanneroo - what action is the Government taking to address the serious problem of excessive noise, disorderly behaviour and alleged drug problems associated with rave parties?

Dr Gallop: There are lots of rave parties in the Maldives if you want to go there.

Mr WIESE replied: The interjection from the member for Victoria Park is indicative of the absolute ignorance displayed by this Opposition about the role of the police in the whole system of government.

Dr Gallop: No, it hits the whole system on the head. They are busy harassing Aboriginal people when they should be bringing back criminals from the Indian Ocean islands.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WIESE: I am aware of the concerns raised about the rave parties which are held around the metropolitan area. It has been the subject of discussion which the Attorney General and I have had with representatives from local government. The Police Department has sought advice from Crown Counsel on the powers available to the police under the existing legislation. A working party comprising representatives from the Police Department, the Environmental Protection Authority, the Health Department and local government is currently reviewing the relevant legislation. The working party will make recommendations on a uniform approach to deal with after hours noise complaints and controlling rave parties.

Mr Marlborough: Most of the after hours noise is caused by members of the Police Force, under your leadership, who knock down doors and break people's arms.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Marlborough interjected.

The SPEAKER: I formally call the member for Peel to order.

Mr WIESE: Frankly, someone should give the member for Peel a pill. His interjection again indicates the Opposition's appalling attitude to the police. The Opposition repeatedly refers to the lack of morale in the Police Force.

Mr Marlborough: Do you think the police should change the standards on which they are judged? What a nonsense. You are a joke.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WIESE: What can one say about the morale of the Police Force when remarks like that are made by members opposite? The member for Balcatta continually raises matters in this House wholly and solely to denigrate the Police Force.

Mr Catania: You don't know your job.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Point of Order

Mr SHAVE: I am having a great deal of difficulty hearing the Minister's answer and I wonder whether you, Mr Speaker, will ask the member for Balcatta to allow us to listen to that answer. I would be interested to know whether the member for Balcatta knew that his party and the rabble on that side of the House appointed the current police commissioner. They should stop knocking their own man.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr WIESE: As Minister for Police, I do not believe that police officers should be wholly and solely responsible for controlling these rave parties. It would be preferable to prevent these parties occurring in the first place; however, in reality they will probably continue to occur. Therefore, it is necessary

to ensure they are controlled and regulated, and this should be done in a cooperative approach through the relative authorities and the organisers of these parties. I hope that this working party will make recommendations on how that can be done.

SEXUAL STEREOTYPING - BY MINISTER FOR PLANNING

16. Mrs HALLAHAN to the Minister for Women's Interests :

Yesterday in the House the Minister for Planning stated that "the member for Glendalough should stick to her knitting". I ask the Minister -

- (1) Does the Minister for Women's Interests support this kind of sexual stereotyping?
- (2) Does the Minister accept that members of Parliament, particularly Ministers, have a responsibility to set an example in regard to reducing sexual stereotyping in our community?
- (3) Will the Minister speak to the Minister for Planning and her other parliamentary colleagues about setting an example to the community and seek a public retraction by her ministerial colleague?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(3) I do not wish to comment on what the Minister for Planning supposedly said because I was not in the House at the time. I will leave it to the member for Glendalough and the Minister for Planning to endeavour to sort out the comments made.

With regard to stereotyping, this Government is in the process of working very closely with the advertising council to ensure that the stereotyping we have seen in advertisements this year takes into account that women have a very important role in the community. The Government has also put in place a three year strategy relating to women and business. We hope to see some major improvements in that area. Yesterday I issued a press release indicating that 11 scholarships were granted to women throughout the state giving them the opportunity to participate in some TAFE programs, which they could not previously have done.

VEGCO AND NATIONAL UNION OF WORKERS, ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT

17. Mr JOHNSON to the Minister for Labour Relations:

Some notice has been given of this question. Will the Minister inform the House of some of the important details of a recent enterprise agreement negotiated between Vegco and the National Union of Workers?

Mr KIERATH replied:

I thank the member for the question because this is a classic example of the difference between a very rigid system and a very flexible system, and indicates the difference between job losses and jobs saved. Vegco was a similar operation to the Shepparton Preserving Company which was basically a food processing plant that got itself into trouble. The plant was heading for closure as a result of which all the jobs would have disappeared. When the decision was made to close the plant Edgell-Birds Eye, the owners of the factory at the time, cited three major reasons: Labour on-costs, penalty rates and transport costs.

It is pleasing that some unions around this country have an enlightened attitude to labour relations, and the National Union of Workers decided that jobs were more important than some of these labour on-costs. It agreed to a deal to allow the company to operate seven days a week,

traded off penalty rates, and allowed the employees to work on public holidays. The union secretary said that they had to be as flexible as possible. This is an example of a union showing maturity and responsibility. It was prepared to negotiate away those penalty rates for the most important reason - their members still have their jobs. That is the key. It is also the key to the reason the previous government could muster only 1 300 jobs in three years and why this Government has been able to muster more than 40 000 in its first year in office. It shows the difference between a system that is so rigid that it spawns a million unemployed in this country, and the system we are trying to put in place which will absorb that pool of unemployment. It has taken Western Australia from being one of the worst states in the country to the best by a country mile with regard to employment statistics. It is 2 per cent better than the closest state. That enlightened attitude should be compared with the attitudes of some of the players in the Labor movement in this state. If the Government said it wanted to remove penalty rates, they would accuse it of an act of industrial barbarism. Other unions are prepared to trade off these things in return for other benefits. This State Government would welcome the enlightened attitude of the leaders of the National Union of Workers, and would dearly love to trade them for some of the dinosaurs in the Labor movement in this state. If we could do that, more people would be working together as a team so that all players would benefit. We would then avoid the them and us attitude.

SEWERAGE - INFILL LEVY

Cabinet Decision

18. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Water Resources:

I refer the Minister to yesterday's comments by the Premier when asked whether he misled the Parliament on 7 April in claiming no final decision had been made on a sewerage levy. I ask the Minister whether Cabinet had decided not to have a sewerage levy when the Premier made his statement in this House on 7 April.

Mr OMODEI replied:

As the member opposite and all members of this House know full well, as a result of debates in this House, the Cabinet made a decision on 7 June 1993 in relation to an infill sewerage levy as part of a submission to the Commonwealth Government seeking funds for the infill sewerage program.

Mr Ripper: You have concealed that decision.

Mr OMODEI: We have not concealed anything. Members of the Press Gallery, both print and electronic, well know I have canvassed the issue of levies as far back as 1993. That is exactly what was happening. A series of meetings were held over 12 months to discuss the biggest public infrastructure project ever undertaken in this state. It was obviously something the previous government failed to address, to such an extent that country towns in this state, almost without exception, have sewerage, health and environmental problems.

The member for Belmont should go to the Belmont City Council and confess that he believes local government councils should contribute 30 per cent of the cost of the infill sewerage programs in their electorates. On the basis of the amount spent in the electorate of Belmont in the last year since the Commonwealth Government provided the Better Cities funds, it would cost that local government \$1.6m.

Mr Ripper: Answer the question.

Mr OMODEI: I have answered the question. I ask the member whether he has been to the Belmont City Council and said he believes its ratepayers should contribute \$1.6m towards the sewerage program in the electorate. A yes or no answer will suffice.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The fact that the Minister has not answered the question as some members would have liked was picked up by me a while ago, and I am sure by other members. It is not helpful to continue asking him further questions. It is disorderly for so many people to ask questions that we cannot hear the answer being given.

Mr OMODEI: I have almost answered the question.

Mr Ripper: The Speaker does not think so.

Mr OMODEI: I reiterate my comment. In the last financial year \$4.9m was spent in the electorate of Belmont and I ask the member for Belmont whether he has told the people in that electorate they should pay \$1.6m towards it. No final decision was made until the final week, just before the announcement. A number of meetings occurred during the run up to that decision.

SCHOOLS - CASTLEREAGH *Therapy Services, Changes*

19. Mr BOARD to the Minister for Disability Services:

- (1) Is it planned to transfer Health Department speech therapists based at Castlereagh Special School at Willetton to school age therapy services under the control of the Department of Disability Services and, if that is the case, will the services to Castlereagh School be maintained at the present level or greater?
- (2) What effect will these changes have on the delivery of services, and why are they being made?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) The services will be transferred to the school age therapy service set up under the Disability Services Commission. However, it must be clear that there will be no alteration in the therapy staff levels at Castlereagh Special School because we realise that service is a very important part of the Castlereagh school. Therapists will be expected to work according to the guidelines of their current duty statements.
- (2) I refer the House to the recommendation following the interdepartmental review of therapy services in 1991. There were two main recommendations. First, that there be an increase in therapy services and, second, that there be better coordination. Past Ministers - and I am aware of one here at the moment - will realise that coordination between the Health Department, the former Authority for the Intellectually Handicapped and the Education Department has been a problem. The recommendation was that there be better integration. Such integration into the school age therapy services unit will lead to a more efficient and streamlined delivery of services. Resources are tight. We do not have enough therapists, and even if we were given an unlimited budget there are not enough trained therapists to fulfil the demand. We have an opportunity to streamline the service delivery as much as we can. The SATS program has been set up specifically to do that. It will maximise the services from therapists, and the resources to pay them. The member can rest assured that there will be no deterioration of services at Castlereagh, and it will be a better delivery across the board.

COCKBURN SOUND - MINING LIME SAND BY COCKBURN CEMENT, APPROVAL

Environmental Protection Authority's Support

20. Mrs HENDERSON to the Minister for the Environment:

I refer to the approval granted to Cockburn Cement to mine lime sand in Cockburn Sound over a 50 hectare area.

- (1) Did the Environmental Protection Authority members unanimously support the decision to grant approval to mine for sand in the Sound?
- (2) Will the Minister table all the advice that was provided to the EPA in making its decision on this matter?

Mr MINSON replied:

I am gratified that someone opposite knows something about the environment and can ask a question on it. I was feeling rather lonely over here. I have had to rely on questions being directed to and answered on behalf of the Minister for Health.

- (1) I have no idea.

Mrs Henderson: Will you find out?

Mr MINSON: I can and, if the member insists, I will. The minutes are available publicly in the EPA library so perhaps it would be better not to waste the time of the House. Perhaps the member should go to the EPA library.

Mrs Henderson: I do not think the minutes show that, and that is why I asked the question.

Mr MINSON: If the minutes indicate the vote - as they should - they will not indicate which individual voted which way during debate. I am more than happy to undertake to find out the result of the vote and to make the information available.

- (2) I have no objection to the information being made public. I will liaise with the Chairman of the Environmental Protection Authority with a view to obtaining that information, and to table it or to make it available to the member.

YAMAJI PATROL - AND OTHER PATROLS, REPLACEMENT VEHICLES POLICY

21. Mr BLOFFWITCH to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

Can the Minister inform the House as to the policy of the Government on replacement vehicles for the Yamaji Patrol and other such organisations?

Mr PRINCE replied:

I should make a couple of points. First, the patrols mentioned by the member were developed from initiatives of a similar nature in the Northern Territory at Tennant Creek and Alice Springs, and in Victoria at Mildura.

Mr Bridge: That is not true. The patrols which are now successfully in operation in Western Australia emerged out of a group of caring Aboriginal people in Broome and other centres developing -

Mr PRINCE: I accept what the member says.

Mr Bridge: They were introduced by the Aboriginal community.

Mr PRINCE: But there were similar initiatives elsewhere, and they grew out of that. As the member says, the Broome patrol has been in existence longer than patrols anywhere else. Geraldton, Derby and Kalgoorlie patrols have

been established for a long time and the most recent are at Kununurra, Mullewa, Meekatharra, and Carnarvon. The patrols have strong local support from business people, members of Parliament - obviously the member for Kimberley, and I know that the Leader of the Opposition supports the patrol in his area - the police, local government and Aboriginal community organisations.

The Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority has assisted the establishment of all patrols as a result of the grants funding program of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. I do not believe the authority has paid for the total cost of any one vehicle but it has contributed substantial sums for the purchase of each vehicle. In one or two instances it has been able to make a one-off grant for some recurrent funding. The authority has neither the funding nor the mandate to supply funding on an ongoing basis. The patrols are to be encouraged - and I hope and expect that all members of Parliament will do so - because they reflect a very strong commitment by Aboriginal people in each area to finding solutions to the problems which are not peculiar to Aboriginal people but which are vastly more obvious and in greater proportion among Aboriginal communities. I take this opportunity to praise all those who had the initiative to commence the patrols and run them, whether they be Aboriginal people, the police, local government, or community leaders who have supported them.

The patrols have been so successful - as the member for Kimberley pointed out - that I am aware of at least 10 other communities that would like to start them. In Kalgoorlie, the result has been a reported decrease by the police in the detention of people. In Geraldton, the member has made a number of glowing statements in praise of the patrol's ability to keep trouble off the streets. That is basically the same result almost everywhere the patrols operate; that is, a reduction in the number of arrests and detentions and the resultant disruption in the streets. Because that has meant a saving to state government departments, local government and communities, it is more than appropriate that those organisations and bodies should address the problem of funding and resourcing on an ongoing basis. I am not confident that the patrol system would continue in the same effective way if it were taken over by a government department and run as a program on a totally funded basis. One of the strengths of the system is the community policing concept where the community owns the problem in the sense that it then finds and runs the solution.

I have brought the matter to the attention of the Justice Coordinating Council for determination of a proper policy that should be in place regarding ongoing funding. One government agency should act as a sponsor. That should not be the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority; it should be the police, under the community policing program. As yet, no definite policy is in place, but the policy is being worked through now.
