



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

THIRTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
FOURTH SESSION
1996

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 13 November 1996

Legislative Council

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THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 11.00 am, and read prayers.

STATEMENT - PRESIDENT

Informal Committee on Operation of the Legislative Council, Work Conclusion

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths): I take this opportunity to report that the informal committee which was established by the two leaders in this Chamber to look at possible ways of introducing some changes to, and new conventions for, the operation of the Legislative Council - for example, time management and the sharing of the Chairs of various committees - has concluded its work. I understand the proposals have been given to the two leaders and possibly to all members. The committee's task is now completed and it will be up to the two leaders and other members who want to participate to discuss any proposal that may be adopted to put these new conventions to the test in the new Parliament with a view to adopting the proposals that are successful and, I guess, dropping those that are not.

IRON ORE (YANDICOOGINA) AGREEMENT BILL

Assent

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Bill.

PETITION - ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY CARE

Hon B.M. Scott presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 938 persons -

To the Honourable the President and members of the Legislative Council in Parliament assembled.

WE, the undersigned citizens of Western Australia:

Wish to petition against the current lack and decreasing number of appropriate care and accommodation available to people with an acquired brain injury. We believe that people are being denied the intensive rehabilitation required. We also wish to petition against the placement of young people with an acquired brain injury into inappropriate beds in nursing homes as the level of care is inadequate and their needs are not being met due to the lack of appropriate funding.

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

[See paper No 885.]

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - SPECIAL

Adjournment Debate - Valedictory Speeches

HON N.F. MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the House) [11.10 am] - without notice: I move -

That the House at its rising adjourn until a time and date to be fixed by the President.

The House has concluded the Government's legislative program, subject to any changes which the Assembly might make today or tomorrow. I do not expect that changes will emerge from that place, so for all intents and purposes this Parliament is coming to its conclusion.

I have taken the view that during this special adjournment we should take some time to contemplate the work of a number of people in the Parliament, particularly as quite a large number of members are retiring or are seeking a job in another place. Also, rather than having the valedictory addresses late at night, we should come together at this time of the morning to give as much time as the House needs to pay respect to and thank people who have made a significant contribution to the Parliament of Western Australia.

I will comment first on you, Mr President - if I can refer to you as the first of the retiring members. You were elected to this Chamber in 1965, which seems like a very long time ago, as it was. You were elected as the President in 1977, the year in which I was elected to Parliament. It is a little disconcerting to realise that when you leave, Mr President, I will become the longest serving member of this House. You were the President when I arrived, and you were appointed to that position after serving in the House for 11 or 12 years. Therefore, your term in this Parliament is

well in excess of that of anyone else in the Chamber, and the contribution you have made in that time has been immense.

The other evening at a function for members I said that Mr President's political life could be divided into a number of periods. I will not repeat that speech today, other than to say that your contribution as President, and prior to that appointment, has been an inspiration to us all. As I said the other evening, your great strength is your ability to understand the strengths and weaknesses of members of this House. We are all different and react differently to different circumstances. You have a capacity, Mr President, to understand each individual's circumstances so that when the Chamber became heated and problems arose, you applied techniques with each member to ensure that order was maintained and this place did not erupt. From time to time some members provoked you into making long speeches about how the House should perform. During such speeches, the member concerned lost interest in the inflammatory matter and calmed down, and the debate resumed with decorum. When one considers the number of members who have passed through the Chamber, it surprises us all that you have been able to understand pretty well all of us. Even though you are the only President any of us has ever known in this Chamber, you have maintained the dignity and decorum of the Chamber like no-one else could. I have seen Presiding Officers in other Parliaments, and your performance is superior to that I have witnessed in any Parliament with which I have been involved or visited. You can be well satisfied that you have made an enormous contribution and can be proud of your achievements as Presiding Officer of this House.

I now mention your international role with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Your international achievements can be added to the enormous contribution you have made to this Parliament. What you have done internationally, particularly in Africa, will be the area for which you will always be remembered. I had the pleasure of visiting the Parliament of Zambia in your company when the Zambian Parliament was coming to grips with the idea of two sides of politics residing in the one Parliament. Prior to that time one party had ruled in that country, and opposing people would be shot because they were not acceptable within the prevailing political framework. At the time of our visit Zambia had been through a multi-party election, which resulted in a large Government and a small Opposition. However, I found the Leader of the Opposition to be the most articulate of the members in that Parliament.

Hon Mark Nevill: Isn't that usually the case?

Hon N.F. MOORE: He had been a member of the previous Government, which was decimated at the poll. The role you played, Mr President, as Chairman of the CPA, along with other people from Westminster, at the meeting of the Zambian Parliament was very important in helping people understand parliamentary democracy and how it works in practice. It was interesting talking to the African politicians about the convention of operating with Governments and Oppositions and how they relate to each other short of shooting each other. The work performed on that occasion, together with a number of visits to other Parliaments, particularly those in Africa, led to the respect in which you are held in Africa and other parts of the Commonwealth. You will be most remembered for this work when in the future people spend time considering what Clive Edward Griffiths did for Parliaments around the world. Not only have you been an inspiration at a state and national level, but you are also a person of international significance.

That standing will continue as you move to your next role of Agent General in London. I have no doubt that you will carry out that role as you have fulfilled every other role - with great distinction. I am sure you will represent Western Australian interests very well. On behalf of government members, and I suspect all members, I wish you every success and happiness in your next stage of your life. You have told me, Mr President, that you have the numbers organised to come back to this place after your time in London and the cycle will begin again. You will sit where Hon Ross Lightfoot currently sits. You will stand on the edge of the platform on the backbench making speeches about onions and other matters about which we have heard over the years. If that happens, I will be delighted.

The next longest serving member who is leaving this place is Hon Phil Lockyer. Phil and I have shared an electorate since 1980; he was elected three years after I was. We both represented the Lower North Province until the electorate changed to the Mining and Pastoral Region, which we have shared with three Labor members since 1987. Hon Phil Lockyer has made a significant contribution to the Parliament of Western Australia and his electorate. I pay particular tribute to Phil as a local member. He has worked enormous hours and travelled massive distances, and he is highly regarded by his constituents. He believes the most important role as a parliamentarian is to represent his or her constituents' interests. He has done that job in a superb way, which is a tribute to him. We have not always agreed on everything, but that is the nature of politics and individuals within politics. I have had great admiration for Phil's work as a parliamentarian. He tells me that he is not retiring, but he is going farming. He should have read the Bills we debated last night as it is said that anyone going into farming at this time should consider whether they should be certified! I wish him well in his new career, and I am sure he will continue to have an active interest in the people of the north west, who will miss Phil's significant contribution to their interests after 17 years' representation.

Hon Graham Edwards is also retiring. He is another long serving member, having been elected to this House in 1983. He has been a very important part of this House, and was a Minister under the previous Government. Having been Minister for Sport and Recreation myself, I have great admiration for the way in which Hon Graham Edwards was able to run that portfolio and to get across the message that sport and recreation are very important. His personal interest and involvement in sport, acknowledging his disability, have been an inspiration to many people in the community. I often envied the way in which he could attract great publicity and, as a politician, I will speak to him about that later to find out how it is done. The determination he has shown in his life and the way in which he has overcome his disability have been an inspiration to everyone. I wish him a great deal of pleasure in his life after politics, whatever that might mean to him, and congratulate him on a significant and important parliamentary career.

Hon Val Ferguson has been a member of this Parliament for two separate periods. Both of them were quite short, and she has perhaps achieved some record for having been a member in two Parliaments separated by different elections. I do not know her well, but I have heard her speak in this House, and have spoken to her on odd occasions. She seems to be a person of great integrity who is very concerned about problems in the community. I am told she is an important part of the Labor Party and Labor politics in Western Australia. I wish her every success. I understand she is somewhat unhappy about the circumstances surrounding her departure, but many people are on these occasions. I wish her well and hope the future is everything she would like it to be.

Hon Iain MacLean came into this Parliament following the death of Hon Bob Pike, who was a long term friend of mine. We were very sad when he died. Iain took his place in 1994 and he has made a very positive contribution to this Parliament. It is difficult for government backbenchers to get much air time in this place. It has been a tradition in recent years that needs to be changed. When Hon Iain MacLean has spoken, he has demonstrated a clear understanding of what is important in his electorate and community. Bearing in mind his background and what he seeks to achieve, it is clear he believes in doing everything he can to assist the community. He is very much a community person. He is heading off, we hope, to a Legislative Assembly seat, and I wish him every success in that election. He could certainly represent that part of the metropolitan area with great distinction.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan is also heading for what she hopes will be greener pastures. She is an interesting person. I was in this Chamber when Hon Peter Dowding first came to the Legislative Council. Those who were in this place at the time will testify that he had a significant impact on the Legislative Council. In those days it was a quiet backwater and the House did not sit for long periods. The debates were generally conducted in a gentlemanly fashion - if I may use that sexist term. Hon Peter Dowding turned this place upside down very quickly by introducing urgency motions, disputing the President's rulings and doing things of that nature. He was a very aggressive debater, and we were very pleased when he decided to go to the other Chamber. I do not say the same about Hon Alannah MacTiernan, but I make the point that she has a very distinctive style and she is prepared to argue the point and to debate issues strongly. She is a very articulate person and is able to get her view across, as was the case at two o'clock this morning when all other members were ready to go home but she wanted to take advantage of the second last adjournment debate. I suggest she may be here for the last adjournment debate to make another point about WorkSafe or something similar. She has made a significant contribution in this Chamber and her contribution to debates has been most important. She has been very thorough, and no Minister handling legislation in which she is involved has been allowed to get away with anything in the Committee stage with which he should not have. I wish her well - of course, I do not hope she wins the Legislative Assembly seat - in whatever happens to her after she leaves the Legislative Council.

We presume Hon Sam Piantadosi is retiring. When going through the valedictory address, one works on the basis of known facts. Hon Sam Piantadosi may change his mind and decide to stand again for the upper House but, in the event that he retires from this Chamber and stands for a lower House seat -

Hon Sam Piantadosi: Have you heard another rumour?

Hon N.F. MOORE: I am starting one. Hon Sam Piantadosi has been a tireless worker for his electorate. He has never left members in any doubt about what he thinks on any issues, and he has always argued strongly and fiercely for what he believes is right. On occasions his Italian heritage has led him to become excited about certain matters, and his relationship with Hon Phil Lockyer is legendary.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: That is racist.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Sam's basic desire to make sure the right thing is done contributes to the way in which he presents his point of view. I know he has had a falling out with the Labor Party. I could not get away with saying I did not like hearing his comments. I thought it was an interesting speech the other night, and I was pleased to hear it. That is life in politics, and these things come and go. I wish Hon Sam Piantadosi well in whatever he decides to do. He has represented his constituents in a very impressive way.

Hon Doug Wenn came to the Parliament in 1986 as a representative of the south west of the State. It was a surprise, because that area was considered to be Liberal territory. He is very much a supporter and advocate of his region, district and community. He has presented their point of view for that long period since 1986 in a commendable way. He was part of a committee of which I was a member that travelled overseas a few years ago. I had not known him very well before that trip, but one of the good aspects of serving on a parliamentary committee and travelling with committee members is that one gets to know one's colleagues far better than would be possible in this Chamber. I came to admire Hon Doug Wenn's great sense of humour. I had not appreciated it in this place but having met him on a personal level I discovered he is a very funny man and a great wit. I know he is looking forward to selling more flowers in Bunbury and becoming a very successful small businessman. I wish him every success.

We know those members who are retiring voluntarily but the circumstances in politics are such that one never knows who else will retire whether or not they want to. I wish them all the very best in whatever they decide to do in the future.

I thank Hon George Cash who was formerly the Leader of the House. We all know the circumstances surrounding his decision not to continue in the leadership role, and I said at the time that filling his shoes would be a very difficult task. George was leader of the Liberal Party in this House since 1987 and was an excellent leader. I thank him for all he did for the Liberal Party during that period, and wish him well in his recovery from the illness that led to his standing down as leader.

The Whip is an important part of the operation of any party, and Hon Muriel Patterson always makes sure that people do as they are required to do. She has a gentle way of telling people they cannot have a pair or must return to the Chamber. She is able to achieve great things by simply putting her requests in a gentle way. I do not know of anyone having missed a division or having not been where they were supposed to be. Muriel was a great help to George, and I thank her for the great support she has given me since I have been leader.

Similarly, I thank my ministerial colleagues, Hon Eric Charlton, Hon Max Evans and Hon Peter Foss, for their continuing support and hard work in this Chamber. Members will know that it is an arduous task to be a Minister in the upper House, with the requirement to handle legislation for Ministers in another place. It is not easy to be an expert on all the legislation of the Ministers one represents. I thank my colleagues for their great contribution and the hard work they have put into this House.

I thank Hon John Halden, the former Leader of the Opposition, and Hon Kim Chance, the present leader, for the cooperation they have shown both me and Hon George Cash previously. I think the House has run particularly well over recent times. The cooperation between the Opposition and the Government has been first class. It demonstrates that we can achieve things without necessarily using standing orders to bring down the guillotine and things of that nature. I hope that cooperation will continue, as I am sure it will, into the future.

I thank Hon Barry House, Chairman of Committees, for a job very well done. It is hard work being Chairman of Committees, particularly when dealing with long pieces of legislation which cause lengthy sittings in Committee. Similarly, I thank the Deputy Chairmen for their work and involvement in particular operations of the House.

I have referred to members who are leaving. I also thank all the members who are here now and who will be continuing in this place. I thank those who are staying, particularly from our side of politics, for the support they have given me since I have been the Leader of the House and for the very significant amount of work they have done. Being a member of Parliament is an arduous job. It involves very long hours and enormous commitment. I thank everybody on both sides for that commitment and hard work.

As we heard the other night, Laurie Marquet is the best Clerk of the House in the world. I would not say there was any doubt about that. Laurie has been a great source of advice to all members since he has been here. He has brought a sense of dignity, understanding and knowledge to this Chamber which is crucial to its future as an important part of our Legislature. Ian Allnutt, who joined the staff just after the President, has been here since 1966. He was very young in those days; I think he had just come out of year 10. He is still very young; although that beard is getting greyer!

The PRESIDENT: He had not started shaving when he joined.

Hon N.F. MOORE: He has been a great supporter of the Legislative Council and is a good golfer. I had hoped to join him in more than the one game of golf we had about 15 years ago. Perhaps in the future we will get a chance to play golf again. I also wish Stuart Kay, the new Deputy Clerk of the House, every success in his new career. I know he will provide a great deal of support to Laurie and Ian in the years ahead.

I thank all the Chamber staff who look after us very well and make glasses of water appear miraculously when we desperately need them and do not have a chance to press the call button. They make sure the House runs efficiently and effectively at whatever hour it is sitting.

I thank again the officers of Parliament, particularly Hansard staff, Neil Burrell and his team. It is a very difficult task being a Hansard reporter, as we all know, especially when some of us speak very fast. Hansard staff work the long hours the House sits without complaint. I thank them most sincerely, as I do the dining room and bar staff. I thank also all those people who work within the House, such as the library and gardening staff, and the people who work for Vince Pacecca in administration - all the people who make the Parliament work. They all work in totally unacceptable conditions. One of these days a Government will be able to convince the world that something must be done about this place and we will get rid of the very unacceptable working conditions in this building. I hope that will be sooner rather than later.

I especially thank Julie Holmes and Tina Samuel who work in the parliamentary services office. As members on the other side who were Ministers know, they are tireless workers who provide great support to Ministers. They make sure the paper work is done and all the information is in place when it needs to be. I thank them most sincerely. If I have forgotten to thank anyone it is not intentional. Many people work very hard in this Parliament. At the end of a Parliament it is important to say thank you and I do so on behalf of government members.

I have appreciated the opportunity of being Leader of the House, albeit for a relatively short time. I have enjoyed working with members and the Opposition. We have been able to achieve a fair degree of cooperation and the legislative program has progressed quite smoothly over the past six months or so. We have had an interesting four years. When a new Government takes office it wants to pass new legislation and it can evoke significant passions particularly over legislation such as industrial relations Bills or legislation that is important to members. On some occasions during the past four years the Chamber found itself under a great deal of pressure; members likewise. We sat long hours on many occasions.

The Government regards the past four years as a period of achievement, and one of significant and important debate. This Chamber has demonstrated that it is a place where we can debate issues positively and to a large extent on their merits. On the odd occasion we can put the politics of the issues to one side and at the end of the day achieve good results for the people of Western Australia. As it is a political place, obviously people lose their tempers from time to time and get cross about things. The bottom line is to develop a maturity where that anger and bitterness that sometimes develops on issues does not translate into our relationships with each other.

In this Chamber we have a pretty good set of relationships between individuals who, outside the Chamber, can be very friendly to each other. There is a sense of camaraderie in being members of the Legislative Council. I hope that level of maturity will continue to grow and that we can debate issues on their merits, put our disagreements on the issues to one side and remain as colleagues within this Chamber.

As you said, Mr President, an informal committee has been examining how the Chamber can improve the way in which it operates. I have received the report from the committee, but I need to talk more to members about a couple of areas. I will meet with the Leader of the Opposition as soon as we can arrange that. I hope that we can agree on a set of conventions as a result of that, which we can put in place when the Parliament resumes, regardless of who is on what side of the House. That may make the Chamber work better in relation to a number of issues raised over the past four years.

I conclude by saying to everybody that, as we know, an election is imminent. I do not know when it will be - any time between now and May next year is the time frame. We have concluded our program in the Parliament. It is now out to the hustings to sell our wares to the electorate. I wish members every success in that. If, after the election, the numbers are the same as they are now, I will not be unhappy. I thank everybody for what they have done and wish them every success during the election. Although it seems a bit premature to talk about Christmas greetings; it is nearly Christmas so I send that message also. Thank you very much.

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural - Leader of the Opposition) [11.37 am]: My situation is somewhat different from that of the Leader of the House, apart from the obvious, in that I have already had an opportunity to wish all retiring members well. Although I reiterate those thoughts, there is no need for me to go back over ground that I have covered. I know that Hon Graham Edwards my former Leader of the Opposition, Hon Phil Lockyer, Hon Val Ferguson, Hon Iain MacLean, Hon Doug Wenn, Hon Alannah MacTiernan and Hon Sam Piantadosi all understand that we wish them well in their many and varied futures.

Although I cannot wish them success in every case in their immediate desires for their occupations next year, I know that each one of them will be successful in their own way. The one person to whom I have not had the opportunity to express those wishes in this place is you, Mr President. I specifically reserved my comments, when I spoke in the

appropriations debate, because I thought it appropriate that a separate occasion be set aside. I am grateful to the Leader of the House that we could make this occasion somewhat special with respect to you, Mr President, and other long serving members who I thought should have a rather special opportunity to make their valedictory speeches.

In particular, I thank you, Mr President, on behalf of the Opposition - and if it is not too presumptuous - on behalf of all members of this place and the people of Western Australia for your service to this place and to the public of Western Australia. One of the things I learnt very quickly when I came into this place in 1992 was that, even though you adopted a somewhat fearsome stance at times, I would always be able to rely on your fairness and impartiality. I was not entirely without the benefit of some observation of other Parliaments, even though I was a complete stranger to this Parliament until 1992. I learnt from that contact with other Parliaments that the kind of fairness and impartiality of which we have had the benefit in this place is not altogether common in every western Parliament. I had not had the experience of eastern or African Parliaments, as had the Leader of the House - and by the sound of it, that is probably just as well. As a result of your skill and dedication, this Chamber is a special place in the world parliamentary sphere. I suspect that in terms of monuments to people - I know that you are not one who chases monuments whether they be physical in nature or more realistic and something that lives - the only monument you would ever have wanted is the way this place works. Monuments exist not only in institutions but also in people's minds.

Mr President, you can leave this place - even though perhaps temporarily before you take up your seat in the House of Lords - in the knowledge that the people who have had experience of the manner in which the Legislative Council has run under your presidency will always be aware of the essence of what you tried to bring to this place. That might change, indeed it almost certainly will change with a new President. However, those changes will always be tempered by the fact that we know how it should be done. Even though we have not always agreed with you, we have come to an understanding of a principle that makes this place rather different from any other. That principle is very simple. I will not repeat as have others those famous words of yours regarding members being required to listen to what other members say. I will resist that temptation because almost everyone else has referred to them. They were good lines and they contain the spirit of parliamentary democracy. One is required to listen and there is a place for everyone to express their opposition to another member's point of view. However, it is the essence of democracy that that opportunity be given to each member in proper order. That is what Parliament is about; that is why Parliaments were established. It is something that much of the world still must learn and it is something we must hold very dear. A great many Australians and other people of free nations have died trying to defend that principle.

I also express my appreciation to my colleagues. I am here at the moment in my present capacity as a result of some very difficult circumstances. I am grateful to my colleagues for their support and assistance in getting us through those somewhat difficult times. One of the characteristics that I believe has marked the Opposition's performance over the past four years has been that it has worked very effectively as a team. Hon Graham Edwards, as Leader of the Opposition at the time, said to me on more than one occasion - referring back to his sporting links - that a team of champions will always be beaten by a champion team. That is a very good point, because team work is absolutely essential. Hon Graham Edwards as Leader of the Opposition did bring that team work into this place on behalf of the Opposition, and it is something that has never been lost in spite of two subsequent changes in the leadership of the party. My predecessor, Hon John Halden, brought a different dimension to the leadership of the Opposition in the Legislative Council. I believe that he managed to create one of the most effective Oppositions in Australia. This Opposition achieved its aims without giving away a single inch. Hon John Halden is a fine leader and obviously a close colleague of mine. I hope that at some time in the future he will be able to further his ambitions.

We have also had in that time two Leaders of the House - Hon George Cash and Hon Norman Moore. We were able to develop a very close relationship with Hon George Cash - one that has not quite been matched by the relationship that we have with the current Leader of the House, but we are working on that; these things do not happen overnight. One of the things Hon Norman Moore must learn is that the Leader of the Opposition is not his enemy. Indeed, the enemies exist on the back benches on both sides of the House; I am actually his friend. We will get to that point, but it takes a little time to develop trust in a relationship like this. I look forward to that relationship developing.

I thank the Clerk, Laurie Marquet, and his deputies, Ian Allnutt and Stuart Kay, for their advice and assistance over the past four years, although obviously Stuart's service is much more recent. Laurie's guidance to both opposition and government members is extremely valuable to this place, basically because it prevents us from making awful mistakes. Occasionally we must make judgments about the warnings we get - about the nature of those mistakes and whether it might not be highly desirable for those mistakes to occur - but they are judgments we must make. One thing we can always be certain about with advice from Laurie Marquet is that Parliament will be served best by his recommendation. It might not serve best the aims of the Opposition or even the Government, but Parliament's interests will always be served best by his advice.

I reiterate the appreciation expressed by the Leader of the House to the Chamber and administration staff, in particular the staff of the Procedure Office. I occasionally make some outrageous demands of that office, both here and in the Legislative Assembly - I am not sure I am entitled to do that - nonetheless they answer my calls for help in a spectacularly efficient manner.

I also express my appreciation on behalf of the Opposition to the Hansard staff and the administration and refreshment room staff, who make our life in this place bearable. We are a long way from home, sometimes a little hard to please, sometimes over demanding, sometimes tired and sometimes even irritable, although obviously that does not apply to every member. Further, the administrative staff and the refreshment room staff have been superb in the way they have coped with our peculiarities and our sometimes irrational demands.

It falls now for me only to wish all members a successful election period, although that success obviously has to be tempered by the manner in which they seek to approach the electorate and which party they represent. Nonetheless, I hope they are successful in the sense that they do not get bitten by dogs too often or run over by buses. That applies especially to the Minister for Transport.

Hon E.J. Charlton: See me afterwards!

Hon KIM CHANCE: I am most sincere in my good wishes to all members. Whatever their future holds I hope it will be a happy and rewarding one.

HON GRAHAM EDWARDS (North Metropolitan) [11.51 am]: I had not intended to speak in this debate but, after talking to my good friend Hon Phil Lockyer, I thought I had better. My difficulty was that Hon Phil Lockyer would get in before me. I thought I had better get in quick!

During my life I have had the opportunity to knock about a bit. I have been in the army, worked in shearing sheds and have knocked around in boxing tents. In many respects I reckon that I have roughed it with the best of them. It is true to say that some of the best and probably worst people whom I have met have been in politics. Some of those best and worst people have been on this side of the political spectrum and some on the other side. No political party can justly claim for itself only that which is good. In my experience the good and the bad are common to all sides of politics and political parties. I have had 14-odd years in which to make political points and in which to get stuck into people. Today I want to talk about the good in politics and the human side of our job.

Looking at the end of my political term, it is inevitable that I tend to look at what got me involved in politics in the first place. I never really harboured any ambition to become involved in politics, nor once in politics did I have an ambition to progress. I guess I arrived where I did in politics more by fortune than design. I became involved in politics through the urging and the encouragement of Brian Burke; indeed, Brian had a big influence on my early political life. I appreciate the opportunities he put before me. Brian Burke, Sue and his children remain close friends of my family. I want to record in *Hansard* my appreciation for all that he did for me over the years.

Vietnam obviously had a big influence and impact on my life, in more ways than one. I recall sitting in my hospital bed in Victoria feeling a bit uncertain about the future. I had a swag of books on my bedside table. I picked up a book called *Fate is a Hunter*. I cannot recall the author's name, but in the front of the book I found a transcript. I would like to read it to the House. It is something I have kept over the years. It is entitled "I'll teach you how to escape death." It reads -

There is a raven in the Eastern Sea which is called yitai (dull head). This dull-head cannot fly very high and seems very stupid. It hops only a short distance and nestles close with others of its kind. In going forward, it dare not lead; in going back, it dare not lag behind. At the time of feeding, it takes what is left over by the other birds, therefore the ranks of these birds are never depleted and nobody can do them any harm. A tree with a straight trunk is the first to be chopped down. A well with sweet water is the first to be drawn dry.

That was written by a fellow named Taikung Chen in conversation with Confucius. Obviously it goes back some years. I do not care what side of politics people come from; in the main all politicians work hard and take leadership roles in our community. It is true to say that we do have a few yitai birds, but they are in a minority. As politicians we get sniped at, rubbished, criticised and lampooned in the media. I am not denying that at times we deserve those barbs. However, I believe that we do what we do because we have a belief in a better Australia and in the politics to which we subscribe. I would like to say to my colleagues and those people who have supported me over the years as Minister and as Leader of the Opposition, a sincere thank you.

Hon Kim Chance, the Leader of the Opposition, is potentially one of the best leaders we have in our ranks. I simply wish him all the very best. I guess I take my measure of a good leader by reflecting on Hon Joe Berinson. He was one of the best people I have worked for anywhere in my life. He is the sort of bloke we can set as a measure of a

good leader. I hope Hon Kim Chance will go on and emulate him at some stage in the future. To Hon Doug Wenn, who is pulling the pin, I wish him all the best. Doug and I have had a few beers over the years. I know that he is very much looking forward to retirement. I am sorry that Hon Alannah MacTiernan is going to another place. I am sure she will win a seat. There has always been a role for people like Hon Alannah MacTiernan in this Chamber, and I believe she would have been better served and the Australian Labor Party and this Parliament would have been better served had she decided to stay here. I have said that to her, but I think she disagrees with me. However, wherever she goes I wish her all the best. I wish Hon Val Ferguson all the best. I am sorry that things worked out for her in the way they did, but that is the nature of politics, I guess. Sometimes politics can be very hard and very unfair these days, particularly on people who do not deserve to have hardship visited on them. I wish her good luck and I hope she gets the very best out of her future life whatever she decides to do. Hon Mark Nevill came in at the same time as I. I have appreciated -

Hon Mark Nevill: I'm not leaving!

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS: I will make that distinction, but I am and so I will say these things anyway. I have appreciated Hon Mark Nevill's counsel over the years. He is one of the great contributors to this Parliament and has made a great contribution to this House and indeed to his electorate. When I look around the Chamber I cannot see a member better equipped to sit in that seat once the President goes. I hope Hon Mark Nevill will have the opportunity at some stage to contest the position.

Hon Tom Helm, you and I are pretty opposite in many respects but we have travelled about a bit. I think underneath his gruff exterior Tom has a big heart. He has done a tremendous job as Whip. He has perhaps surprised himself as much as he has surprised others. I wish him all the very best, whatever he decides to do and however long he decides to stay in politics.

To my old mate Tom Stephens: Tom, you and I have had some pretty good battles in our party over the years as to how things should or should not be done. I do not think I know a more passionate person. You are prepared to follow your beliefs and take them to the fullest extent. That is a great strength, and you have many beliefs about which you are passionate. You have a wonderful family. I have seen you bring your children up here on many occasions, and they are a family of whom you should be very proud. Whatever you do, Tom, I will say this about politics: There are far more important things in life. Claim nothing; enjoy.

To Sam Piantadosi, who also came in at the same time as I did: I am sorry, Sam, that you have left the Labor Party. The Labor Party has been a family to you and it is always traumatic when there is a split like this. It is sad, Sam, that you and Nick are now opposed to each other, although I guess that too is a reflection of politics and the way things are going. I wish you all the best. I very much enjoyed your friendship over the years, and I wish you well.

To Bob Thomas, who is not here today: Bob is the real gentleman of this place. I take the opportunity to say that I have very much enjoyed Bob's friendship as well. Philosophically we are very much in the same boat, and Bob will continue to make a great contribution to this place as well.

To Nick Griffiths, my other philosophical colleague: Nick, I think that you too will make a great contribution to this place. Your attention to detail and the manner in which you apply yourself to reading Bills, looking at not only what is written but what it means, has been a great strength to this side of politics. I am sure that one day you will realise your great ambition to become Attorney General.

I notice my friend Tom Butler in the President's Gallery.

Hon P.H. Lockyer: He should be down in the more salubrious part of the Chamber.

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS: I have often said that Tom Butler spends more time in this place since his retirement than he did when he was a member here. It is lovely to see you about the place, Tom. Every time we see you in here we are reminded of how good retirement can be.

To Cheryl Davenport: I have watched Hon Cheryl Davenport grow in confidence and in stature since she has been a member here. Cheryl is a very hardworking person who makes a great contribution to this place. You will continue to grow in confidence, Cheryl, and it is pleasing to see that you are so able to represent the Australian Labor Party as a member of Parliament as well as project a very fine image of us in the community.

Hon Reg Davies said yesterday that he and I share a common bond in that we are both ex-servicemen. It is a little sad in some respects that the number of ex-servicemen have declined over the years. Although I would not want any more conflicts, I hope that Parliaments will always reflect fairly on the contributions of ex-servicemen from whichever era and will endeavour to ensure that they get a fair shake of things as they evolve.

I will briefly comment on some of my colleagues from the other side of the House. I have served on a couple of committees. The first one comprised Hon Phil Lockyer, Hon Sam Piantadosi, Hon Graham MacKinnon, who has since departed this Parliament, and I. It was an enjoyable committee and one where I learnt a lot. When I first came to politics I sat where government members now sit, and when I looked at the Opposition I thought we should be enemies. I am not convinced otherwise today. However, it was good to get out on committees and work closely with members from the other side of the House in an endeavour to achieve something for our community which was based not on politics but on what was the right and best thing to do. I firmly believe, Mr President, that the future of this House will be based on its having more committees. I am sure that if we can turn this into a House of committees we will do the State a great service, and we will probably ensure that members of Parliament who serve in this place make a far greater contribution for the time and energies they put in.

I had the opportunity to chair a committee in this current Parliament: The Select Committee on Cape Range National Park and Ningaloo Marine Park. Hon Phil Lockyer, Hon Murray Criddle, Hon Ross Lightfoot, Hon Tom Stephens and I put a fair amount of work into bringing forward what I thought was an excellent report that related to the Ningaloo reef and to a very important part of the North West Cape. Once again members from different parts of the political spectrum came together to work in a non-political manner in the forum of the community and bring forward an excellent report. I again thank those members for the work they put in. Phil, I recommend that you read a book called *Damn the Dardanelles*. I am sure you will remember the discussion from which that comes. Phil, you will know that I will never forget and I never let up. I have enjoyed the company of Hon Phil Lockyer. I suppose I have always enjoyed the company of blokes who have a few rough edges. Hon Phil Lockyer certainly has plenty of those.

To Hon Murray Criddle: Murray was the quiet achiever of that committee. He was certainly the best reference point I could find when I looked across and saw Hon Phil Lockyer, Hon Murray Criddle and Hon Ross Lightfoot sitting together. Murray, you did an excellent job in keeping those blokes under control and I thank you for the work that you did on that committee and for your friendship.

To Hon Ross Lightfoot, who likes to give the impression that he sits about two degrees to the right of slavery: Despite your love of pomp and ceremony and the title of office I am sure underneath that there is a bit of Australian and if you worked a bit harder, Ross, some of that Australian would come out. That would be to your benefit and to the benefit of this place. I very much enjoyed your company and I have appreciated the friendship that we have had.

To the Ministers who sit on the front bench: You have all worked fairly well in this House. I know just how difficult it is to be a Minister, and I have watched with interest how you have worked and how you have handled your workloads. Individually you have done a pretty good job. To the Leader of the House Norman Moore: Thank you for your kind comments.

To Hon Max Evans: Max, I know that you worked diligently as the opposition spokesperson for sport. You would attend most events - much to my annoyance at the time, I might say. You were always out there doing your job and that is what it is all about, and I congratulate you.

I also thank those members who, in their participation in the appropriation debate, had some kind of things to say about all retiring members. I particularly want to thank Hon Barbara Scott. I met her some time ago through sport, and I have always been sorry that she is on the Liberal side of politics. People like her are important in politics. I guess it does not matter what side of politics people are on; it is just good to see in this place beautiful, decent people who have a contribution to make. I know Hon Iain MacLean is working hard to win the seat of Wanneroo. Although he will not be successful, I say good luck to him. I know he will put every effort into winning that seat, and I wish him well.

When I first came to this place I was fairly intimidated by the surroundings and, to some degree, by you, Mr President. You may not recall this, but I found out there was a human side to you, one that I have kept quiet about over the years; but I now intend to share this story with other members of the House. I used to have the odd game of snooker with either Hon Doug Wenn or Hon Sam Piantadosi, during the lunch hour. On one occasion I was playing a game with Hon Sam Piantadosi. You were having a game of billiards with Hon John Williams, and I am not sure whether money was changing hands on that game. Suddenly the door opened and Bill Grayden came in with five or six people, all very well dressed; they had obviously been here for lunch and Bill was showing them around.

Mr President, I looked around and noticed you had suddenly vanished. Hon John Williams was standing holding his cue with a very startled look on his face; in fact, a rather vacant look. Bill Grayden stopped and said hello and introduced these impressive looking guests, stayed for a couple of minutes and then meandered out the other door with them. You then suddenly reappeared from under the snooker table, where you had been hiding. It transpired - you did not tell me this; someone else did, but I can only assume that this person was being truthful - that you had

been at lunch with these people and had made the excuse that you had to leave to attend a very important meeting. I have saved that story until today. It showed me that you had a human side, Mr President.

On a more serious note, I think you have done an excellent job in keeping order in this place. I understand it is a very difficult job. I always reckoned you were always harder on us than on those opposite. That is evidenced by the fact that Hon Alannah MacTiernan has been thrown out of here once, and Hon Tom Stephens twice; yet Hon Ross Lightfoot and Hon Phil Lockyer have escaped that.

Hon P.H. Lockyer: By the narrowest of margins!

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS: Mr President, you have done an excellent job in keeping this place under control. My perception that have you have been harder on us than on them may be a result of my political bias. In the main you have always given me a fair go and always gave me the call when I had to compete with people who were able to jump up in a bit of a hurry - and I thank you for that. Just recently I spent some time in the Parliament in the United Kingdom as the guest of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and I know you are held in very high esteem there. When you go to England you will be in company that will look after you. I wish you and Mrs Griffiths all the very best. Although we have disagreed over a few things over the years, one thing we have in common is a love of the State, and I know you will do everything you can to promote it.

I thank the Clerks for their work and the support they have given me over the years. I particularly thank Ian Allnutt for his availability and the honesty and clear advice he has given me over the years. I also thank the Hansard staff members. They have done an excellent job in this place over the years. It is just amazing that often when we have been here at three or four o'clock in the morning - it does not happen as much now as it used to - the reporters would always front up and continue to be very accurate in their recording of the proceedings. I have never once had cause to complain about Hansard. Some things may have been recorded that I wish I had not said; however, that was not the fault of Hansard, it was mine. I say thanks very much to the attendants in the Chamber, for all the work they have done and the support they have given me over the years.

The two most important things members of Parliament have are the support of, firstly, their electorate and, secondly, their family. If the electorate office does not function well, a member of Parliament is in trouble, as is the party. Ministers spend a great deal of time away from their electorate office and must place a great deal of trust in the staff located there. I have been very well served by Maurene Palmer, who has been my electorate officer for all but three months of my time in Parliament. She has been a great servant, not to me but to the institution of the electorate office. That is extremely important. Often people come into the office who are angry or upset about a decision that has been made in Parliament or by the Government, and single-handedly electorate officers must deal with these people. I have never seen Maurene lose her cool. She has always been very polite, smiling and happy when dealing with people. However, on some occasions when she has put down the telephone, she has had something else to say! I say thanks to Maurene for all of the work and support she has given me, and also for the very professional way in which she ran my electorate office.

I turn to my family and say that no member of Parliament can function in his or her job without the support of the family. In my case, my wife, Noelene, has been a tremendous asset to me. I would not have been able to do the job in the way I have without her support. She has put up with me coming home late and leaving early, and with people calling into our home. As a member of Parliament and as a Minister, I always had my home number in the telephone book. Given that I spent a lot of time away from home, my wife had to deal with those calls. I am sorry to say that sometimes we would get calls at two or three o'clock in the morning and often Noelene took those calls when I was away or at work. I appreciate the fact that, despite the rocky road - the highs, the lows, the ups, the downs - of politics, we have been able to keep together as a family, and in the main that is a tribute to my wife. I have two daughters who have grown up. If I have one sorrow, it is that my kids grew up while I was heavily engaged in politics. As politicians, we come into this place and do this job in the belief that we are working to create a better society and a better State, to make things just a bit better for our kids. I am sure they appreciate that.

I am now in the market for a job. I am looking at a couple of avenues: I will be putting in for the job as kicking coach with the Eagles, and there is a fair chance that I will get that job; and I will also be auditioning for *Riverdance*, and I think I also have a good chance of doing that as well! I have enjoyed the good humour and friendship of this place as well as the battles, the fights. At the end of the day we are all involved in politics for the right reasons, but sometimes we may go about it in the wrong way. To all of those who are contesting the forthcoming election, I say good luck. I simply hope the Labor Party is victorious at the next election because I firmly believe our policies and our people are better, and that is what I have been about over the years.

When I was in Vietnam, often we used to go out at night when we had a bit of time off and share a few beers and a bit of mateship, and always before we went to bed someone would come up with our favourite anthem, which I will

recite to the House: "Beneath the Southern Cross I stand, a sprig of wattle in my hand, thanking God for this my native land, Australia, you bloody beauty."

[Applause.]

HON P.H. LOCKYER (Mining and Pastoral) [12.21 pm]: It is a pretty tough act to follow a speech from a person such as Hon Graham Edwards, but I will have considerably more to say about him because I have come to know him quite well over the time that I have been in this place. I commend the Leader of the House for making available this debate today. Apart from you, Mr President, and the Leader of the House, no-one has been in this House longer than I. I have despaired sometimes that when members leave the Parliament, they do not get the opportunity to give a valedictory speech in dignified surroundings; and today is a prime example of a dignified debate. We have just listened to an eminent member give a very good speech, and it was heard in relative silence, which is very important on occasions like this. I point particularly to the time of the late Graham MacKinnon, who did not have an opportunity to make a valedictory speech because the Parliament was prorogued early, or for some other reason. That was very sad, because he had been here for a long time.

Hon Mark Nevill: Thirty years.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: Yes, and he would have made an enormous contribution. I hope this will become a tradition, regardless of which party is in power, because whether a member has been here for a short time, or for too long, as in my case, it is important.

I wish you all the best, Mr President, in your endeavours. While we have had our differences over the years, I have always been an enormous supporter of the Parliament, and the way that you conduct yourself in this House is an example to Presiding Officers throughout the world. I know that you will carry out your duties as Agent General in London with great distinction, and if that is the direction in which you want to head at the end of your parliamentary career, you could not have made a better choice; because of your association with the Westminster Parliament and the number of people whom you know there, you will carry out that job well.

Mr President, as Hon Graham Edwards said, you could have booted me out a few times. You, and also your deputies, have had me on the last chance on more than one occasion; but, by and large, you have been extremely fair. I do not agree that you favoured our side. In fact, on many occasions I thought that your side of politics got the tough end of your tongue as far as I was concerned.

I wish all those other members who are leaving, the best. I thank those members who over the past few days have mentioned in their speeches not only me but other members. While I might not have been in the Chamber at all times, I always read *Hansard* the next day. I appreciate in particular Hon Murray Nixon, who referred to me as a "stocky". I did not think anyone else remembered that; it was almost 30 years ago. He obviously does remember it, and I will be a different sort of stocky, but rest assured I will go back to the land.

Hon Val Ferguson has been in this place for a very short time. I have always reckoned that this is politics, not tiddlywinks. It is pretty tough in this place, and I have seen the odd member or two shafted over the years. I saw Ron Leeson, who is a very good friend of mine to this day - "Dodger", we call him - get nailed by Hon Mark Nevill. Those things happen over time, and at times it definitely is a bit tough. I know that Hon Val Ferguson has been most unhappy in the past few months, and I sympathise with her, but there is life after politics and I am sure she will get over this. I know that she is an enormous supporter of the Australian Labor Party. I know also that she will not allow the distaste that she has for that system to last forever, and I urge her not to let it last forever, because I agree with what Hon Graham Edwards has said very well. I do not intend to go out of this place on a sour note. I do not hold any grudges and I do not hate anybody. I might not be too fussed about crossing the road and taking some members to dinner, but I want to, and will, remain good friends with many members. That includes Hon Tom Stephens, to his astonishment.

Hon Tom Stephens: Does that mean a dinner invitation is coming my way?

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: It is an almighty possibility! I thought I might invite Hon Tom Stephens to my farm and take him to dinner after I had done a long day's work with him. I can think of some particularly interesting things for him to do on my farm.

Hon Iain MacLean unfortunately is away from the House today on parliamentary business. I wish him the best in his endeavours to try to shift from one House to the other. I think he is mad, but that is what he wants to do, and he certainly has the best interests of the Liberal Party in mind, and I think he will be successful. Nobody beavers away more than he does. I have not seen too many successful changes from one House to the other, and I thought this was his spot, but I wish him the best.

I wish the same to Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who has been an interesting member of this place.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: Tell the truth!

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: I will tell the truth. I have got into trouble for being pretty straight in here. I have always found her to be an interesting member. It took her about a year to find the dining room and another year to find where to park her car, but she certainly is like a dog with a bone, and I admire her for that, because we are in this Chamber to represent our electors and constituents, and if we have a job to do, we should do it without fear or favour. That has always been my philosophy, and she certainly carries that out.

Hon Doug Wenn - my old mate "Jarrah" - unfortunately could not be here today, and that is why he made his speech the other night. I listened carefully to it. Hon Doug Wenn has been a pretty good mate of mine. I went on a select committee to Singapore with him once under Hon Beryl Jones, and I got to know him really well. We share a great liking for country music. He has, as Hon Norman Moore said earlier today, a good sense of humour. He has not enjoyed his stay here in the past couple of years since he has decided that he will go. He was a victim of his party trying to get rid of him last time, and I think it was lining up to be successful this time; so he jumped the gun, which is not a bad thing on some occasions.

I turn now to my old mate, Hon Sam Piantadosi. He has also chosen to try to get into the other House, and I wish him the best in his endeavours. I just thought to myself, it is amazing when thieves fall out. He has had a bit of a difference with members of his own party, and I know that he feels pretty bitter towards them. He should dispense with that bitterness when he gets outside the Chamber and when the election comes because, in the long run, it will only keep him awake at nights, and I do not think that will be good for him.

I also want to expose a myth. Members would know that on one occasion over the years, Hon Sam Piantadosi and I came close to blows when I inadvertently called him a Sicilian. I am happy to confess that I listened to him carefully in the corridor afterwards, as he waved his finger under my nostrils and explained the difference between Sicilians and northern Italians. I was happy to accept that; and it is a couple of years since that incident, perhaps more. However, the other night he introduced me to one of his mates who came out on the same ship. I happened to get into the lift in this place with this mate and I said to him, "What part of northern Italy did you come from? You must be the same as Sam." He said, "What are you talking about? Sam does not come from northern Italy. Look at my eyes." He lifted up his glasses and his eyes were bright blue. He said, "Only blue-eyed blokes come from northern Italy. He comes from the south; he is either Sicilian or Arabic!" That is what his mate said. The first thing I said when I saw Sam was, "I want to have a look at your eyes. They are not blue!" I have to tell Hon Sam Piantadosi that either he has been fibbing to us or he has some explanations to make to me afterwards.

I will be sorry to see Hon Sam Piantadosi leave this place. He is one of the people whom I will miss in this Chamber, even though we have had a love-hate relationship over that time. I served on a select committee with him on one occasion - the same one that Hon Graham Edwards spoke about - that was looking at the fruit and vegetable industry. Hon Sam Piantadosi had worked in that industry in his early days and he was enormously helpful to us on that committee. He seemed to know everyone who moved at Market City. It was a good committee and we did a lot of terrifically hard work. As Hon Graham Edwards said, these committees are very important because they offer a chance for members to get to know each other.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: You and Hon Graham Edwards set me up in Melbourne.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: Yes, but the committee was very good. At that time Hon Sam Piantadosi had a fairly hefty love-hate relationship with the late Graham MacKinnon, when Hon Sam Piantadosi was secretary of the sewerage workers union and Graham MacKinnon was the Minister for Water Supplies. Hon Sam Piantadosi explained bitterly that there were cockroaches in the sewerage system - and he was caught red handed putting those cockroaches in! The long and short of it was that Hon Graham Edwards and I conspired to leave Hon Sam Piantadosi and Graham MacKinnon together for a day in Melbourne, and they ended up being good members of the committee.

Seventeen years is a long time to spend in this Chamber. I made the choice to leave because I have seen too many people stay in this place past their use-by date.

Hon E.J. Charlton: How long did you spend in here in 17 years?

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: I went back through some copies of *Hansard* last night. It is amazing how rudeness from some people goes on for so long! Hon Eric Charlton was being rude to me 10 years ago in 1986; he has not changed. The member is right: I have not spent as much time in the Chamber as perhaps some members do. I have never been a good sitter in the Chamber, but that does not mean that I have not been doing some work. I am a great believer in looking after one's constituents - and I have 85 000 of them. Members can rest assured that if I am not in the Chamber, I am on the telephone or doing something productive. The installation of the PA systems in our offices makes it easier to carry out work while doing our duties.

I have seen an enormous number of changes in this House over the years. Hon Norman Moore referred to some of them. When I was first elected, this was quite a civilised place. Even though Peter Dowding was elected on the same day, it took him a while before he started his antics. We rarely sat on Thursdays, and we certainly did not sit after dinner on Wednesdays. Question time was a short session. Although members had an unlimited time to speak, no-one took advantage of that often, except Peter Wells. I do not know whether the changes over the years have been for the absolute best. The Chamber deals with business very differently now, and that is probably good: We are probably more productive and work a lot harder in the Chamber.

The change that I think has not been good is the change of electorates into the regions. It seems to have taken away the personalities of the members. When I was the member for Lower North Province and I had only the two Assembly electorates of Murchison-Eyre and Gascoyne, I seemed to get to know just about everybody in the electorate and people felt as though they were somebody. It is tough covering a region from Kununurra to Eucla, which includes the Legislative Assembly electorates of Kimberley, Pilbara, Ashburton, Northern Rivers, Eyre and Kalgoorlie, and there is no hope of getting to know everybody. It is even tougher when those six Assembly members and the three upper House colleagues are not of one's own political persuasion. It is really pushing the proverbial uphill. It has never daunted me, and I do not think that it should daunt members. As the Leader of the Opposition said the other night, he knows what it is like to work in the same system because he is virtually the sole hand in Agricultural Region. I strongly believe that we do not pay as much attention to our constituencies as we should as local members. In my case, I did not have any choice. If I did not do the work, nobody else would do it, and my constituents needed to be looked after. The change to regions has been a bad thing.

Over the past few weeks I have been looking back through some copies of *Hansard*. It is amazing to see the number of people who have gone before me. When I first came into this place Ian Medcalf was the Leader of the Government; Des Dans was the Leader of the Opposition; Vic Ferry was the Chairman of Committees; Howard Olney, who went on to be a Supreme Court judge, was in the Opposition; David Wordsworth was the Minister for Lands and Forests; Gordon Masters was the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife; and Peter Dowding, who was a member in this place, went on to be the Premier of the State. Peter Dowding remains a friend of mine to this day. We also had a love-hate relationship in this place, but he was a person I always respected. He now does all my law work - and very efficiently so. Other members were Bob Hetherington, whose name appeared last night because he is strongly in favour of the Mental Health Bill; Tommy McNeil, whom we see very occasionally these days; Sandy Lewis, who has gone on to be a millionaire tourist operator; Phillip Pandal, who has gone to the other House; Mick Gayfer; Neil Oliver - some of these blokes I have not seen or heard of since; Lyla Elliott; and Fred McKenzie, who in my view was the epitome of the old-style Labor member that we see fewer and fewer of these days. I understand that certain changes within the Australian Labor Party preselection process are taking the party back to the style of bringing in people who have deeper roots in the workplace. That is to the Labor Party's advantage.

I went through some of the incidents in this place over the years that interested me and that I think I should bring to the attention of members. The saddest time I remember in this Chamber was when Hon Jim Brown got up after 10 school children were killed in a bus crash at Merredin and made an incredibly difficult speech. He was a Labor member and was a former shire president of Merredin. He represented the area and knew each of the kids individually. His speech that night moved me terribly. I know the great difficulty he had getting through his speech. I thought at the time that I would not like to have to do that. I admired him for it and it has stuck in my memory as a tough job to do. He pressed on because he believed he had to do it.

The worst incident was no doubt the tabling of the Penny Easton petition. I do not hold Hon John Halden as responsible as I did originally. At the time he probably thought that he was doing the right thing and matters probably just got out of his hands. If he made any mistake at all, it was that he did not show enough remorse. He could never be held responsible for that young lady committing suicide. It was an unfortunate incident. On reflection, Hon John Halden would not do that again. However, it is a timely reminder to all members, particularly as a similar situation has occurred in the New South Wales Parliament, that parliamentary privilege is something we should treat with great care. If members are going to do something that may involve parliamentary privilege, they should think about it - and think again. If Hon John Halden had his time over again, he probably would not do it again. It was a terrible incident. I went back through *Hansard* and I saw that at the time I was grumpy about it and I was nearly thrown out of the House for a day because of it. It was a dreadful incident and one that we can all take a lesson from.

The second worst incident was the time we brought Peter Ellett to the Bar of the House. Given the opportunity to do that again, I would vote vigorously against it. It was a terrible error. I am not ashamed of it, but I was annoyed with myself that I was not strong enough in those days to stop it from happening, because I do not think that is what this Chamber is all about. On that occasion there had to be some other way around it. The situation ended up a debacle. We had a bloke here who did not know what he was doing, and we did not know what we were doing. We made total fools of ourselves.

The best orator I heard in this House was the late Graham MacKinnon. He was a great speaker, and that was evidenced no better than the night he verbally dismembered Hon Sam Piantadosi. Hon Sam Piantadosi had been feeling confident for some weeks after making a series of good speeches and answering questions. However, he made the grave error of referring to the time Graham MacKinnon was the Minister for Water Supplies. Graham listened to him in silence and then rose and spent the next hour and a quarter taking the member to pieces, bit by bit. In the end, Hon Sam Piantadosi was in the corner with two cigarettes going - we were allowed to smoke in here in those days - and he felt like he was being mowed down by an M16. I would not like to have been on the receiving end. Hon Graham MacKinnon knew how to put the Queen's English to good use, and he did it with enormous effect that night. I was talking to Hon Dodger Leeson recently about that, and he said, "Why do you think I shut up for 12 years in that place? Every time I opened my mouth, Graham MacKinnon would take me to bits, and I got sick of it after a while."

Hon Graham MacKinnon was an accomplished orator. I had the great privilege of sharing an office with him for 10 years, and we became very good friends. When I first arrived in this place I had the comfort of an airconditioned office, simply because no-one else would share with Graham MacKinnon. The first meeting I had with the Liberal Party in this place was the day the party rolled him as the leader and installed Hon Ian Medcalf. Graham was fairly upset, to say the least. Hon John Williams, the then secretary of the party, said that I would share an office with Graham. I did not mind, because he seemed to be a nice bloke. It took me six months to meet him, but we became very good friends over the years. He was very helpful to me. I ended up being a pallbearer at his funeral, after drinking a bottle of whiskey with him in hospital the day before he died of cancer. I do not know whether the cancer killed him or the bottle of whiskey that I brought along. He insisted that I buy Dimple Haig, and I have just finished paying it off!

When I came to this place the most admired person in the Australian Labor Party was Hon Fred McKenzie, who narrowly nosed out my mate Hon Tom Butler, who is in the President's Gallery talking to my wife. I shudder to think what he is telling her.

Hon Graham Edwards: Probably the truth!

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: We are talking about Tom Butler, Mr Edwards, not about people who make a habit of doing other things.

Both members were old style Labor members whom I have greatly admired. Hon Fred McKenzie had enormous integrity. He carried out his duties as Whip for his party in an admirable way. I am told that he was a tough leftie on that side of the Chamber. He used to run the left with a rod of iron, and he was a pretty good operator. He is a great friend of mine to this day. He and I share the love of a little punt on the odd racehorse now and then. He is a fabulous bloke.

I can refer to a couple of funny incidents in this place. One occurred on the night Hon Peter Wells had been speaking for about four hours. I left the Chamber and reversed my shirt so that I looked like a minister. I passed around the plate, and everyone donated, including Hon Peter Dowding, who astonished me by putting in a dollar - but he asked for it back later on. I undertook that collection, but Hon Peter Wells did not notice; he did not break his stride; he kept on going.

The next funny incident was when Hon Des Dans relinquished the leadership of this House. He used to sit where Hon Bill Stretch now sits. We were debating a money Bill, and I sent a note to Des which read, "We have almost finished with this money Bill. Can you speak for 15 minutes while I arrange some urgent amendments?" I signed it "J.B." The note was handed to him by an attendant, and as he was trying to work it out, he looked at Hon Fred McKenzie - because in those days members were organised on a two hour on and two hour off basis. As our speaker sat down and Hon Joe Berinson was rising to sum up, Hon Des Dans rose. He tried to find out what the Bill was, which was an interesting scene in itself! I interjected and said, "You aren't going to give us a seaman's speech, are you?" Members tried to sit him down, and sit him up; he did not know where he was in the end. An enormous blue was caused on this side of the Chamber because the Whip tried to sit him down. Four years later I confessed that I had sent the note.

Another funny incident was when my good friend Hon Graham Edwards, Hon Murray Criddle and Hon Ross Lightfoot were in Israel. Graham insisted on going to a restaurant which could only be reached by walking down 90 steps. It had no wheelchair access. We managed because we each took a corner of his wheelchair, and down we went. We had a fabulous dinner, and then came the time for us to return up the steps. We had reached about the forty-fifth step when Hon Graham Edwards said, "How are we going, boys?" Hon Ross Lightfoot said, "You shut up! The first thing we'll do when we get back is to send you to Jenny Craig!" We almost let the wheelchair go at that point.

Hon Graham Edwards mentioned our work on select committees. I appreciate my time spent working on three such committees, including an inquiry into fruit and vegetables, the Ningaloo committee and the police committee. All the committees were very interesting, and I agree with Hon Graham Edwards that select committees play an important role - provided people take notice of their reports. I have just finished serving on a committee, and I notice in *The West Australian* today that the Minister for Primary Industry has been very critical. Committees cannot call a Minister from another House to appear before them without a motion being passed in the other House. We wrote to the Minister for Primary Industry twice, but he ignored our letters. We have given him a serve in our report, but in today's paper he said that no-one officially told him that the committee was in place. I can tell him that his entire department knew, because we interviewed almost every officer in that department. If Ministers of the Crown ignore select committees, perhaps we should stop having them because there is no point to it. If Ministers are that rude to another House they should not be Ministers. I will tell the Minister personally when I have the opportunity to speak into his shell-like ear.

My good friend Hon Reg Davies had a few nice things to say about me yesterday. I shared an office with Reg, and I was there when he went through the long process of deciding to leave the party. It was not an easy time for him. He decided to become an Independent, and I insisted he remain in my office because it would be bad to change office just because he had changed his party. I have always said that what happens inside the Chamber should not be taken outside. People should not take the worries and troubles of this place outside. I know that I do not set the best example at times, but that should not be done. At the next election after becoming an Independent, Hon Reg Davies was re-elected. He was a terrific bloke to share an office with, even though he smokes like a chimney. Also he used to encourage a wretched crow that he befriended to come into the office. He used to open the window because I would object when he smoked. I do not know what was worse, the crow or the smoke, but both were pretty bad. Lately I have shared an office with Hon George Cash, after he became ill and stood down as Leader of the House. Hon George Cash has been a great help to me, and he is a very pleasant person to have in the office.

I agree with Hon Norman Moore, the Leader of the House, that someone must bite the bullet and attend to our accommodation problems in this place. It is one of the worst Parliaments in Australia. Even South Australia has recently undertaken massive construction changes to its Parliament. It is not right that members must share offices, and it is just as bad that Ministers must interview people in the corridors. Once, I inadvertently allowed Hon Eric Charlton to use my office. It took me a year to stop him from using it, because he used to take in people of all styles. He almost took over my office. It is not right that Ministers must meet people in corridors. A Minister of the Crown is a very important person, and when people visit a Minister we must have appropriate interview rooms available for them. It appears that the whole building needs an upgrade. This building suited its original purpose, but now it houses an enormous number of people.

I turn now to my mate Hon Tom Stephens. He thinks Liberals eat their young, and that is nine-tenths of his problem. I must tell him that he is not right.

Hon Tom Helm: They eat our young!

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: Hon Tom Stephens and I have had our differences over the years, to say the least, but that has not taken away some of the admiration I have for him. He is tenacious to the point of going over the top sometimes about certain matters in which he truly believes. He is passionate about the Aboriginal cause and about the Labor Party. I admire that, but at times one can go over the top with one's passion. Perhaps I do it at times. Hon Tom Stephens has never laid a glove on me over the years. He has made plenty of attempts -

Hon Tom Stephens: I wish I could say the same about you!

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: It was the lightest of taps. I will leave this place regarding Hon Tom Stephens perhaps not as my closest mate but certainly not as an enemy. I think we share a mutual admiration. Hon Tom Stephens became a Minister of the Crown - and I was astonished. He did a reasonable job. I must confess something about the information I have received over the years: If Hon Tom Stephens gets another computer, if he ever becomes a Minister of the Crown again, he should clean it out before he leaves that posting. He should not allow blokes like me to end up with his hard disk. I have put most of it in the bin, but I still have some interesting stuff which I will bin this afternoon. The member has written some great letters over the years!

Over the years I have had a number of electorate offices. At one time I had my office in Perth. However, I chose to shift it up top. Most of my electorate officers have got married or shifted to another State and, with the exception of one, they have always been fantastic. My present electorate officer, Lyn Snook, has been enormously important to me.

I will conclude as did Hon Graham Edwards. It has been a great privilege to represent the enormous electorate that I have represented. I have met some absolutely fabulous people in the electorate. I make no apology for being as

strong as I am about working a constituency. I did not come in here to win a popularity contest. I wanted to represent my people and I have done that to the best of my ability. Hon Graham Edwards is right: I have some rough edges and I make no apologies for that. Unfortunately, it seems that the old working member of Parliament who has a few rough edges is not as welcome in this place as he used to be. That is very sad. If all members are clones of lawyers and school teachers, this will be a very sad place. I suggest that the House needs a rough edge or two because it is good for everybody. I have always believed that we are roosters today and feather dusters tomorrow. I have no illusions at all about Parliament. I know very well that, from the day that I step out of this place, I will become Joe Citizen again and it will be business as usual. I will not be asking for any favours and I do not intend to be here every five minutes of the day. However, I hope I will be able to keep tabs on what goes on in this place. The institution of Parliament is very important, as is this Chamber. It has an enormous role to play. While, from time to time, members bite one another's heads off, in the end they should work together because we should be putting the State above everything else. Everybody heard the ode recited by Hon Graham Edwards: We are really working for Australia.

I thank all the staff of this place, particularly the three Clerks, Laurie Marquet, Ian Allnutt and Stuart Kay. I thank Laurie and Ian for their assistance over the years I have been here. I thank also all of the Chamber staff who have been exceptionally good to me. I also thank the Hansard staff. I will give a tip to members: When I made a long speech in this place and, upon getting it back for correction, found how good the speech was, I always dropped a note to the Hansard staff thanking them for a nice take. They really appreciated that. I do not think enough members do it. Years ago, Graham MacKinnon told me to do that if I was happy with a take. It is a very difficult job for the reporters to report a speech properly when people like me talk like a machine gun. I will always remember Peter Wells objecting to mistakes that Hansard had made. The next time he made a speech he was reported verbatim and he never objected again. The Hansard staff do a great job.

I thank the attendants and the dining room staff. No-one gets a girth like mine unless one likes the dining room staff. There have been some interesting people behind the bar over the years. The staff around Parliament House are a great example. It is not easy when one is working around two major political parties and one is trying to please both of them. Vince Pacecca has the toughest job in Australia, but does a fantastic job. I have always been polite to the staff. I have a note here that I have never had an angry word with any of them. Politeness costs nothing.

Like Graham Edwards, I believe that this job is the toughest on a member's family. Members know that during my 17 years in this place my marriage broke up. That was a pretty tough time for me. The marriage broke up for a variety of reasons. However, one of the reasons high on the list was the amount of time that I put into my political endeavours. I greatly regret that as I regret the time that I did not spend with my family. That is why I am getting out of this Parliament at 50 years of age. To make up for that I will spend some extra time with my lovely wife Joanne, with my daughters Susan, Fiona and Kate and my son, Sarid. I will try to make up for those times that I missed their birthday parties, wedding anniversaries and other important times to them.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: And your Italian grandchildren!

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: Hon Sam Piantadosi knows how to hurt people! My daughter inadvertently chose an Italian gentleman - he comes from northern Italy, I am pleased to say, and has blue eyes. He is present in the Chamber. I must have let that slip one night and Hon Sam Piantadosi has not let up on me since, even to the point when one night when I was feeling a bit down, he said that he is related to me. I hope he is not. They have been my backbone. My former wife, Lynette, remains a very good friend to me as does her new partner, Ray. I know the tough times that all members of Parliament go through. Unfortunately, we sacrifice our families before anything else. The Leader of the House should consider that when he is working out sitting times. I know that we have to sit through to 2.00 am on occasions. However, that should happen as little as possible so that we do not have to go home to grumpy wives and husbands. It is tough when members have to go away at weekends. Hon Tom Stephens, Hon Tom Helm and Hon Mark Nevill understand that when we leave the Parliament on Fridays, we could travel to anywhere from Kununurra to Kalgoorlie and inevitably we do not return until Monday nights and Parliament begins the next day. It is very tough on the families. My family has been very patient with me and it is now my turn to return that patience.

I am going farming and I intend to make that a success. I am not going hobby farming; I will be doing it full time. I will retain my interest in the Liberal Party. I came into this place as a Liberal and even though some people think I will canvass for my good friend, Dudley Maslen, who is standing for the National Party, I will not. I will be supporting the Liberals because I was born one and I will die one. It is as simple as that. I hope that they are successful in the election.

I wish members all the best in their endeavours. I will keep a close eye on all of them to make sure that they leave this Chamber in the good state it was in when they came here. It has been the most important time of my life. It has been a privilege to be here. I treat it as such and it will always remain so. I thank everybody. If I have offended

anyone over the years, I apologise. If I had it all over again, I would probably make the odd change or two, but not too many. I thank members for their patience.

[Applause.]

The PRESIDENT: Order! I want to inform members about the procedure for this debate. My good friend, Hon Tom Helm, said at an earlier meeting that I had been a very good shop steward over the 20 years that I have been the President inasmuch as I have never succumbed to the demands of the Ministers in this place to sit after 12.30 pm, lunch time. Because of this special occasion I have agreed not to adjourn the House until the debate is completed. How long members stay here is up to them. The debate will not be adjourned and I will not vacate the Chair until it is completed.

HON SAM PIANTADOSI (North Metropolitan) [12.57 pm]: I will not take up a lot of time. However, there is a need for me to correct a few statements that have been made. This is only one of the few occasions that I have allowed Hon Phil Lockyer to get the jump on me. However, I have been able to listen to his speech and will now be able to take him to task without his having a chance to reply. Hon Phil Lockyer has been true to form; he has been a scallywag through to the end with some of the unpleasant things he has said about me. It is true - we have had a love-hate relationship over 13 years. However, we have also been good mates. Hon John Cowdell reminded me of the time that I tried to assist you, Mr President, by standing behind Hon Phil Lockyer to bring about a bit of order in this place, he being the unruly fellow that he is. He and Hon Graham Edwards certainly set me up in Melbourne. They knew that there were some differences between the late Graham MacKinnon and me. Graham Edwards was meeting Noeline somewhere in Melbourne and Phil was visiting a friend. That was dropped on to me with five minutes notice and I was left to show Graham MacKinnon around the Dandenongs. We spent about four hours together. However, that provided us with an opportunity I to resolve a few problems. On reflection I was grateful because there had been some bad feeling between us prior to that event.

I have often referred to Philip Lockyer as "knuckles", "Papa Lockyer", "Nonno" and other things and he has called me a wog. Not many people can get away with that. The worst thing he did was to call me a Sicilian. Again, I set the record straight: I am not a Sicilian. I advise Phil that he will receive in the mail a map of Italy which includes Sicily. It will clearly show that Sicily is not connected to Italy and that it is a piece of land which has broken away from north Africa and is at arm's length from Italy. It certainly will not get any closer to Italy. On one occasion a bridge was proposed, but the people on the mainland went to a referendum and the proposal was rejected.

I refer to an incident which occurred in this place many years ago; that is, the encounter between Hon Tom Stephens and Hon Phil Lockyer. Being a new boy and concerned for a colleague after he received what one could call a sign of affection from Hon Phil Lockyer, I went looking for Tom. I found him in his office and I thought it strange that he kept rubbing his lip. I thought that if his lip was sore he would not be rubbing it. I discovered that his intention was to make his lip look worse than it actually was because he was going to lodge a complaint to the police the next day. I am revealing a few secrets, but I advise Tom that he has come very close to getting one from me. Members might find that humorous but, as I said the other day in this House, if there is a repeat of certain events, he will not have a chance to rub his lip.

I would like to sincerely thank Kathy Biancotti and Judy Gabriele for their help. I also thank my family, who are very dear to me, for the support they have given me. I advise members that when my family are put in any danger or are under any pressure from anybody I react badly and I get even. Hon Tom Stephens and some of his colleagues should bear that in mind. I and a few of my friends will not forgive. I certainly hope it will not come to that.

I received a fax this morning from the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia (Inc). It is the last opportunity in the life of this Parliament that I will have the chance to read this fax. What has happened in the other place will probably occur in his place next year. I certainly hope that what I have been told is not true and that there is a change of heart. The fax reads -

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SCHEDULE 5 (Section 64 of the Amendment Bill 1995)

The members of the Asbestos Diseases Society reject the proposed amendment number 64 on the basis that it is discriminative, unjust, illogical and outrageous.

For example, a person suffering from severe asbestosis may get little or no compensation if they contract a subsequent disease mesothelioma. Given there is absolutely no connection between the two diseases it is quite unconscionable, it is like saying that someone who breaks their leg in a work accident is not entitled to further compensation if they subsequently break their arm.

Also this disgraceful proposed amendment to change Schedule 5 of the Workers' Compensation Rehabilitation Act is in our opinion in conflict with the provisions preventing discrimination on the basis of disease or injury in the Equal Opportunity Act.

The society understands that a deal has been struck between the Government and the Opposition. It is outrageous; people should be put first. I urge members to reconsider their stance. Members know how badly asbestosis victims have suffered over the years and we should not impose further suffering on them. I certainly hope that no agreement has been reached. Due consideration should be given to the amendments in such a way that the asbestosis sufferers are considered.

Question put and passed.

BILLS (4) - RETURNED

1. Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Bill.
2. National Environment Protection Council (Western Australia) Bill.
3. Sandalwood Amendment Bill.
4. Legal Practitioners Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Assembly without amendment.

HOME BUILDING CONTRACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Council.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - ORDINARY

HON N.F. MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the House) [1.09 pm]: I move -

That the House do now adjourn.

Adjournment Debate - Valedictory Speech by the President

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths): Before I put the question I want to say a few words. The nearly 20 years that I have held office as President have been years of significant change for the Legislative Council. When I was first elected in 1965 the franchise for this House had only recently been made the same as that for the Assembly, and each of us had a six year staggered term. Provinces have since been replaced by regions and staggered terms have given way to fixed four year terms with all members facing election at the same time. I agree with Hon Philip Lockyer that it is a crummy system, but it happens to be what we have.

The evolutionary signposts for the Legislative Council between now and then are easily identified. It is far more difficult to describe the character of the House and how that has changed over the past 20 or 30 years. The supposedly golden days of leisurely consideration of business have well and truly gone. Members of Parliament are subject to prevailing views and influences in the community and in this age of performance indicators and output measurements there is an expectation that members of Parliament will also respond and perform. What many do not appreciate is that members 30 years ago worked equally hard as they do now. The difference is that, as a group, today's politicians are made more visible and their activities scrutinised more intensely by the media. Unfortunately, greater media coverage and scrutiny has tended towards the superficial treatment of political issues and politicians' activities in cases where more informed treatment is often called for. We have all experienced the frustration of having to stand by and watch the news media do less than justice to the facts that are known to us. The solution is not to muzzle the Press or cut back on parliamentary privilege; rather, it is to ensure that the Press maintains its freedom and carries out the obligation to report fairly and accurately.

There was a time in the 1980s when I thought that there would be a concerted effort to abolish this House or make it redundant by cutting off its funding and letting it die slowly and publicly. That was the down side. The good side was that the House took the hint, made substantial changes to its procedures and, most importantly, moved to establish a committee system. The committee system has given members a better understanding of what they can achieve collectively while at the same time providing members with better information on which to base their opinions and judgments. Committees give people and groups a new parliamentary forum in which they can express their attitudes towards legislation and, through the handling of petitions, see issues of interest to local communities around the State dealt with constructively. Committee visits to places outside the metropolitan area and even the country provide an important bridge between members and electors. However, a committee system relies for its

success on the informed participation of members of the House and their collective sense of the worth of a bicameral parliamentary system. Without this conviction even the most far reaching reforms will be cosmetic in effect and will not save this House from eventual abolition. However, I have confidence that even the most ardent abolitionist who comes into this Chamber will understand and appreciate the value of this House and its legitimacy if, despite political differences, the collegiate spirit is fostered. It is for you and your successors to ensure that the House retains its relevance.

As the President it has been my privilege to serve this House to the best of my ability, and that has not always seen me head the popularity stakes on all occasions. I know there have been times when Governments and Ministers would cheerfully have willed anybody but me to occupy this Chair. My rulings have sometimes been inconvenient, irksome, annoying and unwelcome, but nevertheless they were reasoned. Members could at least point to where they thought I had gone wrong. Rulings without reason add nothing to the evolution of our custom and usage, without which many of the formal rules lack meaning and context. Those adverse reactions suggest that I have done what is expected of a Presiding Officer in the Westminster tradition: To act in the interests of the whole House regardless of who occupies the government benches. I take comfort from the fact that you elected me to office first in 1977 and successively since then. I urge you to keep the practice whereby the President retains office for as long he or she retains the confidence and support of the House despite changes of Government. The presidency should not be a spoil of office given to a member who misses out on a place in the Cabinet. Incidentally, I had two opportunities to go into the Cabinet. The presidency is too crucial to the proper functioning of our system of government to be treated as a consolation prize.

Like anyone who holds public office I have been supported in my electorate and parliamentary duties by countless people. I genuinely thank them all. I hope I can hold myself together to thank people.

Hon Tom Stephens: Do you want me to crack a few jokes along the way?

Hon Graham Edwards: Throw him out!

The PRESIDENT: I remind the member of what I often say: You do not have to like what I say, or believe it, but you do have to listen to it.

The first thing I want to do is to thank my family. Thirty-two years is a lifetime. As has been mentioned by other members, without our families it would be impossible for any member of Parliament to do his or her duty.

I place on the record my thanks to Hon Bill Grayden, who was responsible for ensuring that I was elected in the first place. I want to thank the Liberal Party; in particular, the Swan division of the Liberal Party, which was the division from whence I came. I single out from all the hundreds of people from that division Mr Bernard Wright, who steadfastly stuck with me over the years and ran campaigns for me and made sure I had the resources to run those campaigns.

I pay tribute to John Roberts, who was the Clerk of the Parliament when I first was elected, and to John Ashley, who followed him. Those two people gave me the basic understanding of this parliamentary system. I thank the two secretaries who were here when I first came in, Norma Turton and Bernice Downe. In those days two secretaries serviced the whole of the Parliament. Those two people worked very hard for all of us, irrespective of our political parties. I pay tribute to the then President of the Legislative Council, the late Sir Leslie Diver, who had a great influence over me.

I recall some members - not necessarily in any order. Hon Roy Abbey sat where Hon Phil Lockyer now sits, and at one time I sat alongside him, in the seat currently occupied by Hon Murray Criddle. Roy Abbey gave me a lot of support and help. Hon Frank Willmott sat where the Chairman of Committees is currently sitting. He and Roy Abbey shared my first office with me, a tiny office on the top floor of the building. They were subjected to every speech I made three times: I practised in my room before we came into the Parliament; I made the speech in the Parliament; and I went over it again when we went back into our room. They had three shots at hearing it, and they were good people.

In those days the Leader of the House was the late Sir Arthur Griffith. I did not get on with him all that well, but he was a great leader and he knew this parliamentary system and how to operate within it. Earlier somebody mentioned that the best orator in this place was the late Hon Graham MacKinnon. I agree with that. He was a great help to me. One of the bits of advice he gave to me I will not repeat! It was typical of him; he was a pretty tough character. A far better orator, and one who was far more informed on the procedures and the rules of this place and the laws of the Parliament was the late Hon Frank Wise. He was then the Leader of the Opposition and he sat where Hon Kim Chance now sits.

Members have mentioned that there have been changes - in 32 years, there have been a lot of changes. I say this to Hon Graham Edwards: He may well think that at times I did not make the right decision; however, if Frank Wise were here, he would have voted with the President on every issue. In those days if anybody misbehaved, there was never a division. The only person who would have been on the other side would have been the person who was named. Mention has been made of the fact that I broke my record: I set out never to name anybody in this place. Hon Tom Stephens knows why he was named. He is a very intelligent person. I am not quite so sure that Hon Alannah MacTiernan knows why she was named, but there was a very good reason for it. The difference between some members and others is that they withdrew their comments or apologised. I have a bit of an idea - Hon Tom Stephens will tell me whether I am right one of these days - that he deliberately set out to make sure I did not get through my long parliamentary career without naming somebody, and he set himself up as that person. I am digressing a little, but I am sure Hon Tom Stephens knows. I respect, appreciate and understand the dedicated way in which he goes about what he does in this Parliament, notwithstanding that on occasion I may have growled at him.

I remember Hon Bill Willesee. I have said this before, and I will say it again: If the Labor Party in Western Australia ever builds a monument to one of its members, he is the first person I would suggest. He is a gentleman, a member who came from the north of Western Australia, who shifted to the metropolitan area. He had done to him what Hon Phil Lockyer said has been done to other people in this place. When the Government changed, Hon Bill Willesee sat in the seat now occupied by Hon Norman Moore. The numbers were 20 to 10 against him; however, he managed to run and control this Chamber without ever having to resort to raising his voice, or to character assassination of one of the 20 on the other side, of whom I happened to be one at that time. Of all the members of Parliament, he was not the most academically qualified or the most articulate, but he had an ability to do the job as Leader of the Government in this Chamber in a very competent and dignified way. I am sorry I have not seen Bill for a while.

Hon Les Logan, who sat where the Minister for Finance, Hon Max Evans, now sits, was an incredible person with a photographic memory. He knew the subject matter of that about which he was speaking. He could speak in very confident and positive terms. He could read a volume of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and recite it immediately. He was a great bloke.

I will refer to some people in the other Chamber. I have been very lucky in my time here. I was lucky to get elected in the first place because I needed a big swing and Hon Tom Butler working against me. I have met some beautiful, wonderful people. I was lucky to come in here in an era where people cared about each other. I remember the late Sir David Brand, our leader. He was a very humble and simple person, the Premier of this State for a record period. I learned many things from him. None of the present members of this Parliament had an opportunity to serve with people like the late Bert Hawke, the previous Premier of this State. He had no pretensions and no hatred for people who did not believe in his political point of view. He shared with us any knowledge he had and he offered his advice and assistance when he had no need to do so. After he retired from Parliament and went back to South Australia, I felt very privileged that after I became President, he always paid a courtesy call on me whenever he came to this Parliament.

Those were the sorts of people who were members of this place. Sir Charles Court was our deputy leader when I first came here, and he subsequently became our leader. He was a very strong and different leader from Sir David Brand. I also owe a lot to Sir Charles. I was the party secretary at the time, but the one thing he did not know anything about was running a meeting. I was the secretary and I made the rules, which made me pretty powerful for a while. Sir Charles Court was a great leader, Premier and friend of mine.

I do not have time to run down the entire list of members in the 1965 *Hansard*. Most of the members listed are dead. I feel as though I came here only yesterday - I feel new; I do not feel an old member. The list contains the late Hon Keith Watson. I have already mentioned the late Hon Frank Wise, who was probably one of the most brilliant members of Parliament I ever met. Hon Harry Strickland sat where Hon Murray Montgomery sits, and I sat in the middle of that bench.

I am rambling a little now, but in those days when a member came into the Chamber he or she was allocated a seat which was retained for the rest of his or her days in Parliament. We had none of the nonsense of the Opposition on one side of the House and the Government on the other side. Apart from the three Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and the two Whips, the allocation of seats never changed. The Government would change, but members stayed in their allocated seats. Hon Roy Abbey, Hon Harry Strickland and I sat on cross-benches. Members were all over the place. Members became very close friends with the members next to whom they sat. They talked to them. When a member was making a speech, the speech notes were kept on the bench. If one wanted to oppose what was being said, one could easily grab the notes to use in making one's speech in favour of a different point of view!

Hon Ruby Hutchison was the first lady elected to this place. I was privileged to serve in this place with her. She spent a lot of time trying to abolish the Legislative Council, but she could not find a seconder, even from among her

colleagues, every time she moved to introduce a Bill to do so. However, Ruby Hutchison was a wonderful lady who always gave me a hug and a kiss - I reckon she was fantastic.

I recall Hon Jack Heitman and Hon Eric Heenan. The first member of Parliament I can ever remember meeting was Eric Heenan. When I was a schoolboy in Morawa, he visited the school. I thought this guy was some sort of king of Australia because of his eminence and stature. I understand that Eric is still alive and has eyesight problems. He was a very good solicitor and would give us the benefit of his legal advice.

There was only one Hon Fred Lavery, a dedicated member of the Labor Party. He sat where Hon John Halden now sits. Three seats were behind the current opposition front bench and he sat in the middle seat. He would get stuck into the Government and Hon Frank Willmott who was sitting on the other side of the House. He was very excitable, not unlike Hon Tom Stephens.

Hon Tom Stephens: He must have been a great bloke!

The PRESIDENT: He was very passionate about the matters he raised. He was highly emotional about his speeches. In those days the *Hansard* books were piled high on the desks in the Chamber. Towards the end of the year members would be almost hidden behind a huge stack of these books. It was not until Laurie Marquet suggested that we did not need them on the desks that the place was tidied up. Fred was a big guy with hands like frying pans. One day Frank Willmott was giving him a few unruly interjections, so Fred picked up this high pile of *Hansard* books and threw them across the Chamber at Willmott. He could not throw them that far, and they hit the *Hansard* reporter and landed on the heads of his colleagues in the row in front of him. He then swung out the door where Hon Alannah MacTiernan is now standing - I invite her into the Chamber if she would like to come in.

Hon Tom Stephens: That is a reversal; you normally chuck her out!

The PRESIDENT: Fred Lavery swung around and jumped over Hon Jim Garrigan, who was sitting where Hon Tom Stephens now sits, and he got his shoulder caught on the curtain when he was leaving through the door. Down came the curtain rail and the curtain, and the rail went smack across the door. He then disappeared. Poor old Sir Leslie Diver was President at the time, and he was aghast, wondering what was going on with the scattered books and the curtain lying across the floor near the door! About 10 minutes later, Fred came back and said. "I apologise, Mr President; I did my lolly."

Hon Jim Garrigan was a goldfields member, and he was one of the men to whom Hon Phil Lockyer referred: He was a rough diamond and had been a hardworking miner before coming to Parliament. He had very little formal education. He used to live at the Globe Hotel in Wellington Street when he came down to Perth, and he had a great desire to play cards. He had a lot of mates at the Globe Hotel who played poker with him. When he came into the Chamber when the bells rang to start proceedings, Hon George Brand and I would have a two shillings bet: We would look at the clock and bet whether Garrigan would stay in the Chamber for one minute or one and a half minutes after prayers. We got it down to such a fine measure. The minute the President finished saying prayers, Jim Garrigan was out the door like a flash so he could play cards. He did not make a lot of speeches, but he was marked off as present every day. My comments indicate to members some of the types of people in this Chamber in 1965.

When I came into the Chamber today, I mentioned that somebody had handed me a Standing Order No 72 urgency motion which, for the benefit of people not in this Chamber every day, is the motion that the present Opposition absolutely loves. It likes to use the procedure every day; it gives it an opportunity to raise matters of some urgent interest. The urgency has gone from many of those matters from time to time, but it uses the word very loosely.

An urgency motion was handed to me today. I had been told that there would not be one, and I thought, "What is new; we will have one", and I did not bother reading it, but the Clerk said I had better read it, so I saw that it was signed by me and indicated that I was very disappointed that the standard of onions in Western Australia today was not as good as it was in 1965. Members have heard me say over the years that my maiden speech in this place was about onions. I do not even eat them because I do not like them! Why would I make my maiden speech on the Marketing of Onions Amendment Bill? I made it because in those days if a member did not stand up to seek the call when the President put the question - the Presidents then were not soft and lenient like me - that was the end of the debate; there was no mucking around.

At that time, Hon George Brand, who was one of five other members who came in on the same day as me, was supposed to take the call and speak on the Address-in-Reply, but when the President put the question, "All those in favour say aye, against say no", George did not understand it so he did not stand up, and the Address-in-Reply was carried; but no-one had spoken other than the guy who had moved the motion, and the opportunity for new members to make their maiden speeches on the Address-in-Reply disappeared.

My opportunity to speak came - Hon Tom Helm will again criticise my shop stewardship - when I made my speech on onions. Members should bear in mind that the House did not sit until August after the election, and I commenced my speech on 6 October 1965 at one minute to 6.00 pm and I spoke until 6.15 pm. The speech was so good that the President did not leave the Chair at 6.00 pm, as members know I do meticulously, and I do not let Ministers keep us here one minute past 6.00 pm; so I broke the rules by speaking until 6.15 pm. That speech was about onions, and I do not have time to tell members the reason, but Hon Ron Thompson, the Labor member for South Province, as it was then called - it was Fremantle and Spearwood - got me into trouble, and I will tell members about that some time.

The late Herbie Burton was the House Controller. He ran this place like a sergeant major. Any member who misbehaved, walked the wrong way or did not wipe his feet on the mat when he came into the House was given a broadside. I learnt a lot from Herbie, particularly with regard to the operations of the Joint House Committee.

The Chief Hansard Reporter was Mr Chinnery. I had forgotten his first name. The present present Chief Hansard Reporter told me it was Wally. I think he must have used another name, because I do not remember him as Wally. The other interesting Hansard reporter was Jessie Bussola, who was the first and only, at that time, female Hansard reporter in the world, and we had her in Western Australia at that time. We now have bundles of female Hansard reporters, but she was the first. That was in 1965. She was here before then, because she was here when I came. She went on to become the first female Chief Hansard Reporter, and she was a great lady. There were lots of other Hansard reporters, but I cannot name them all.

The library - some members heard me the other night - was a shelf with some Zane Grey books and some copies of *Smith's Weekly*, and that sort of highfalutin literature. We did not have a library as such. We have now made, and are continuing to make, advances in that area.

I need to talk briefly about the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association because members would think that something was wrong with me if I did not. Whatever I was able to achieve with regard to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association I owe to all members, because without the initial support of this branch, I would not have had the confidence to stand for that very vigorous international election that was held in Harare, Zimbabwe, where there were five candidates from around the world and about 400 delegates from around the world voted. I was very pleased to win. Actually, it never occurred to me that I would not win, because I am a super optimist. However, I would not have been able to achieve that without the help of some members who were here then and their successors who are here now, because I received a lot of encouragement and support.

I must pay tribute to Hon Bill Stretch, who was Western Australia's delegate to that conference. Hon Bill Stretch had told me he would vote for me, so I knew I had one vote out of the 400-odd, but Hon Bill Stretch helped me when we got to Zimbabwe and made sure that I was given every opportunity to win. I thank him for that, and I have thanked him previously. My election to the position of Chairman enabled me to do things that I know each and every member would love to have the opportunity to do, because I know how all members think and operate. As Hon Norman Moore has mentioned, it allowed me to help these emerging democracies, these third world countries, not only to run an election that was free and fair for the first time in their history, but also to establish a system of post election seminars. People from all over the world were doing election monitoring. However, as soon as the election was over all the monitors, including the commonwealth monitors, went home and left these people with a brand new Parliament of 200 to 300 members who had never set foot in the Parliament before. Of course, a year or two later there would be a coup because the system had broken down. I established a system of post election seminars. I took people from all over the Commonwealth who operated under the Westminster system, and we held seminars to give them a basic understanding of how a system of multiparty Parliaments should work. I repeat, every one of the members in this Chamber would have done the same thing, had they had the opportunity. I was the fortunate one in the position to do it.

Again, I was able to do it only because of the tolerance of this House during the many times I was not in the Chamber when the House was sitting. I know that never once did the Government or the Opposition take advantage of the fact that I, as President, was not here, because the President is not paired and there was one person short as a result of that. I have told people all over the world that I come from a Parliament which has incredible tolerance for and belief in the system of parliamentary democracy I was espousing, to the extent that the Parliament allowed me to be absent.

I want to mention briefly another point that Hon Norman Moore made; that is, I study every one of the members in this Chamber. I am no psychologist or psychiatrist, but while I have been in the Chair I have made a practice of trying to understand each and every member in this place so that I know the special matters in which they are interested. I know which member antagonises another member, and I know the interjections that are unacceptable to individual members but which some other members may not care about. Some members can interject on some members but another member will take exception to it. I have studied that over the years. That is the reason I wrote the name Don Cooley in my notes. Hon Don Cooley came to this Parliament for a short time, one six year term. I

do not know whether any of the Labor Party members know him, but those who do will agree with me I am sure that he is a wonderful person. He was involved with the brewery union and gave me a book about it.

Don was volatile and if the name "BHP" were mentioned he would go berserk. Hon Gordon Masters was then Whip and sat in the seat now occupied by Hon Muriel Patterson, and Hon Don Cooley sat where Hon John Cowdell now sits. If Don Cooley spoke, for example, about cemeteries, horticulture or anything, Gordon Masters would call out "What about BHP?" It had nothing to do with the subject being debated but he would ask the question every time. Don Cooley would go totally berserk. He nearly beat Hon Tom Stephens in the race to be the first member to be thrown out by me. Don was not only Cooley by name, but also in a crisis he was cool by nature. The bells were being rung for a division on whether to suspend him, when he jumped to his feet and apologised for his outburst. That outburst was not initiated by him, but by Gordon Masters. As soon as Don Cooley stood to speak, I would not listen to him but would watch Gordon Masters every single second to stop him opening his mouth. I have done that over the years with all members. Some members, even when I call for order, think I am being terrible, and others ignore it. It has worked very well over the years.

Before I get to the present members of the staff and the other persons to whom I must pay tribute, I will say something about my travels in India, Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific Islands and the Pacific nations. I refer to the word "racism". Racism is something we must fight tenaciously. We must ensure that even though we may have some views on the way in which people act, behave and run their politics, we should never be critical of a person's ethnic background. I have been at meetings of between 50 and 100 people when I was the only white person present. I do not know the colour of the people to whom I speak. My friends do not have a colour, shape or accent. They are all human beings with the right to be treated as such. I urge all members and people in Australia to be very careful of the tendency they may have to go down this path, which seems to be gathering momentum in this country, to ensure we do not allow ourselves to be labelled as racist.

I have similar feelings about people's political views. When I speak to people in this place and around the world I do not think about their political party or their political views. It does not occur to me to think about it. If many more members behaved like that, there would perhaps be fewer rowdier times. Even if there are rowdy times, it is far better for members to yell at each other than to shoot each other. I have been to countries where that occurs. Tolerance of people's race is no different to me from being tolerant of their political views. Every one of us has the same objective; that is, to do the best we can on the basis of our beliefs for the people who elect us and whom we represent.

I must spend one or two minutes talking about the current people. I want to compliment and thank many people with whom I have had contact over the years. Somebody has already said some nice words this morning about our Clerk of the House, Laurie Marquet. Two people saying something nice about him in one day is probably a bit difficult for him to cope with! He is the Clerk because I appointed him, not without some controversy at the time and not without great disappointment in the eyes of some people. However, I appointed him for no other reason than that I had seen over the years that we needed in our Parliament somebody who had legal expertise and knowledge of parliamentary law. The days of becoming the Clerk simply because one had worked here longer than anyone else - I am not suggesting that was necessarily the case - were gone. I believed that members of Parliament were entitled to have access to somebody to advise them who had the depth of legal expertise of Laurie Marquet. He did not stop at giving his advice to the members; he actually started giving it to me! I thank Laurie. We have not always agreed, but we have been very good friends and have worked well together. Even when he disagreed with me about something I asked him to do, he dedicatedly prepared for me the views I had in words that members could understand. I will be eternally grateful for what he has done for me and, more importantly, for what he has done for this Parliament.

Ian Allnutt came a little while after I did. I should not have interjected earlier when I said that he had not started shaving when he came here. However, looking at him today, he still does not shave! Ian has worked in a variety of jobs over the years. He had a stint in the Legislative Assembly but he scurried back here pretty quickly. He did not suffer that mistake for long. I was pleased recently to appoint Stuart Kay to a brand new position. Again, it is part of my vision that members from now on have the expertise which a qualified person such as Stuart is able to bring to this Parliament. I will keep my eye on Stuart. There is an old saying that the corridors of this Parliament are strewn with the corpses of people who have let me down; I do not want him to be one of them!

I thank very much Neil Burrell, Vince Pacecca, Ken Foster and Bruce Bott, all of whom are the heads of the various departments in Parliament House at the moment. My great encouragement goes to each of those people to carry on the work they have been doing for the members of this Parliament during their time here. Each of the other staff in the Legislative Council, of whom we have had many over the years, has his or her job to do. Each is a very important link in this chain of activity. A chain is as strong as its weakest link. We have been able to put together in this place over all these years a chain containing no weak links.

I thank the catering staff, the people who make sure we have cups of tea etcetera when we need them. I have always said that the Hansard reporters have turned my speeches into pretty good speeches. I read some of them recently and I did not think I knew anything about the subjects. I obviously have a crook memory. I hope they do justice to this one, so that it reads decently.

I turn to my personal staff over the years. I have already mentioned Norma Turton and Bernice Downe, who were everybody's staff in those days. I thank Gay Iriks, my secretary; David Lloyd, my personal assistant; Jan O'Neill, who is in my electorate office, for what they have continued to do for me. I have news for them all - they will be doing it for quite a few weeks yet.

Finally, I mention Rosalyn King, who came to work for me a number of years ago; first in my electorate office and then in here. Many people criticised Brian Burke and I was one of them. However, the one thing he did was recognise that the Presiding Officers were in an invidious position if they did their job correctly. Members of Parliament represent people; they are endorsed by a political party. They are judged by their political parties by the number of times they can get outrageous stories on the front page of the newspaper criticising their opponents. If they do that every day, the party thinks they are working hard and are good at their work. However, Brian Burke understood that the President - and I guess the Speaker - was in an invidious position. He said to me that he would give me the funds to employ someone as my personal assistant who could do some public relations for the President provided I did not say nasty things about Brian Burke. Rosalyn King took on that job and she did a very good job for a number of years. However, Laurie Marquet could see that she had some ability so he offered her another job with more money and more permanency. As members know, anyone who works for me goes when I go. Ros took a job with the Legislative Council and now looks after the money. I tell her that she is tougher than Paul Keating about any financial claims I make. Nothing I claim qualifies for reimbursement; it is always "outside the guidelines". I thank Ros King; she does a good job.

Finally, I come to the members. I thank the Leader of the House for his very nice words. Each of his ministerial colleagues has been good to work with. His predecessor, Hon George Cash, is a great personal friend of mine and a person whom I was delighted to support when he came into the House and we elected him as our leader. I thank each of my other colleagues, whom I will not list, for their continued support and encouragement for the work I do. Each of the members who is leaving - Hon Doug Wenn, Hon Sam Piantadosi, Hon Val Ferguson, Hon Graham Edwards, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, Hon Philip Lockyer and Hon Iain McLean - has played a very important part in the history of Western Australia. Each has done his or her best to ensure that the laws of this State conform with the desires of the community, and I commend them for the contribution they have each made. I hope that they have success in their retirement or new activities. I am honoured to have had the opportunity of serving with them.

I have never had any problems with Hon Kim Chance, the Leader of the Opposition, and his colleagues. I mentioned facetiously the other day that the newspapers attributed Hon John Halden's demise to being too close to the President. I have always wanted everyone to be close to the President; that is how this place works. Anyone making that comment does not comprehend how this place works.

Hon Joe Berinson was a pretty tough Leader of the Government and a very tough member of the Labor Party. However, he came into my office and confided in me. He sought my advice and assistance in the absolute knowledge that there was no way in the world that I would divulge to anyone what he had said. That is what the President is there to do. Hon John Halden was no exception, because I offered him the same courtesy that I offered to Hon Graham Edwards and the other leaders. Hon Kim Chance has not been here very long, but he has made his mark in this Parliament and he will continue to do so. I feel very comfortable in the knowledge that people like him are on one side of the political scene in this parliamentary democracy.

My wife Norma is in the gallery. Equally important to me is my grandson Justin, who is also present. I am very proud of him. Finally, I thank each member for their friendship, support, tolerance, patience, forbearance and understanding, without which my task as President would have been impossible. I wish all of you and your families and friends a very happy festive season and every success in the year to come.

[Applause.]

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 2.15 pm
