



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

THIRTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
SECOND SESSION
1998

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 12 August 1998

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 12 August 1998

THE SPEAKER (Mr Strickland) took the Chair at 11.00 am, and read prayers.

HOME CARERS

Petition

Mr Riebeling presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 712 persons -

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

We, the undersigned, call upon the Court Government in relation to licensed homecarers to ensure that every carer and spouse and every person over the age of 18 who resides at the property of the carer receives Police clearance.

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

[See petition No 6.]

GRAND BOULEVARD AND BOAS AVENUE, JOONDALUP, TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Petition

Mr Baker presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 150 persons -

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

We, the undersigned, hereby request that traffic control signals be installed as a matter of urgency at the intersection of *Grand Boulevard and Boas Avenue* in Joondalup. This location is extremely hazardous due to the dual lane configuration of Grand Boulevard and the increased use of the intersection by motorists and pedestrians accessing the Central Business District, nearby Police Station, Law Courts, Lakeside Joondalup Shopping City, banks, retail outlets, professional suites and Government agencies.

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

[See petition No 7.]

CARAVAN PARKS AND CAMPING GROUNDS REGULATIONS

Petition

Mr Riebeling presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 90 persons -

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

We, the undersigned call upon the State Government to exempt certain areas of the State of Western Australia from the 1997 Caravan Parks & Camping Grounds regulations namely 40 mile beach and Cleaverville and any other parts of the coast of Western Australia from time to time.

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

[See petition No 8.]

WESTERN POWER AND ALINTAGAS

Petition

Mr Kobelke presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 25 persons -

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

We, the undersigned citizens are opposed to the sell off of Western Power and AlintaGas.

We believe they are people's assets and should continue to be publicly owned and put to the service of the communities of Western Australia before investors' profits.

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

[See petition No 9.]

GRAFFITI

Petition

Mr Baker presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 122 persons -

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

We, the undersigned residents of the new City of Joondalup call for specific legislation to deal with the proliferation of graffiti in, inter-alia, the North-West Metropolitan area which should include the following provisions:-

1. Making custodial parents strictly liable to pay monetary compensation or reparation for any criminal damage caused by their children who graffiti property;
2. A curfew on all juveniles after 9 pm unless they are in the care of a responsible person;
3. The banning of the sale of spray paint to juveniles;
4. Mandatory sentencing for juvenile graffiti offenders to include compulsory work with specially established Weekend Graffiti Removal Task Forces;
5. Deeming that any juvenile in possession of spray paint in a public place after dark be deemed to be in possession of the same with the intent to graffiti until the contrary is proved;
6. Removing the right to silence when juveniles are found in possession of spray paint or doing graffiti at night;
7. Increased civil and criminal protection for members of the public who elect to apprehend suspected juvenile graffiti offenders;
8. The public naming of juveniles (and their parents) who are convicted of causing criminal damage by graffiti; and
9. Prohibiting any juvenile convicted of criminal damage by graffiti from possessing spray paint for a period of 5 years after the date of the last such conviction.

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

[See petition No 10.]

CONVENTION CENTRE

Petition

Mr Brown presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 208 persons -

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

We, the undersigned petitioners of Western Australia strongly object to the Government setting aside \$100m for a convention centre when the crime rate and hospital waiting lists are increasing at a rapid rate.

We believe people should come before monuments and call on the Government to use those funds to improve our public hospital system by reducing waiting lists as well as injecting funds into the much needed areas of law and order and education.

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

[See petition No 11.]

XEROX INTERNATIONAL TRIATHLON SERIES

Petition

Mr Baker presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 50 persons -

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

We, the undersigned residents and avid sports men and women of the City of Joondalup, request that EventsCorp WA support our local Member of Parliament's proposal to conduct 3 stages of the 1999 Xerox International Triathlon Series in the Joondalup area. The City of Joondalup has beautiful beaches, an excellent road system, an efficient public transport system, well equipped parks and recreational facilities and would make an ideal venue for such a series. Further, the national and international TV coverage associated with the event would greatly assist in promoting the Joondalup region and its various tourist facilities, hospitality industries and other attributes.

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

[See petition No 12.]

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO BENALE PTY LTD - STATEMENT BY MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND TRADE

MR COWAN (Merredin - Minister for Commerce and Trade) [11.20 am]: I advise the Parliament of a financial assistance package offered to Benale Pty Ltd, a company related to Fletcher International Exports Pty Ltd, which is an Australian meat processing and export company. Assistance will be provided by way of a \$2.5m interest free loan and a \$2.7m grant for the establishment of an export abattoir near Albany. Fletcher International Exports Pty Ltd, one of the largest sheep meat processors in Australia with facilities in Dubbo, NSW, is finalising development of facilities at Narrikup near Albany. The Narrikup facilities are planned to process up to 1.5 million sheep and 50 000 cattle a year and include fellmongering facilities to produce both sheep and cattle hides. The development will involve investment of around \$46m by 1999. The new facility will create an additional 400 full-time positions when in full production, and by 2001 will generate income of more than \$100m per annum, mostly for export markets.

The development company, Fletcher International Exports Pty Ltd, is owned by Roger and Gail Fletcher; and another of the Fletchers' companies, Benale Pty Ltd, will own and operate the facility. Financial assistance will be provided to Benale Pty Ltd in two parts. The first part is a loan of \$2.5m that will progressively convert to a grant, subject to the company satisfying specific investment and industry development performance milestones. The second part is in the form of a grant of \$2.7m for infrastructure development costs incurred by the project for power, water, effluent and gas. The grant will be paid once infrastructure development costs have been incurred by the company.

This assistance is provided in recognition of the major economic development impact of projects of this nature in regional Western Australia. Furthermore, the project will enhance the State's capacity to add value to our rural produce and thereby improve the level of income to regional communities and the State as a whole. The investment that will be made by the Fletchers will strengthen the Western Australian industry's ability to increase its share of the international processed meat market and provide greater demand for livestock in the region, encouraging higher stocking levels. I table the details of the financial assistance provided by the Government to Benale Pty Ltd.

[See paper No 77.]

FORMER CHILD MIGRANTS - STATEMENT BY MINISTER FOR FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

MRS PARKER (Ballajura - Minister for Family and Children's Services) [11.23 am]: The recent release of the House of Commons Select Committee on Health report "The Welfare of Former British Child Migrants" complemented and confirmed the findings of the Select Committee into Child Migration which reported to the Western Australian Parliament in November 1996. The Government acknowledges the findings of both committees and agrees that the House should recognise in a bipartisan fashion the trauma of the various child migration schemes in which several thousand unaccompanied child migrants were sent from Britain and Malta to Western Australia and other Australian States. Most of these children were accommodated in Catholic institutions or at Fairbridge Farm

School at Pinjarra. The Western Australian Government acknowledges that many children were subjected to cruel physical, emotional and sexual abuse at the hands of people responsible for their care.

The House of Commons report recommended a number of actions for consideration by the British Government. It recommended the establishment of a central database, access to information by former child migrants, help with tracing families, and counselling as required. The committee further recommended that the British Government establish a travel fund to give former child migrants the opportunity to visit the country of their birth, attend family reunions, or visit sites of personal importance. Sufficient knowledge and information is available now to ensure that these services and supports are provided. What is required now is action on these recommendations to ensure the appropriate supports are available to those who have suffered from these past schemes. Sixteen of the 17 recommendations of the House of Commons report are supported by the Western Australian Government, which for the past 13 years through Family and Children's Services has been providing direct assistance to former child migrants with regard to access to information, and free counselling and therapeutic services through its psychologists, or by private psychologists if that is requested. This positive approach by the Western Australian Government was acknowledged and commended in the House of Commons report.

With regard to the recommendation to suspend the Statute of limitations, no limitation is placed on the time within which criminal proceedings that may arise in this type of matter may commence, and this option remains open. In all cases, this is a matter for the Director of Public Prosecutions. However, retrospective change to the Limitation Act will need to be treated with considerable caution because of its effect on both the general principle against retrospective legislation and the general principle of limitation periods with regard to individual cases. Any such legislation will need to be given careful consideration.

Family and Children's Services fully supports the good work of the Child Migrant Trust and the recommendation that the work of this trust be expanded. The Western Australian Government will continue to support former child migrants. Therefore, I have directed Family and Children's Services to establish close liaison with its counterparts in the British Government with regard to any implementation of the recommendations of the House of Commons report; to cooperate fully with any implementation plans that may be developed by the British Government to ensure a coordinated approach to the services provided so that Western Australian former child migrants can access information about their heritage; and to liaise with the Commonwealth Government, the Catholic Church and the Child Migrant Trust to ensure maximum cooperation and the provision of appropriate services to former child migrants.

The Government has provided services over the past 13 years to former child migrants and is committed to continue this support. These services will now be enhanced through cooperation with other Governments and organisations in the light of the findings of this important report.

The SPEAKER: Before I give the Premier the call, I remind all Ministers that brief ministerial statements have a three minute limit, and although there is a bit of discretion, Ministers need to adjust their statements to make sure they get fairly close to that limit.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION - PREMIER

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [11.28 am]: Members of Parliament presently need to provide an annual return under the Members of Parliament (Financial Interests) Act. Although it is not necessary for me to do so, I advise the Parliament that previously I have not had shareholdings in any companies, but recently I have become the sole shareholder of a private company for investment purposes. That company will invest only in managed funds over which I have no control or influence.

POLICE (CONFIDENCE POWER AND REVIEW) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Dr Gallop (Leader of the Opposition), and read a first time.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Days and Hours

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [11.29 am]: I move -

That the House shall meet on Tuesdays at 2.00 pm, on Wednesdays at 11.00 am and on Thursdays at 10.00 am.

This motion proposes the sitting hours be the same as those that have applied during the 1998 autumn sittings. However, I note that the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee has recommended a three week trial of new sitting times. Its suggestion is that the times could be on Tuesdays from 2.00 pm to 6.00 pm and then 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm; on Wednesdays from 11.00 am to 7.00 pm, with no meal break; and on Thursdays from 10.00 am to 6.00 pm. The Government will respond formally to that recommendation and others shortly. We will undertake a trial period of, if not exactly those hours, something similar to them during one part of this sitting.

Question put and passed.

PRECEDENCE OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Motion

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [11.30 am]: I move -

That private members' business shall take precedence on Wednesdays from 4.30 pm until 10.00 pm and government business shall take precedence at all other times.

If a trial of changed sitting hours is introduced, obviously we will need to amend the time for private members' business and I shall discuss that with the Opposition prior to the trial.

Question put and passed.

The SPEAKER: Order! That motion having been adopted, in accordance with Standing Order No 224 I advise the House that, following the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, I will call for grievances on Wednesdays from 4.30 pm.

BILLS - RESTORATION TO NOTICE PAPER

Government Bills

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

That under the provisions of Standing Order No 416, the following Bills be restored to the Notice Paper at the stages which they reached in the previous session of Parliament -

1. Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 3).
2. Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 4).
3. Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority Bill.
4. Child Welfare Amendment Bill.
5. Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia Bill.
6. Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (Consequential Provisions) Bill.
7. Friendly Societies (Western Australia) Bill.
8. Friendly Societies (Taxing) Bill.
9. Gas Pipelines Access (Western Australia) Bill.
10. Gender Reassignment Bill (No 2) 1997.
11. Government Financial Responsibility Bill.
12. Maritime Fees and Charges (Taxing) Bill.
13. Petroleum Safety Bill.
14. Planning Legislation Amendment Bill.
15. Port Authorities Bill.
16. Port Authorities (Consequential Provisions) Bill.
17. Surveillance Devices Bill 1997.
18. Transport Co-ordination Amendment Bill.

BILLS - RESTORATION TO NOTICE PAPER*Council Bills*

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [11.32 am]: I move -

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council requesting that consideration of the following Bills be resumed at the stages which they reached in the previous session of Parliament -

1. Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Amendment Bill 1997.
2. Energy Coordination Amendment Bill 1997.
3. School Education Bill 1997.
4. Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Amendment Bill 1997.

MR RIPPER (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.33 am]: I take this opportunity to ask the Leader of the House, the Minister for Education, whether the Government supports continuation of the consideration of the School Education Bill by the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Public Administration, or whether it will be necessary for that matter to be redebated in the Legislative Council.

Mr Barnett: I understand the upper House committee is due to report by 8 September, or thereabouts. The Bill has had very limited debate so far in the Legislative Council. The timing is a matter of urgency. I understand the committee has met rarely, if at all.

Mr Ripper: I do not know whether the Minister supports the committee continuing to consider the matter.

Mr Barnett: It is not up to this House to reflect on the other House; however, that committee is due to report on 8 September. If it does not report by that time, the passage of the legislation will be delayed and it will be very difficult for the schools and, indeed, the Parliament to be provided with the regulations. The committee was formed; it had a reporting date and, as far as I am concerned, it should report by that time.

Mr Ripper: I thank the Minister for his comments.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION*Appointment*

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

That for the present session -

- (a) the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee shall consist of the Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, the member for Belmont, the member for Hillarys and the member for Midland; and
- (b) the Parliamentary Services Committee shall consist of the Speaker, the member for Armadale, the member for Carine, the member for Churchlands, the member for Midland and the member for Roleystone.

BILLS - RESTORATION TO NOTICE PAPER*Opposition Bills*

On motion by Dr Gallop (Leader of the Opposition), resolved -

That under the provisions of Standing Order No 416 the following Bills be restored to the Notice Paper at the stages which they reached in the previous session of Parliament -

1. Coroners Act Amendment (Deaths in Custody) Bill.
2. Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Bill 1997.
3. Equal Opportunity Amendment Bill (No 2) 1997.
4. Freedom of Information Amendment Bill.
5. Local Government (Foreshore Parking) Amendment Bill 1997.
6. Local Government (Political Donations and Electoral Expenditure) Amendment Bill 1997.

7. Police Act Amendment (Graffiti) Bill 1997.
8. Public Scrutiny of Bills and Regulations Bill 1997.
9. Scrutiny of Government Publicity Bill 1997.
10. Tobacco Control Amendment Bill.
11. Town Planning and Development Amendment Bill 1997.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 11 August.

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park - Leader of the Opposition) [11.36 am]: In Western Australian politics today three developments are shaking the foundations of our political system and the way it operates, and each of them must be addressed by this Parliament and by the Government. One is economic, the second is political, and the third is social. I refer to, firstly, the new economic uncertainties which have followed the Asian economic crisis; secondly, the emergence of the One Nation party; and, thirdly, the growing levels of crime in our community. Each of these requires an honest and intelligent response on behalf of our State and our nation. We need certainty and clarity from our political leaders and the political parties they represent. Above all, we need a Cabinet that is competent, united and hardworking.

With those comments in mind, I ask three questions: Are we getting an honest and intelligent response from our Government to these problems? Is our Cabinet competent, united and hardworking? Are we getting certainty and clarity on the big issues we must address? The fact is that the coalition Government has become arrogant about its own qualities, and complacent about its obligations. We have a Cabinet that neither thinks a lot nor works a lot.

I now turn to the first of the factors I mentioned - economic uncertainty. In its last pronouncements on the subject, the state Treasury predicted a growth rate for Western Australia of 5 per cent for 1998-99, down from 6.5 per cent in 1997-98. Yesterday in his speech to the Parliament, the Governor, on behalf of the Government, made no reference to whether these forecasts have been reconsidered. The impression given is that no reassessment is needed because we have the capacity to adapt. I agree with the comments about the capacities of the Western Australian private sector to adapt to some of the changes that are going on in the world in which we live.

We need from the Government an objective assessment of the way that world is going and how we will have to adapt to those changes. We had from the Government yesterday no hard facts and no references to the current range of economic forecasts that are available.

I ask the Government and the Premier these questions: Were the statements in the Governor's speech yesterday based upon advice from Treasury? Has Treasury spoken to the Government about its views on growth and employment prospects for 1998-99? Has the Government sought advice from Treasury in relation to these questions? If it has, was that the basis upon which the Governor made this statement in the Parliament yesterday? These are important questions because we and the people of Western Australia deserve to know whether the statements in the Governor's speech yesterday were serious economic commentary rather than just political rhetoric.

I turn to what some of the economic forecasters are saying of economic forecasts. They revised their growth estimates downwards but are uncertain as to how far the downward trend will take us. It is difficult to make forecasts in this area but in recent times we have had serious discussions in the media on this question.

On Monday night there was an excellent program dealing with the impact of the Asian economic crisis on the world economy on the one hand and the Australian economy on the other. Professor Sachs from Harvard University and the global economist David Hale commented on the way the world economy was going and put forward the view that if the new Japanese Government does not get its act together, the world economy is in for a very serious time.

Interestingly, they were asked about their views on the Australian economy and what Australian political leaders could do to try to bring about certainty in respect of perceptions of Australia and its future. It was interesting that the response of David Hale - a very well-known economist who is extremely well versed in developments all over the world and who advises major Governments throughout the world - was unscripted and immediate: The first and most important thing that Australian political leaders on both the Labor and Liberal side can do is to say to the rest of the world that they will put One Nation last in terms of preferences. I will come back to that issue later in my speech.

We can say that a great deal of uncertainty exists in the extent to which we should revise our economic forecasts

downwards and it is very difficult to predict. In this climate of uncertainty we need some clarity from the Government. I would like to look firstly at consumer confidence and secondly at investor confidence. Consumer spending in Western Australia has picked up from the low levels of last year. However, Western Australia's consumer spending and trade figures are at best modest in comparison to our eastern States counterparts. Private consumption growth for the year ending March 1998 was 3.4 per cent, compared to 4.5 per cent for Victoria and 4.8 per cent for Queensland. The latest retail trade figures show that retail turnover in Western Australia fell by 1.1 per cent in the June quarter in seasonally-adjusted terms. On an annual basis, retail trade grew by only 2.8 per cent in our State, which was well below the national rate of 3.3 per cent. It is interesting that our retail trade consumption recovery that grew over the past year was not significant in relation to what had been happening in the other States. This will be important because the factors that feed into economic growth are either external or internal. One of the things we will need if we are to ride our way through the problems is strong internal consumption to feed growth in our economy.

Bankers Trust said in its recent economic update that a big factor underlying Australia's economic growth was the strength of consumer demand. I quote -

On the downside, it is possible that domestic demand could weaken more than envisaged on the back of weaker business and consumer confidence.

That is its July 1998 outlook. In other words the factors that feed consumption in our State will be important and the current signs are not positive.

Research from the Melbourne Institute of Social Research shows that consumer confidence in Western Australia fell dramatically in the June quarter. In its June quarterly survey the institute states -

Confidence in Western Australia took a battering in June by falling 4.4 per cent since March; a rate twice the national average. This fall confirms the declining trend in confidence that has been emerging since the end of 1997 when the Asian economic difficulties became manifest.

Therefore, it is of concern that this consumer basis to our economy is on a downward trend at a time when we are going to need some locally based support for our economy at the time of external problems in the export sector.

However, the real basis for the high rates of economic growth in Western Australia has been business investment. Last year the increase was 13.5 per cent and in this year's budget papers Treasury predicts an increase of 8.25 per cent. The future of our economy will depend upon the relevance of that figure of 8.25 per cent because public investment growth this year will be lower; it has been agreed already by the Government that public sector investment growth will decrease from 7.5 per cent in 1997-98 to 3.5 per cent in 1998-99. The key issue is whether we can sustain the high rates of business investment in the new issues that have followed the Asian crisis.

The June quarter survey of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia shows that business expectations of the Western Australian economy have deteriorated. The proportion of respondents to its survey anticipating a negative impact from the current developments rose from 77 per cent at the time of the last survey to 90 per cent this time. In terms of business expectations which feed into investment decision making, 90 per cent of the respondents to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia felt there was going to be a negative impact on our economy by current world developments.

In its 1997 annual report the Department of Resources Development recorded that some 205 projects were being monitored in Western Australia across six progress categories. They are -

Conceptual - 20 projects at a value of \$3.6b.

Projects that had reached project definition stage - 12 projects at a value of \$3.1b.

Projects that had reached technical and economic feasibility stage - 36 projects at a value of \$23.4b.

Projects that had reached detailed design stage - 18 projects at a value of \$5.7b.

Construction - 28 projects at a value of \$3.7b.

Projects now in operation - 94.

During 1996-97, 33 new projects joined that list and another 20 moved into production, representing a capital investment in WA of \$2.66b.

What we needed to hear from the Governor's speech yesterday - written by the Government of Western Australia - was the current state of that Department of Resources Development table: How many new projects had come onto the scene, and how many of those projects have moved on through the process; because that would give us a very

clear sign of how business investment in Western Australia is performing. Given recent announcements about both the Gorgon and An Feng-Kingstream projects, it is incumbent upon the Government to give us a comprehensive update of the Department of Resources Development analysis. We must remember that the reason we ask Governments, banks and other economic forecasters to do this is that many sectors of our economy, primarily the small business sector, make important decisions and put their economic futures on the line through the investment decisions that they make. They need to know, more than anyone else, what is an objective account of the future scenario. They cannot be put into the situation of committing to investment and finding that no markets exist for the products or services in which they are investing. We need from the Government less political rhetoric about these matters and more statements based on the economic forecasts that are given to the Government by the experts within the Treasury, the Department of Resources Development, the Office of Energy, Western Power, AlintaGas etc. Within those government organisations forecasters are coming up with figures relating to these issues. It is most disappointing that the Government did not take the opportunity yesterday to tell the small business sector its view of the future of the Western Australian economy based on forecasts developed within its departments.

This leads me to the important issue of One Nation. We turn from economics to politics. One Nation won 11 seats in the Queensland Parliament in the 1998 Queensland election with 22.7 per cent of the primary vote. Best estimates today are that One Nation will attract between 15 and 25 per cent of first preference votes of Western Australian electors. Let us consider the election in Queensland, because it is important for members opposite to know what happened in the Queensland election. Up to eight of the seats won by One Nation in Queensland were won with coalition preferences.

Let us consider what the global economist, Mr David Hale, said on "The 7.30 Report" on Monday. Mr Hale advises his clients on investment scenarios throughout the world, and the way they should look at countries. He said that the first thing that leaders of the Australian Labor Party, the Liberal Party and the National Party can do is to tell the world investment community that One Nation will go last on the ballot paper because the election of One Nation candidates is destabilising our political system and the policy frameworks within which we operate in a way which is undermining confidence in our nation and this State.

Mr Court: Because they have the same economic policies as you.

Dr GALLOP: If that is what the Premier believes he is not very well versed in economic policy.

Mr MacLean: You want to get off the subject.

Mr Court: On the issue of preferences, where would you put Australia First, which has the same migration policies as One Nation?

Dr GALLOP: We have not made that decision yet.

Mr Court: Why haven't you made a decision? They have the same migration policies.

Dr GALLOP: The One Nation vote and its impact on Australian politics is the most important issue facing us all today. Therefore, it is incumbent on us to obtain an answer about preferences from the Premier today. Why cannot the Premier answer that question?

Mr Court: With Australia First?

Dr GALLOP: On One Nation, which is getting between 15 and 25 per cent of the vote. It has 11 members in the Queensland Parliament and the Premier cannot tell us where the coalition will put One Nation on the ballot paper.

Mr Court: You cannot tell me where Australia First will be put.

Dr GALLOP: It is like comparing a footnote with the main chapter.

Mr Court: Graeme Campbell will like hearing that he is a footnote.

Dr GALLOP: He is a footnote. He is irrelevant to the Australian national political scene today. That is where he is in terms of these issues.

I remind coalition members of this Parliament that up to nine coalition seats in the Queensland Parliament were won on Australian Labor Party preferences. If the ALP played the cynical game that the coalition parties played in Queensland, there would be a lot more One Nation members in that Parliament destabilising the political system.

I now direct my comments to the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests. The decision of the Australian Labor Party in Queensland to give preferences to the Liberal and National Parties ahead of One Nation is what is meant by bipartisanship in politics.

Mr Court: Why won't you give the same commitment about Australia First when it has the same migration policy?

Dr GALLOP: The Premier's efforts to try to raise an issue that is totally unrelated to the main game will not get him anywhere.

The Australian Labor Party will keep calling upon the Government, in the interests of bipartisanship, to put One Nation at the bottom of preferences.

I will come to an analysis of One Nation and how we should respond. In dealing with One Nation we must distinguish between its leadership and its electorate. As a party One Nation is clearly ultra right wing and authoritarian. Its organisation was exposed by "The 7.30 Report" on Monday night.

Mr Court: Its organisation is not dissimilar to that of the Labor Party when it comes to authority.

Dr GALLOP: The Premier is an insult to this Parliament. The Premier is comparing the democratic organisation of the Australian Labor Party with the authoritarian organisation that is One Nation. That shows the Premier's ignorance in all matters related to history and values.

The policies of One Nation would undermine the social and economic fabric of our State and nation. Any serious analysis of its views on economics, migration, guns, and Aboriginal rights leads to this conclusion. Members like the member for Geraldton who think they can play footsy with One Nation to get a slight political advantage are badly mistaken. That is because One Nation is not a party of the mainstream. It is an ultra right wing authoritarian organisation that is attempting to redefine Australia in racial terms. If members of this Parliament do not understand that they lack any sense of history and politics.

We need to respond to this party with a mixture of argument and action. The view of senior figures in the Western Australian Liberal Party that One Nation represents a serious force that must be "negotiated with" simply legitimises the party and its extreme views. The failure of the Western Australian Liberal Party to take a strong stand is seriously undermining efforts to counter its influence.

Mr Court: How can you say that when you don't have a position on Australia First which has the same policies on multiculturalism as One Nation?

Dr GALLOP: The Premier is so out of touch. He should talk to the Deputy Premier and the Deputy Leader of Liberal Party who might put him straight on some of these big issues of politics. If the Premier is not capable of playing the big game of politics and making sure our State and its institutions are protected properly, he should move on and do something else. It is obvious that the extreme elements in the Liberal Party of this State still have significant influence. The fact is that the elements that make up the electorate of One Nation are more complicated than the extreme right wing elements that are its leadership. The extreme right wing element is but one element of One Nation, albeit the one holding the reins of power currently.

The other elements which make up One Nation's electorate are protest voters. It should be noted that the Australian Democrats scored 18 per cent of the vote in the South Australian election last year, in which One Nation was not a participant. That is an indication of the restlessness in the electorate towards the major parties. Another element which makes up the One Nation electorate is people who are disillusioned with economic rationalism, particularly its rigid and insensitive application. It was a self-serving insult to our intelligence yesterday when the Premier came into this Parliament and argued that the protest was only about Canberra-based centralism.

Mr Court: I did not say that.

Dr GALLOP: What did the Premier say?

Mr Court: I said the protest vote is against both Canberra and the States, and it includes issues -

Dr GALLOP: I think the Premier is changing his story. Members of the Australian Labor Party in this Parliament have travelled throughout the State in the past 12 months and listened to the concerns of people. We are covering a lot more ground than members of the Government with all of the resources that it has. The concerns of people relate not only to the performance of the Federal Government and the federal bureaucracy, but also to the performance of the State Government and the State's bureaucracies. It is clear that the Premier and his Government have closed their eyes and ears to the concerns of people - concerns which have been raised in our community about the policies of privatisation, contracting out, downsizing and commercialisation generally of government functions and government activities.

Mr Court: Would you support the Collie power station being privatised?

Dr GALLOP: The Collie power station was never going to be privatised. A new power station was being built with

private money; that is the difference. The Labor Party is happy to support competition in the power generation and gas systems, but that is a big difference from privatising the whole system. The world is about balance; it is about finding the right mix of things. People are saying to us that good policy is all about balance and little doubt exists that the trends have gone too far and need readjusting.

I now move on from discussing One Nation and some of the issues which have been raised by its development in our political system. I turn to crime and community safety. The daily display of violent attacks on the elderly and the recognition that crime rates are rising is the third factor pushing hard at our political foundations. Let us remind ourselves of the Premier's 1993 promise: To make the streets of Perth safe. That stands alongside a record which sees WA with the nation's highest rates of burglary and stealing offences, and the second highest rates of armed robbery, unarmed robbery, motor vehicle theft and sexual assault offences. The one area that the Premier has claimed as his own, graffiti, has recorded the biggest increase in the past year; a massive 120 per cent rise in reported offences.

Mr Court: It was not even listed as a crime when you were in government.

Dr GALLOP: No, I am talking about a 120 per cent increase in the past year.

Mr Court: Some members opposite are very grateful for what we are doing with graffiti.

Dr GALLOP: Is our Government so bereft of understanding -

Mr Minson interjected.

Dr GALLOP: We brought legislation into this Parliament last year and the Government said it would not support our legislation.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I know the Leader of the Opposition has, to some extent, invited interjections in this debate, but I ask that the interjections be held to a slightly lower level, so that Hansard can report them, if for no other reason.

Dr GALLOP: The Government is very ratty and arrogant.

Mr Court: You ask your own members what we are doing on graffiti; they are very grateful for what we are doing.

Dr GALLOP: The Government invokes self-satisfaction and arrogance. Is our Government so bereft of understanding that it has taken it five and a half years to work out that a whole of government approach to the crime issue is needed? It was elected in February 1993 and it is now August 1998, and it has only just announced a cabinet committee to tackle the crime issues and bring some coordination into the Government. Its glacier-like response times look like repeating themselves with Judge Kevin Hammond's report on remission and parole. The Attorney General announced the review in October 1996 after pressure from the state Opposition. He was meant to report by 20 December. Even then, without a final report, the Attorney promised changes to the State's parole laws during the election campaign. The report was delivered in March 1998 after examination of systems in other jurisdictions and submissions from the public, we were told. Now, when the Opposition presses the Government to implement its quite specific and universally accepted recommendations, it is told the matter is with the public for further consultation and action will follow later in the year. That is the person in whom the Premier has continuing confidence as the Attorney General of this State. His response times are glacier-like, just as in the case of crime generally.

Cabinet renewal raises interesting questions about the response of this Premier to the problems in this State. It is just one example of the Government being lazy and complacent in the face of major problems that confront the people they represent. Rather than shake up the Cabinet and inject some new enthusiasm, the Premier simply made cosmetic changes. That leads me to the whole question of leadership in Western Australia today and the fact that we are entering uncertain times as the world economic dislocations unfold. Western Australia needs clarity, purpose and stability within government. Can we say that exists in Western Australia today? Division exists in the Government over political strategy and personnel. These divisions are bubbling over on a daily basis and they are publicly known; we read about them in the paper almost every day. Both the Deputy Premier and the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party have said the Coalition needs to join with the Australian Labor Party in placing One Nation last. That is the one thing that would bring some certainty to Western Australian politics. It was described by the global economist and political adviser, David Hale, on "The 7.30 Report" on Monday as central to an appropriate response to current economic events. The one thing that a State Government can do to ensure the financial markets of continuing stability is the same thing that the Premier of Western Australia seems incapable of doing. It is simple and easy; what is the reason that he cannot do it? He cannot do it because the Western Australian Liberal Party has significant elements in it which want to do a deal with One Nation. Those elements within the Liberal Party are still running

the show. We are not getting a response because those deeply conservative and cynical forces are still running the Liberal Party in Western Australia. They believe that some sort of coalition relationship with One Nation will best serve their political interests. While they continue to straitjacket the Premier and the parliamentary party, we lose valuable time and opportunity to proclaim the values which bind our community together. At the same time the rest of the world is given a distinct impression that, for the Premier and the Government of Western Australia at least, One Nation is just another political party with which negotiations are possible, just like any other. I shall give the member for Cottesloe the last word on this subject. For economic, political and moral reasons, One Nation should be put last - it is as simple as that. Not only has the Premier failed to lead on this subject, he has also failed to lead his Cabinet. His reshuffle was a do-nothing exercise by a Premier concerned not to offend his cabinet colleagues because they might finish up as numbers for others seeking the top job. He missed an opportunity to give new life and purpose to his Government and is left with simmering and publicly displayed discontent on the back bench today.

Mr Court: Could I make a comment on the reshuffle? I think you were on leave at the time we did it. Your deputy leader made comments about who should be in and who should be out. I thought it rather humorous because I remember that when he was a Minister he had to escape via a fire escape to get away from some constituents who wished to put an issue to him. We had that member giving us advice on the people we should put into the Cabinet.

Dr GALLOP: That is a pretty incisive interjection!

Mr Ripper: I am flabbergasted.

Dr GALLOP: I call upon my colleague the member for Maylands to administer some medication to the member for Belmont because he is clearly so shocked and affected by that interjection.

Mr Ripper: I am absolutely devastated.

Dr GALLOP: The Premier's inaction on the disloyalty of the former Minister for Labour Relations has sent a clear message to everyone in the Parliamentary Liberal Party that anything goes. No Cabinet can work with a Minister if the Minister decides to become a law unto himself. Not only did the Minister for Labour Relations break the rules of collective responsibility by showing public dissent but also he chose to pursue a contentious issue by going around rather than through the Cabinet. Of course, the Premier is so committed to these principles of collective responsibility that the previous Minister for Labour Relations is still in the Cabinet! We can only note the anonymous comments that were made in the media about the views of other colleagues of the Premier's inaction on that question. The chickens are coming home to roost for the Cabinet and its capabilities. We see major areas of the Government's performance falling behind community expectations and Ministers not up to scratch in being able to find a way forward on those issues.

Mr Court: You are telling us what we are doing wrong but what will you do that is right?

Dr GALLOP: The public is fed up with the daily diet of press release politics from the Government and now wants some substance. The question is, are the Premier and his selected team capable of delivering that substance? I have referred already to the crime problem in the State and the belated efforts of the Government to recognise that it needs a whole of government approach.

Mr Cowan: When will you become the Leader of the Opposition and not merely a tool of the people in your office?

Dr GALLOP: Please explain that comment. I am puzzled by it.

Mr Cowan: Maybe you are puzzled, and that is probably half your difficulty. I will ask you the same question and you might be able to go back and reason it out: When will you become the Leader of the Opposition rather than the tool of the people who work in your office?

Dr GALLOP: That is a very interesting interjection by the Deputy Premier. What precisely did he have in mind when he used the word "tool"?

Mr Cowan: I want you to become something of substance.

Dr GALLOP: I see.

Mr Court: You are telling us everything that we are doing wrong. We want to hear what you are doing right.

Dr GALLOP: I have referred to the crime problem in the State and the belated efforts of the Government to recognise that it needs a whole of government approach. Two other issues need serious attention: The state of our public hospital system and its ability to reduce waiting lists for elective surgery, and the overall quality of core service delivery in the context of policies of privatisation and contracting out. The Government has sat back and let the health crisis worsen in Western Australia. Since the coalition was elected in 1993, the number of people waiting for

elective surgery has increased by a staggering 37 per cent, or 3 506 patients. That is despite the coalition's promise to rid the public hospital system of waiting lists altogether. We have also seen the Government play politics with people's lives in its funding game with Canberra.

Let us look at the facts of the deal the Government did with Canberra. The former Minister for Health, the member for Albany, rejected the initial health funding offer from the Commonwealth on the grounds that it was not sufficient to cope with the situation in Western Australia. In May of this year the member for Albany said that the State would require an additional \$100m to be returned annually to the State's public hospital system under the new five-year agreement. In rejecting the Federal Government's first offer the Government missed out on a \$125m funding incentive provided by the Federal Government. This incentive went to Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory, with Queensland receiving \$103m of the extra funds. Do you know what happened last week, Mr Acting Speaker? The Government willingly agreed to a new health funding agreement that provided the State with less than 20 per cent of what it said was necessary. The result of that pathetic political game that the State Government played is that it will receive less than 20 per cent of what it said it needed. To rub salt into the wounds, both the ACT and Queensland received an initial \$125m for signing the earlier offer and also got the new funding offer from the Commonwealth Government. If that is real strategic thinking on the part of the Premier and the Government of Western Australia on health funding for Western Australia, I want to know how the Premier defines those terms.

Let us go to the issue of privatisation and contracting out. The Government is well down its privatisation and contracting out path. Since it came into government we have seen it sell a raft of publicly owned assets for short term financial gain. The Government is also in the process of selling off parts of Westrail. It has made clear it is committed to the privatisation of parts or all of our energy utilities. The Opposition will argue on all of those issues with sophisticated economic arguments. For example, what logic is there in the Government's Westrail policies which will see potential users of the Westrail system get control of the tracks themselves? What economic logic is involved in that particular stroke of genius of the former Minister for Transport? The Government has also contracted out the provision of a number of services previously provided by the public sector. Examples exist in the provision of health and transport services. With new arrangements as a result of the contracting out of our bus system, we have received many complaints of buses failing to arrive on time or at all, of passengers having to navigate after drivers have become lost and of near collisions as a result of buses running red lights and driving on the wrong side of the road. Passengers wanting to complain about the service have been given the runaround, with Transperth's hotline referring people to the Department of Transport which in turn is advising them to contact the private bus companies.

When we raise these issues what we get from the Government is rhetoric. The basis on which it is following these policies is not scientific but ideological. The public is not convinced that it is benefiting from this central plank of government policy. I am not surprised that the Leader of the National Party left the Chamber when I raised this issue of privatisation and contracting out, because the basic source of concern within our community on this issue comes from communities outside the Perth metropolitan area. Community after community that we have visited in the past 12 months have raised their concerns. For example, virtually every local shire that we have visited in the past 12 months has said that what the former Minister for Transport has done to Main Roads is a disgrace.

Mr Court: That is interesting, because without exception every local authority I go to gives thanks for the additional road funding.

Dr GALLOP: They do say that it is good they are getting extra road money but they are very concerned about the way it is being administered. The Premier is willing to give one half of the argument but not the other.

Mr Court: You forgot one half of the argument.

Dr GALLOP: I acknowledge exactly what the Premier was saying. Communities are saying it is good that they are getting extra road funding but they are very concerned about Main Roads. They are concerned that the qualities that have been built up over the years are being lost. They are concerned about the procedures being followed to provide maintenance of the roads. They are concerned about the loss of the partnership they had with their local Main Roads officers with the roads in their shires. They do not agree with government policy in this area.

I believe that we live in an era in which people are correctly concerned that corners are being cut in core government services. People want to know that they will receive high quality core government services such as water, power, telecommunications and emergency services. We need those services to maintain our basic quality of life. Indeed, the proper delivery of those services is what makes a society civilised. In an article by Helen Meredith in *The Australian Financial Review* a former federal government adviser, Fred Argy, asked whether Governments are now at such arm's length that there is no way to ensure accountability. Of course, he was referring to the changing approach to risk management that has resulted from privatisation and contracting out.

Interestingly, in the United States, where the level of private sector ownership of infrastructure is higher than in any other similar jurisdiction, the President has set up a commission on critical infrastructure protection. This commission has pointed to the need for a much deeper understanding of the physical and cyber vulnerabilities of that country's basic infrastructure. The Americans are looking at the potential for terrorism, computer-based errors and so on to undermine the delivery of services.

Recent experiences in Australasia have been a cause for concern. They include the Auckland blackout, the cutting of Esso's pipeline from the Bass Strait fields and the Sydney water debacle in the past few weeks. Questions have been asked about the contracts entered into and whether they define and distribute responsibilities adequately. Questions have also been asked about the relevance of profit maximising and other commercial attitudes in these core areas.

It is not only the Labor Opposition that is raising these important questions. The Victorian state regulator, Dr John Tamblyn, has claimed that standards of electricity supply have fallen since privatisation in that State. In some cases, assets have been purchased for high prices and spending on maintenance has been delayed while companies have leveraged off what they have purchased. The Opposition has a responsibility to raise these concerns about the Government's mad rush to privatise and contract out every service it delivers. The public does not want a return to the bad old days of state-owned monopolies. There is no question about that and that is not the Labor Party's policy. The public accepts and wants competition because it provides some choice, and the Labor Party also accepts that. However, there is a difference between the Government's and the Opposition's attitude to these issues. The Opposition does not want to see a headlong and thoughtless rush into privatisation and contracting out that leaves in its wake unanswered questions and ongoing problems, the price of which might be devastating to public health and safety as well as to the economy. The Opposition adopts an appropriately cautious attitude and proposes that if there is to be any privatisation and contracting out we must be sure that the results are positive for the public of Western Australia.

This Government's attitude is that it will pursue these policies no matter what happens. We now have huge gaps in accountability in our system. If the Government does not understand that, it is another example of how out of touch it is with what the people are saying about the nature of the society in which we live.

Mr Court: Over eight years we have made a decision that we will not sell off Western Power; that is, over two terms of government. A Labor Government in New South Wales is desperate to sell its power utilities. The Labor Party is all over the shop about this issue.

Dr GALLOP: I will illustrate how all over the shop it is. A proposal was put forward under the rules and constitution of the Australian Labor Party in New South Wales to bring about a change, and the duly constituted body that can make those decisions said it did not want it to happen. There is no uncertainty about that. This Premier had the audacity to come into this Parliament a few minutes ago and say that the rules and organisation of the Australian Labor Party are similar to those of One Nation. What an insult to the people who work for the Labor Party.

Mr Court: You said that we can sell the new power station.

Dr GALLOP: No, I did not. The Premier asked me whether the Labor Government's policy on the new Collie power station was privatisation. I pointed out that at the time we were building a new power station with private capital.

Mr Court: So, the private sector could own it while the Labor Party was in government. I therefore assume that the private sector can own it while the coalition is in government. Your spokesperson has just said that you will not support selling either of the power stations.

Dr GALLOP: We will not support the sale. Unlike the Premier, the Opposition monitors developments in our communities, works out what is in the public interest and responds to the facts. That is where we differ on these issues.

Mr Barnett: There is no doubt about that.

Dr GALLOP: No, there is absolutely no doubt about it. Our good friend the Leader of the National Party is willing to give advice to his federal colleagues about privatisation and to tell them that they are pushing it too fast and too far. However, when it comes to developments in this State, in which he has some influence, he remains silent. That is why the National Party is so much on the nose throughout Western Australia.

The people are telling the Opposition that they are not sure about privatisation and contracting out because standards are being affected. Nor do they want the all-important access - so crucial in such a large State that has so many remote and isolated communities - sidelined to the status of a community service obligation. Having spoken to the people in these communities we have discovered that they are not convinced about this approach. They follow these issues with a great deal of interest and passion and they do not like the concept of the Government's simply having

a community service obligation; they want it stated more strongly and built into the very heart of government service provision.

As the member for Cockburn said, we must look carefully at the way our basic electricity infrastructure is provided throughout the State and at the relationship between public ownership and control.

Mr Court: Your current position is that you will not sell any of the assets.

Dr GALLOP: What is the Government's position?

Mr Court: We have already said over two terms of government that we will not sell Western Power. That is the irony of your argument.

Dr GALLOP: At the next election the people will have a very clear choice.

Mr Barnett: You have two years to think about it, so you might be able to sort it out and you might have a policy by then.

Dr GALLOP: We are doing very well.

Mr Barnett: I hope you do as well on all the other issues.

Dr GALLOP: The Minister for Energy is out of touch on this issue, although he is not out of touch about One Nation. I will give him 100 per cent for his attitude to One Nation but nowhere near the same mark for his policies on privatisation and contracting out.

We live in a period in which the public wants the commitment to equality of access and high standards of service to be given a much higher priority in the decision-making process. We have been through an era in which the chief ideology has been to break up state monopolies, privatise, contract out and provide for more choice. There is no question that has led to some good. However, as an experiment in public policy it has caused many questions to be left hanging and the emergence of many problems throughout western countries to which we must respond.

This Government does not even know those questions are being asked; it does not recognise the legitimacy of those questions. However, the Australian Labor Party says that standards of service delivery and equality of access to these basic services should be given a much higher priority in the Government's decision-making process. I do not see any recognition of that in the words or actions of the coalition Government. It simply goes full steam ahead. Therein lies one of the major problems in Western Australia today. We need a new approach to the government of the State that is balanced, inclusive, systematic and sustainable. How does this Government operate? We will raise in Parliament, as a matter of serious debate, the degree of system and science that went into the decision to build another bridge alongside the Narrows Bridge rather than simply to extend it. What science and system went into that decision or the decision to spend \$100m on a convention centre?

Just as we ask our government agencies to set performance targets and develop indicators for themselves, we should be asking that of our Government as a whole. The sustainable Seattle indicators, the Oregon benchmarks and the Jacksonville quality of life indicators in the United States are examples of how jurisdictions similar to the State of Western Australia have tried to examine the future of their society. They have consulted their people about the balance between social, economic and environmental objectives. They have established action plans to create policies to carry out those objectives and have monitored their performance by the development of indicators.

That is what good government is all about at the turn of the century. That is what we should be seeing here in Western Australia. It is interesting that major international institutions like the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have taken steps to revise their measures of progress by having certain components of the gross domestic product, pollution and congestion reflected, for example, as costs rather than benefits.

In the United States a group called Redefining Progress has developed the genuine progress indicator. This index includes more than 20 aspects of contemporary economic life. The GPI is like a true balance sheet. Measures such as the distribution of income are adjusted; others, such as the value of household and community work, are added; while others, such as crime related costs, are subtracted. The index is based on the same consumption data as the GDP but revises those data to reflect a more accurate picture of the component's contribution to the community's wellbeing.

Inherent in the GPI is the understanding that quality is just as important as quantity. This, of course, leads to complex issues such as value judgments in measuring quality. However, a value judgment works both ways. In measuring the GDP, it is just as much a value judgment to leave out factors such as social and environmental costs, as to include them. Extensive work on alternative indicators is also being undertaken in this country by the Australia Institute For

Public Policy, a non-profit public policy research centre. It has developed an Australian index of sustainable economic welfare known as a genuine progress indicator which highlights that sustainability is the key to developing a GPI.

The index has 25 components and, like the US index described earlier, some of the components, such as weighted personal income and the value of household and community work, are positive; while others, such as the costs of crime, commuting, noise, air pollution, transport and industrial accidents, are negative. We must not forget that a healthy gross state product does not automatically translate into a better quality of life.

As I have discussed, an over-reliance on the gross state product not only provides us with a limited and misleading definition of economic wellbeing in the community but also guides the policy progress and debate in the wrong direction.

It is interesting that when the Australia Institute formulated its index of progress in Australia, it compared it to the GDP and reached a fascinating conclusion in which all of us who are interested in good public policy should be interested. In examining the nature of our society and whether life is getting better or worse we can compare the GDP with the GPI.

Until the 1970s both indexes moved upwards at the same rate. However, after the 1970s the gross domestic product has continued to rise, while the genuine progress indicator has dipped. The experience of many people in western societies is that over the past couple of decades policy makers have not addressed the range of issues that should be addressed in our community. They want a better basis on which to evaluate the performance of government. That is why there is restlessness in the community. That is why people are turning to minor parties and looking to the major parties to have a more sophisticated approach to policy making.

The Opposition has taken on board these ideas. It notes that no reference is made to any of them in the way the Government proceeds to set up its machinery of government. Western Australia is not a financial machine in which the people are cogs. People wish to see a balance in our society and our economy and between big business and small business. Those of us on the Labor side have been working hard with many small businesses in our electorates because of the problems with the current Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Act. They have problems convincing their landlords that they have not only rights, but also responsibilities to their communities and their tenants.

The balance under this Government has swung in favour of larger businesses and landlords. The community wants a better balance between work and leisure. How many people working 12 hour shifts have come to members opposite and described their lives in some of the mining towns in our State? How many people have doorknocked in those mining towns during the day and found nothing happening because people were asleep? It is impossible for them to engage in dialogue and to participate in the community.

Mr Thomas: They are not too happy when you wake them up either.

Dr GALLOP: That is precisely what I was implying. Those people want balance. As politicians we must develop policies that will give that balance. We must move away from pursuing economic objectives independently from social and environmental objectives. It is almost impossible to do that effectively if we are confined to measuring progress on the basis of only narrowly conceived economic outputs. Even the World Bank recognises that pollution is a cost to our economy rather than a benefit.

That is the thinking we need as we come to the end of this century. This is the approach to government we need as we lay the foundations for our children and grandchildren for the future. This is the approach that will better equip the Western Australian Government to provide answers to questions posed by our young people as they look to the future.

However, it is sad to report that just as the problems of our world become more complex we have a Government that has become more insular and more defensive. It gave us rhetoric on the economy when we want and need information.

Mr Court: What do you mean, rhetoric? This Government is giving the State the strongest performing economy in the country.

Dr GALLOP: What about a bit of information from Treasury about future economic forecasts?

Mr Court: The Leader of the Opposition told the Government that it got all its forecasts wrong.

Dr GALLOP: No, I would like the Government to tell us what the Treasury has told it about those forecasts.

Mr Court: It is telling the Government that it will come in on those forecasts.

Dr GALLOP: That is last year.

Mr Court: No, this year.

Dr GALLOP: In 1998-99? When did it last tell the Government that? When did Treasury last give the Premier that advice?

Mr Court: What day is it today?

Dr GALLOP: Wednesday.

Mr Court: Sunday night.

Dr GALLOP: We will be pursuing the Premier to get that advice from Treasury. In relation to One Nation, the Government gives us cynical power politics when we need strength of purpose and bipartisanship. In relation to crime, it has taken some steps in the right direction but it remains to be seen if they will be anything more than window dressing. In that context, I remind the House of its experience with the whole of government approaches of this Premier in tackling drugs and graffiti. In relation to the Cabinet, we have had inaction rather than action thus leaving an uncertainty at the very heart of Government decision making in Western Australia today.

Amendment to Motion

Dr GALLOP: I move -

That the following words be added to the motion:

but we regret to inform His Excellency that the Premier has failed to provide the leadership the State needs in these complex and uncertain times by retaining in the Cabinet non-performing Ministers, undermining collective cabinet responsibility and refusing to take a principled stand in relation to preferences for One Nation.

MR KOBELKE (Nollamara) [12.41 pm]: The Leader of the Opposition's speech clearly indicates what this State needs in the way of leadership but what we see from the Premier is a total lack of leadership. The excellent speech of the Leader of the Opposition addressed the fundamental issues this Government is failing to face up to.

I will approach the amendment by referring to something that happened last week in my electorate of Nollamara. A constituent came to see me because he was upset with the direction of the Government and the range of problems besetting our community. This gentleman is not someone who normally visits a member of Parliament. He did not have a problem he wanted me to address; he just felt that things in Western Australia were getting so bad that he had to express his concern. I appreciated his taking the time to come to see me. This gentleman struck me as someone who is interested in politics and current affairs; he is a keen follower of what goes on in the media. He was rational and articulate but he was very disillusioned. He is my age, or perhaps a little older, and feels that he made a contribution to our community through a range of sporting groups when his children were growing up. What he sees all around him now has led him to feel that the State is simply falling apart. When he looks to see who is doing something about it, he can only discern the total lack of political leadership from this Premier and this Government. He also feels that Prime Minister Howard shows that lack of leadership at the national level.

The Leader of the Opposition has already touched on the cabinet reshuffle. It was in that area that the Premier could have tried to do something to kick start his Government and get it to address the major issues facing the State. However, all we got from the Premier was a statement that the ship of State is sailing well and there is no need for any change. For the constituent who came to see me and the people I speak with in the electorate of Nollamara, that is unbelievable. To the ordinary residents of Western Australia, this Government appears to be a Government without leadership and one which is incapable of dealing with the major issues confronting the State.

We get doublespeak from this Premier and this Government. When things are falling apart, the Premier says everything is going well. When a project or issue has been a complete failure, this Government says it is a success. The people of Western Australia are coming to understand this. They are extremely concerned that no-one is at the helm of this ship of State. The Deputy Premier's interjection about the backroom boys pulling the strings may be true of this Government; it is clearly not true of the Leader of the Opposition. The current ministers and the Premier are not taking responsibility for what is happening in this State. All we get is rhetoric. Neither the Premier nor, in most cases, his Ministers are prepared to stand up and address the issues.

I will touch very briefly on the issues raised by my constituent. One was the horrendous issue of the crime besetting people in the suburbs of Perth. What is this Government doing about it? Crime has escalated through the period of the Court Government, which is in its sixth year. The manifestations or trends change from time to time, but the incidence of a range of crimes has been increasing for the life of this Government. It took off astronomically from

the time this Government took office. The Government has not necessarily caused this but the people know it has not been able to tackle the soaring crime rate in any practical way. The Government has sat on its hands.

This Government has created an incredible problem with police morale. It has not been able to manage the force. We acknowledge that it has provided extra resources. However, the way it has handled the matter has resulted in the loss of confidence of the Western Australia Police Service. A senior officer appeared on the television news last week or the week before and indicated that the huge problem we have with crime has to be fixed by the community taking responsibility for it. I do not wish to make a negative comment about one officer because he may have been misrepresented in the Press or the comment may have been put in an unfortunate way. That statement and the way it was projected incensed people. The officer may have meant that we need to promote community policing and I fully support that. We need to involve people but the way the message came across was that this Government is incapable of dealing with law and order issues and expects the ordinary citizens to fix the problem. That is how people read it. It may not have been intended but that was how the message was conveyed.

We see this time and time again from the Premier and his Ministers. The Premier made a comment earlier today about graffiti. He told us he is doing something about it. He is not doing anything effective about it. The City of Stirling is doing something in my area. It has stepped in and is spending huge amounts of ratepayers' dollars because this Government is incompetent. This Government did nothing about graffiti, so the City of Stirling has to do something about it.

Mr Cunningham: It is doing a very good job.

Mr KOBELKE: Yes, it is doing a very good job. The Premier is trying to put a spin on it as if he is doing something about graffiti and law and order. All the Premier does is form a committee to put some gloss on it and sell his point of view. This Premier does not try to address the issues.

The gentleman who came into my office also raised his concern about what is happening in our hospitals. This Government made an election commitment to cut the waiting lists. Has the Premier fired his Minister for failing so abysmally with the waiting list blowing out so incredibly? Where is the leadership of the Premier when a major election promise is thrown out the window, leaving thousands of Western Australians to experience unnecessary suffering and, in a small number of cases, possibly death, through the incompetence of this Government and its Minister? What does the Premier do? Is there any leadership? No. His answer is, "We will just reshuffle the deck chairs on the *Titanic* and see if we can get the public to believe we are doing something." The people of Western Australia are far more intelligent than this Premier gives them credit for. They can see through this Government. It is a Government without leadership, and without leadership it is not able to address these fundamental problems currently besetting the citizens of Western Australia.

The third area on which I will touch is the Premier's total inadequacy in dealing with One Nation. Again, it reflects the lack of leadership of the Premier. It was stated in *The West Australian* of 25 July that -

... Mr Barnett said the Liberal Party should make a clear statement at its party conference today that it would not give One Nation preferences.

"It's a moral issue but also an economic one for WA and a political one for the (Court) Government," ...

The Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party can see that for moral, economic and political reasons the Premier should be taking a clear, unequivocal stand to put One Nation last in Liberal Party preferences. However, what do we have? We have a Premier who cannot show that leadership. That is reflected in the polls. These polls are a gauge of public sentiment at the time the polls are taken and that can change radically from week to week and month to month. The poll published in *The West Australian* of 25 July asking, "If a State election was held this week who would you vote for?" showed that the Liberal Party vote was down to 29 per cent. The Labor Party vote stood at 42 per cent. That is a clear picture of the people's perception of the total lack of leadership from this Premier, which resulted in the Liberal vote going down to 29 per cent and the One Nation vote increasing to 17 per cent. The bulk of that 17 per cent comes from the Liberal Party. Liberal voters are deserting the Liberal Party because of the lack of leadership. That is a reflection of what happened in Queensland. The polls in Victoria do not show that because Premier Kennett has taken a strong stand. Liberal voters who may be a bit disillusioned have a strong leader saying, "Do not desert us because you will be buying a pig in a poke." That leadership is trying to hold voters to the Liberal Party. However, in Western Australia we do not have that leadership.

All members will be aware of the fable about the king who was convinced by his advisers to wear a suit of clothes that did not exist. When the king went parading down the street without any clothes on, the populace could see that the king had no clothes. The king went on with the rhetoric about the fine garments and tried to fool himself and others, but the people could see that the king had no clothes. We have a Premier without any clothes. Despite the huge amount of taxpayers' money that is spent on media staff, paid advertising and the promotion of this Government,

the public realises that it has a Premier without any clothes. The Premier can try to put all the spin he wants on issues; he can say that black is white and that night is day, but the people of this State know that we have a Premier without any clothes; a Premier who tries to convince us that he is a leader, when everyone knows he is not a leader's bootlace.

What we saw from the Leader of the Opposition was what we can expect of a leader; someone who can address the issues, unlike the Premier who, through his inane interjections, reveals that he does not have a grasp of the issues. The Premier cannot take up the key issues facing this State and find solutions. We will be watching very closely his suggestion that this Government, which is in its sixth year, form a committee to try to do something about the state of law and order in Western Australia. The current rate of burglary, assaults and people entering other people's homes, as occurred again last night according to this morning's news, is unacceptable. This is a Government that cannot ensure that the Ministers are working effectively in their portfolios. Clearly, some Ministers are doing that in a range of areas; however, when Ministers cannot handle their portfolios and make major mistakes, the Premier is not capable of pulling them into line. The Premier could not undertake a reshuffle of his Cabinet in order to get his Government going again. Perhaps I am wrong. Perhaps the Premier judged that the talent on his backbench was so poor that he had no choice.

Mr Marshall: You never change a winning team. I think it is a winning team.

Mr KOBELKE: I am glad to hear from the member for Dawesville that the Government of Western Australia is a winning team and is doing something about things. If the member for Dawesville thinks that the current crime rate is acceptable, he is living on another planet. The member is living on another planet if he thinks that this Government is kicking any goals with law and order, unless of course the Liberal Party has received kickbacks from the criminal element in this State. Is that what the member is talking about?

Point of Order

Dr HAMES: I think that statement was disgraceful and the member should withdraw it.

Mr Brown: It did not defame a member. It just defamed a party.

Mr Johnson: We were not receiving kickbacks; you remember that.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Barron-Sullivan): The statement by the member for Nollamara is possibly approaching that line, and in view of the better interests of this Chamber, I ask whether the member is prepared to withdraw it.

Mr KOBELKE: I did not make a statement; I asked a question. How can I withdraw a question? Mr Acting Speaker, I will repeat the question so you can make a clear judgment. The member for Dawesville indicated that this Government was doing well. I asked him whether the Government was doing well with regard to law and order and crime in this State, and I said, "If you think you are doing well, one could ask whether you are getting some money from the criminal element in this State because they are the only people who are benefiting." That is all I asked.

Mrs van de Klashorst: You used the word "kickback".

Mr KOBELKE: Kickbacks or money from criminals because, as far as everyone in this State is concerned, the state of law and order in Western Australia is totally beyond the pale. The member for Dawesville's suggestion that it is all right is making a mockery of this House - either that, or he knows something that I do not know.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The member will recall that I did not direct him to withdraw that statement; I said that in the interests of the good operation of the Chamber he might consider doing so. It is my opinion, supported by advice I have received, that no point of order is involved as no direct accusation was made.

Debate Resumed

Mr KOBELKE: The interjection from the member for Dawesville is an example of the inane comments from members opposite which indicate that they have no regard for the people of this State. If members opposite are so locked away in their cocoons that they do not understand the real worries and concerns of people about crime in this State, they should not be sitting in here and taking their pay. The Government has failed to address the crime issue. Similarly, people in this Government need to start addressing issues in health, transport and a range of other areas. They are clearly not capable of doing so without leadership.

Debate adjourned until a later stage, on motion by Mr Ripper (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

[Continued on next page.]

Sitting suspended from 1.01 to 2.00 pm

[Questions without notice taken.]**BILLS - APPROPRIATIONS**

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

1. Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 3).
2. Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 4).
3. Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority Bill.
4. Child Welfare Amendment Bill.
5. Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia Bill.
6. Gas Pipelines Access (Western Australia) Bill.
7. Gender Reassignment Bill (No 2) 1997.
8. Petroleum Safety Bill.
9. Port Authorities Bill.
10. School Education Bill 1997.
11. Transport Co-ordination Amendment Bill.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Amendment to Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR RIPPER (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.38 pm]: I support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. On 28 July I watched television coverage of the announcement of the Premier's cabinet reshuffle. The first person I saw was a grim faced former Minister for Labour Relations protesting that he had been the victim of a payback as a result of a principled decision he had made on the issue of smoking in public places. I was then somewhat surprised to see a fairly bleak looking member for Joondalup appear on the television screen. I cannot remember what he said, only that he looked extremely disappointed.

I was further surprised to see the member for Ningaloo appear in an interview. I remember that he said he was disappointed not for himself but for all the other good members who had missed out on Cabinet positions. That was a very interesting television coverage of the cabinet reshuffle. It marked the conclusion of an inglorious saga for the Premier and his Government.

We have seen a Government drifting with no firm sense of direction. We have seen new social and economic difficulties confronting the State. We have seen a Premier demonstrably too weak to arrest the slide in his Government's support, too weak to take control and too weak to assert a sense of direction for the Government. We have seen the Premier protect his supporters in the cabinet reshuffle and he has put the protection of his own factional interests above the interests of the public. Even the timing of the cabinet reshuffle reveals this drift in the Government and this lack of strength of the Premier. A week before the cabinet reshuffle, he told journalists that it was two months away. Two days before the cabinet reshuffle, he told journalists that the reshuffle was two weeks away, and, of course, it happened only two days after that announcement. We saw the cabinet reshuffle brought forward twice because of the difficulties in the Government, and because the Premier was unable to confront those difficulties other than by heading off the protest and the dissent.

The SPEAKER: Order members! Despite the very good voice of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, it is difficult to hear. Too many conversations are going on within the Chamber.

Mr RIPPER: The only way in which the Premier could deal with the growing dissent within his own Government - with the frustrations of ambitious backbenchers denied their place in the sun and with the growing consensus that the Cabinet needed rejuvenation - was to bring forward his reshuffle and to have it all over and done with before that dissent impacted upon the decisions which were made. We ended up with a Clayton's reshuffle, with no replacement of non performing Ministers in the Cabinet; we ended up with nothing to assure the public that it might see a better performance in government from a new Cabinet. Some members opposite may shake their heads, but the comments we make about this cabinet reshuffle, the drift in the Government, the non performing Ministers and the need for

rejuvenation in the Government are the same as some members opposite are saying. They were quite voluble in their comments to journalists. I quote an unnamed Liberal MP who was reported in *The Australian* of 28 July, 1998 -

If you've a bad hand in poker, you don't just reshuffle them, you toss some in and hope for a better hand.

That is a great comment. I would be fascinated to know who said it. I would like the member opposite who said that to put up his hand and admit it. It reminded me of the member for Dawesville; it had the larrikin ring that his quotes might normally be expected to have. I also thought that the member for Hillarys might have been responsible for the remark. Can I have confirmation from the member for Dawesville; was it he? Did he make that wonderful statement?

Mr Marshall: To whom are you talking?

Mr RIPPER: To the member for Dawesville. I hope I have the member's seat right. He is the member for Dawesville, is he not?

Mr Marshall: I thought you said Hillarys.

Mr RIPPER: I withdraw any allegation that the member for Dawesville was sharp enough to make that comment! Clearly that is not the case; it could not possibly have been the member for Dawesville.

Mr Marshall: I thought that sounded like a remark I would make, but it was too smart for me. I did not think that one up. That is a good one.

Mr RIPPER: The member denies it! While we are having trouble pinning down the anonymous Liberal who made that comment, we have a senior National Party person making a somewhat similar comment on record; the number two man in the Government was reported in the same article in *The Australian* as saying -

It is clear the State Government has to look for some form of rejuvenation.

We second that motion.

Mr Kierath: Who said that?

Mr RIPPER: The Deputy Premier and Leader of the National Party. The Opposition is very pleased to support that piece of analysis. Liberal backbenchers, and the leader of the second party in the Government and Deputy Premier, made those comments. A consensus existed among the commentators that something needed to be done to bring some new blood into the Government. To give a sample of those commentators' opinions, I shall quote from the editorial in *The West Australian* of 28 July. The opening sentence reads -

Premier Richard Court is in a very small minority if he believes that his Cabinet team is the best he can muster and is performing well.

I suggest he is in a very small minority on his own side of Parliament if that is his belief. Backbenchers, the National Party leader, commentators and editorialists all agree that non performing Ministers remain in this Cabinet. They all agree that better qualified people are on the back benches of the governing parties to take their place, and they all agree that the Premier has been weak in his cabinet reshuffle. The Opposition also agrees with that analysis. Cabinet needs to be rejuvenated and the Premier has failed to meet that challenge. Only the Premier appears to differ from the analysis of everyone else who has looked at this situation. I say "appears to differ" because it is not clear whether the Premier disagrees with that assessment or whether he has not had the strength of leadership to implement the outcome of his own considerations. Let us look at the evidence. An article by Ann Burns two days before the cabinet reshuffle reads -

. . . Premier Richard Court rejected outright the suggestion that any of his cabinet team was performing below par.

Even the day before the cabinet reshuffle, he is quoted in the Ann Burns' article as stating -

I believe we have a good ministerial team . . .

He batted away all the criticism about performance of his team right up until the day of the reshuffle. However, after the reshuffle and the decisions, he finally appeared to concede to his critics. Another quote from the Ann Burns article reads -

Some ministers need to lift their performance, that's been made clear to them.

We, on this side of the House, would be fascinated to know to which Ministers the Premier was referring and which Ministers have been told that they need to lift their game. Perhaps we have been remiss in not asking that question at question time. We could give the Premier a list if he would like, but we would be fascinated to know his view of

his own Ministers' performances. It has not been particularly clear in the discussions surrounding the cabinet reshuffle because in the time leading up to the cabinet reshuffle, the Premier denied that any Minister was performing badly. He conducted the reshuffle and then, having made no significant changes, conceded that some Ministers may not be performing properly.

It is not a very glorious episode in the Premier's leadership of the Liberal Party and his premiership. It appears that, in the end, the Premier has been forced to agree with his critics, but he has still not been able to rejuvenate his Cabinet. Why is that? I offer the analysis of yet another coalition backbencher. Maybe the member for Hillarys made this remark. It is reported in *The Australian* of 28 July. The answer to why the Premier agreed with his critics but then did not reshuffle his Cabinet was given by a backbencher. The article reads -

"It's pathetic, he just can't bring himself to confront people," one backbencher said.

Was it the member for Hillarys?

Mr Johnson: No it was not.

Mr RIPPER: Would anyone on the government benches like to own up to that remark? Perhaps I have been unfair to the members for Dawesville and Hillarys. Perhaps the real culprits are prepared to remain anonymous while we accuse coalition backbenchers who in reality have probably been totally loyal to the Premier. That comment, whoever made it, really does sum up the situation: The Liberal backbencher, the community, all the commentators and the Opposition say that the reshuffle is pathetic. It is a Clayton's reshuffle; a reshuffle Governments make when they are not having a reshuffle.

Who are the cabinet Ministers who have been criticised by their colleagues? According to newspaper reports, they have been criticised as too old, too arrogant, unable to answer a simple question and/or as failures. I am not sure precisely about whom these members of the Liberal Party are talking but we think that there are some obvious candidates. We can look at the performance of the Attorney General, the former Minister for Police and the former Minister for Health. We see these people presiding over failures in key service delivery areas. There are not many portfolios bigger than the Health portfolio. There are not many portfolios that are more significant for the community in Western Australia at the moment than those covering law and order. Clearly there have been failures in those areas. If the Government does not think that it has failed in law and order, why has the Premier been forced to establish a Cabinet war council, which he will head up, to deal with the crime issue? Clearly the Government is conceding that it needs to do better in law and order. If the Government does not think it has failed in the area of health, it is not consulting its constituents. All of us, day after day, have people coming into our constituent offices complaining about the waiting times for hospital treatment. The Premier would be unable to convince the community that he has succeeded in health and law and order. What has he done with those Ministers who presided over failures in key service delivery areas? The Attorney General remains in his position; the Minister for Police has been shifted and so has the Minister for Health but they have been rewarded with alternative key service delivery areas - in fact their portfolios have been swapped. No-one can say that any action has been taken against either the former Minister for Police or the former Minister for Health for the crises in the portfolios over which they presided. They have simply been given equivalent responsibilities at the same level of seniority.

Mr Day: Why not tell us about what the Belmont police are doing in your area? You must agree that they are taking very positive action.

Mr RIPPER: I do appreciate the work of the Belmont police in my electorate. I am supportive of the initiatives undertaken by Sergeant Fred Heald, the officer in charge of that station. He is a particularly progressive police officer who has some sensible approaches to reducing the crime rate. However, even though the Minister is now the Minister for Health and probably should not be arguing this issue, he will not be able to convince the public that his time as Minister for Police was a time of success in the Government's fight against crime. That is why the Premier has had to respond with a Cabinet war council to deal with crime issues.

There are others in the list apart from the former Minister for Health and the former Minister for Police. The former Minister for Labour Relations cannot accept the convention of cabinet solidarity. He should have been sacked at the time when he defied Cabinet on the question of the regulations which should apply to smoking in public places. He has been given the political equivalent of a community services order. Nothing serious has been done to him in comparison with the punishment normally applied to people who cannot accept cabinet solidarity; in fact, he is still demonstrating sackable behaviour. The Premier reshuffled him and he went on television and alleged that it was a payback and he was being punished for having taken a principled stand. He demonstrably cannot accept the disciplines of cabinet Government. That he is still getting away with his continued defiance of the Premier and of cabinet conventions is further evidence of the Premier's lack of grip on his Government and of a failure of leadership.

This leaves us with the last of the opposition candidates for relegation to the backbenches, the Minister for Family

and Children's Services. I am not really sure what I can say. This Minister is clearly believed by her colleagues to be the one who cannot answer a simple question. We see that day after day in this House. We know that she survives only by the Premier's patronage. We know that her continued presence in the Cabinet as a result of the Premier's patronage weakens his position daily. Every question time she fails to answer an opposition question in anything like satisfactory terms, people know that she is in the Cabinet because of the Premier's patronage, which simply weakens his leadership position.

The Premier cannot face down his factional supporters in the Parliament; he cannot put the public interest or indeed even the performance of his Government over the interests of his supporters in his party room. The Premier also cannot face down his factional supporters in the Liberal Party outside Parliament. For all the Premier's rhetoric about One Nation's foolish and dangerous policies, for all his formal commitment to antiracism and multiculturalism, the Premier cannot commit his party to putting One Nation last on Liberal Party how-to-vote cards in all electoral contests at federal and state levels.

I want to remind the Premier of the reason that One Nation must be put last. It is not simply a matter of attitudes to immigration and to multiculturalism; it is a matter of attitude which can be described only as racist. I will quote from the infamous inaugural speech of Pauline Hanson to the House of Representatives. I want to remind the House of what she said in that speech because this should reinforce in our minds the phenomenon we are dealing with. She said -

I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians.

Further on in the speech she said -

They have their own culture and religious, form ghettos and do not assimilate. Of course, I will be called racist but, if I can invite whom I want into my home, then I should have the right to have a say in who comes into my country.

She does not even seem to mind being called a racist, given those remarks. Further on she said that she quotes from Arthur Calwell, when she says -

Japan, India, Burma, Ceylon and every new African nation are fiercely anti-white and anti one another. Do we want or need any of these people here? I am the one red-blooded Australian who says no and who speaks for 90% of Australians.

She also said -

I have no hesitation in echoing the words of Arthur Calwell.

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [3.00 pm]: I did not think the Opposition would have the nerve to move an amendment along these lines. I heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition criticising cabinet Ministers involved in a reshuffle. I heard him on radio giving a list of the Ministers he wanted to see replaced and I nearly fell out of my car laughing. I will tell members why. I can recall walking down St Georges Terrace when I was in opposition and I came across a group of young mothers. They greeted me and I asked them what they were doing. They said that they were trying to see the Minister for Community Services. I asked why they had not seen him and they said that he had fled via the fire escape. He would not talk to a group of mothers who had a legitimate concern. I did not believe the story, but I later established that it was true. This Deputy Leader of the Opposition - the then Minister for Community Services - would not front up to a group of mothers who wanted some help, but he has gone on radio criticising current Ministers.

Again during his term as Minister, a Uniting Church minister was doing a live radio interview and a ministerial adviser told him he could not say what he was saying and grabbed the phone from him. Afterwards the Minister said it was a trivial incident and that there was a misunderstanding. That is an illustration of the tremendous rapport he had. He wonders why I nearly fell out of my car laughing. The Deputy Leader - the then Minister - circulated a letter saying that there had been no cuts in funding for disability services when they had been cut by \$2.5m. He was really on top of his portfolio. After six years in opposition, he now has the experience to say who should come and go in a ministry.

It does not make me feel good to raise these matters, but there was never a Minister more out of touch with his portfolio than the Deputy Leader when he was a Minister. He is criticising the current Minister for Family and Children's Services, who runs a portfolio and looks after five children and still does a much better job than he did.

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: I know it is fair game to have a go at Ministers and to point out who is performing and who is not.

However, before the Deputy Leader claims to be the expert he should remember what happened when he was a Minister. He should be the last person to judge anyone's performance.

Mr Ripper: I was a good Minister.

Mr COURT: He was a good Minister who resorted to using a fire escape to avoid facing those young mothers! If they had not seen me they would not have had anyone to listen to their concerns.

The second part of this motion refers to collective responsibility. Members opposite would not know what that is. They never accepted collective cabinet responsibility for the WA Inc debacle. One of the Labor Ministers would go back to Geraldton and say that, although he was a member of the Cabinet, he had nothing to do with those decisions. Members opposite got into trouble because they would not accept collective cabinet responsibility, but they have a motion before the Parliament today directed at a Government that accepts it.

The third point of the motion relates to preferences. The Labor Party is putting itself forward as the principled political party on race and immigration matters. I mentioned the other day how the current Leader of the Opposition saw fit to put Australians Against Further Immigration ahead of the Liberal Party in the Lindsay by-election. Kim Beazley said at the time that it was done for the convenience of the voters.

What is happening with the Australia First party? This is very interesting and of more significance in Western Australia - certainly in Kalgoorlie, which is most of Western Australia, because the Australia First party holds that seat. The state secretary of the ALP has said that the party will not make a decision about preferences until nominations have been finalised and the candidates are known.

Let us consider Australia First. Australia First policy is to cut immigration numbers and to scrap the government funded and institutionalised policy of multiculturalism, and it has been described in the media as avowedly to the right of Hanson's One Nation party. However, the state secretary of the ALP says that is a different issue. The Leader of the Opposition said today that Campbell is irrelevant; he is a footnote. He is a federal member of Parliament. The member for Eyre wants this person, who is irrelevant and a footnote, back in the Labor Party although he has policies avowedly to the right of One Nation's policies. What is the position of members opposite?

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: In the recent Queensland election, in a number of seats the ALP -

The SPEAKER: Order! This is a very interesting debate and many members are being drawn into it. However, there are too many interjections from both sides, including from Ministers.

Mr COURT: In many seats in the Queensland election the ALP put Australia First, the Australian Reform Party and the Australian Shooters Party ahead of the Liberal Party. That was only a couple of weeks ago.

The party that claims the high moral ground on race and immigration issues has yet to make up its mind what it will do with preferences for Australia First. It will be very interesting to see where this party, which members opposite say is irrelevant and a footnote, will stand.

Mr Ripper: What will you do with preferences for Australia First?

Mr COURT: The Deputy Leader would love to know. The Liberal Party has had a consistent position: It waits until it knows who are the candidates before a decision is made by the state executive.

Members opposite are saying that they can make these decisions beforehand, but when it comes to a party that is seen to be to the right of One Nation on race and immigration matters, they cannot make up their minds.

Mrs Roberts: What a load of rot!

Mr COURT: What will members opposite do?

In the light of the three points I made, members opposite are the last people who should be making judgments on cabinet reshuffles. They do not know what collective cabinet responsibility is. When it comes to being a principled political party on race and immigration matters, members opposite make up the most hypocritical group I have seen.

MR BROWN (Bassendean) [3.09 pm]: I refer to the point raised in the amendment concerning the Liberal and National Parties' refusal to take a principled stand on allocating preferences to One Nation last. I will not deal with the economic issues related this matter. However, on the basis of human decency I will deal with why it is right to put One Nation last in preferences.

The Premier said that the Government will make a decision on One Nation preferences when all the candidates for

seats are known. That means the Government is open to put candidates who stand for the principles of One Nation ahead of other parties in the forthcoming federal election. What does that mean for Western Australia, particularly for the citizens who come from Asia or who are of Aboriginal descent? It means that, potentially, this Government is prepared to support candidates who stand for One Nation views; that is, although the Premier says he does not support the policies and views expressed by that party, he undermines that position and contradicts himself by saying that, in electoral terms, the Government may support a party that stands for the abhorrence for which One Nation stands.

As correctly put by the Leader of the House and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, there are some issues on which we need to draw a line in the sand. Race is one of those issues. I feel strongly about this matter because a number of my closest friends are of Chinese origin. Over the years I have learned a great deal from them on etiquette, business relationships, gaining wisdom, dealing with people and turning situations into a win, win result. I find deeply offensive any party that gets up in either this or any other Parliament and talks in derogatory terms about the so-called potential Asianisation of Australia. I do not know what the Asianisation of Australia means. Does it mean that somehow we should shun people who in the main happen to be well educated, bilingual and good citizens, and who have made a great contribution to business, the arts, academia, and whatever else we want to mention? Is that somehow not Australian? Is that somehow Asianising this country? I do not know what Asianisation means, unless it means, as promoted by One Nation and its disgusting leader, that somehow we should look down on people who happen to look different. Does it mean therefore, that they are not welcome in this country?

This is a despicable position. This is not a question of what is in the best interests of parties, nor is it about a single election. This is a position about principle. This is a position about the values we hold very close to us. I am sure that nobody in this Parliament is old enough to have served in the Second World War. However, those of us who have read about it and talked to our parents who were unfortunate enough to be involved in that conflict understand what it means when people talk about a race judged by others to be not worthy or alleged to be not worthy. Woe betide Australia if we find people who support those extremist views. They are views that will do enormous damage to the cohesion of our society and to our country as a whole if somehow support is given, either openly or tacitly, to those views by Government.

By not clearly and concisely saying in absolute and unequivocal terms that it will put One Nation last on its preferences for the forthcoming election this Government is giving some heart to the people who support those racist views. It says that the Government is contemplating supporting that view and that value. I use again without shame in this debate the words of Martin Niemöller, the German theologian, spoken at the end of the last world war when he said -

When Hitler attacked the Jews I was not a Jew, therefore, I was not concerned. And when Hitler attacked the Catholics, I was not a Catholic, and therefore, I was not concerned. And when Hitler attacked the unions and the industrialists, I was not a member of the unions and I was not concerned. Then, Hitler attacked me and the Protestant church - and there was nobody left to be concerned.

These attacks by One Nation and its leaders on the values we hold dear in Australia must be opposed from the outset. They must be unashamedly, forcefully argued against with determination. People who harbour those views must be told by all sides of politics and Independents in this place, that we will not countenance their views and that we will do everything we possibly can to ensure that people seeking election in order to put those views into the policies of the Government of the day will face trenchant opposition at every turn to prevent them from gaining a place in our Parliament.

Unless that is done, the people who hold those views may be successful ultimately. There is a strong onus on the Government quickly and with determination to say that it will put One Nation candidates last on the Liberal and National Party how-to-vote cards. It is true, as the Premier said, that large numbers of people in the community are angry and disillusioned with the policies of the major parties. However, that disillusionment cannot be overcome by a political party simply agreeing wrongheadedly with a party that puts forward racist views. That is, if the Labor Party or the coalition parties are trying to win back the support of those people who have drifted off to support One Nation, they will not win them back by saying that One Nation might be worth supporting through some preference deal at the next election. The members of those parties can win those people back by taking a very firm position on the policies that they hold dear in their own party and for themselves.

It is true that a large number of people have been alienated. Why have they been alienated? If the Government recognises the alienation, what is it doing to recognise the cause of that alienation? Looking at my electorate alone, why have people become alienated with the system and why are they being attracted by some simplistic but unworkable solutions? People come into my office and tell me that they cannot get hospital treatment when they have always expected to be able to get that treatment. They can no longer get into the system. It is not delivering for them. They hobble into my office in pain and they ask why the funds are not being made available for them to have the

operations they need. These are not simple medical ailments; they are operations these people need. They are faced with their problems every day; they endure the pain and suffering and yet are unable to have the operations.

Why are people disillusioned? Pensioners can no longer get the medications they require because of the changes the Federal Government has made to the pharmaceutical benefits scheme. They ask me why is it that in this country they can no longer get the pharmaceuticals, the medications, they require. They cannot get those things because of the changes made to the health policy and the pharmaceutical benefits scheme. Unemployed people come into my office and tell me they are looking for a job and do not like the tag of being unemployed. They are seeking to get into a training scheme, but the funds that were previously made available by the Federal Government to provide training are no longer there. How do they get a job if the skills they learnt previously have been superseded and the Government is not providing the funds for them to acquire a new job?

Alienation is also apparent when workers come into my office. They tell me they have been employed under an award for so many years, getting certain rates of pay and certain conditions, and now when they apply for a job, either a government job or one in the private sector, they can get it only if they sign a workplace agreement. They have to agree to work for wages and employment conditions which are substantially below those they have received over the years. I see a range of these problems. We could conduct a survey of the 400 bus drivers who have been displaced by the Government. These are people who had been driving for MetroBus for some years and are now being shoved between one government department and another. Attempts are being made to find work for them but pressure is being applied on them to leave government employment, to get out of the system; they are being dispensed with as numbers.

The Premier says there is a problem and that people are disillusioned with the system. Is it any wonder, when in my electorate, as in many other electorates, people have been the subject of criminal activity? They come to me and I go to the local police and ask them to put more vans on the afternoon shift. I know they have 25 officers locally - more than they have had in the past - but there does not seem to be any in the evening. I was told quietly, not officially, behind the scenes that the police are very sorry but they cannot do that because no money has been allocated for afternoon shifts. One van is on the road; that is all we can have. We cannot have any more.

Some people wonder why people are angry. It is not too difficult to work out. They cannot get the health or medical care, the employment and training, the medication or the dental treatment they have traditionally had. The Federal Government cut \$100m out of the dental scheme. A lot of people in my area are on low incomes. They are coming to me and asking why they have to wait 22 months for dental treatment. Dental care had always been a State responsibility but the States neglected it. The Keating Government was forced to put \$100m into dental care. That was taken out by the Howard Government. Now, people wait months and months to get dental treatment. A father of a three or four old year came into my office. His child cries at every meal time. The child does not want to take his meals because his teeth are rotten and he cannot get dental treatment. The family cannot afford it. People ask, "Is there a problem? Are people disillusioned?" I will bet they are disillusioned. Never before have I seen people so angry and so powerless.

Mr Day: Is the family the member for Bassendean referred to eligible for family dental treatment?

Mr BROWN: Yes. The father is unemployed and seeking a job.

Mr Day: Is the child in pain?

Mr BROWN: Yes.

Mr Day: I find it very surprising. I will check into it.

Mr BROWN: If the Minister goes back through the files he will find that I wrote to his predecessor. I received a reply saying that originally the child was a priority 1 but the case was reviewed and he became a priority 2. That means treatment some time in the next 12 months. The family came to me and said they knew someone with a similar problem who was treated in a couple of months. I wrote to the Minister and he wrote back saying they had got it wrong. I have taken the matter up. I do not raise these issues in here and hold them back until I do. I take them up and formally write - phone calls are a waste of time - and set out the issues. I tell the Minister, that has happened, and that is just one case.

Mr Day: If the child is in pain, that is clearly unacceptable.

Mr BROWN: The child is in pain. The parents cannot get the child to eat. That family are not sitting at home very contented. They are angry. I suppose we need a superintellectual person to tell the Government why they are angry. I can tell the Government that this family is angry. It is because it is not receiving the sort of service it expects to be provided by the State, particularly for children.

Tomorrow we will see the tax package. It will redistribute the money that has been taken from the poor, the needy and the unemployed. However, that is a debate for another time.

I close on this point: I agree 100 per cent with the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party on the issue of the allocation of preferences to One Party. This is a matter of principle; it is not a matter of politics. It is a matter of human rights, of the Australian value of a fair go. If we still believe in that, we should draw a line in the sand and collectively agree to put One Nation last.

MR PENDAL (South Perth) [3.29 pm]: From my vantage point, the amendment is a bit like the curate's egg; it is good in parts. I share all the views expressed by the two previous opposition speakers about One Nation. Indeed, at an appropriate time in the address-in-reply debate, I intend to take my own action on that matter. I agree that that is arguably the most important matter confronting Australian federal and state politics at the moment. No-one should give any comfort to the views espoused by Pauline Hanson or those in One Nation. The problem is that the amendment is wrapped in a set of words dealing with another subject which has no connection with that One Nation issue. Those who spoke earlier touched on what they see as the Clayton's cabinet reshuffle. It is fair game that whenever a Cabinet is either shuffled or not shuffled, an Opposition is in the position to be critical. I do not deny the Opposition the chance to do that.

However, it seems to me that the amendment argues a matter of great significance; that is, the Pauline Hanson affair, but mixes it up with something that is of day-to-day, and at the very least, incidental importance to political outcomes in Western Australia. That is not to say that I do not have my own views on the performance of the Cabinet and whether the reshuffle that took place was adequate. How anyone could sponsor an amendment that gives that issue parity with the question of the racist, intolerant tactics of One Nation is beyond me. Therefore, had the two been split, I would more than happily have supported the Opposition regarding One Nation because it is associated with something of relatively minor importance. Because of that, I do not intend to support the amendment.

MR CARPENTER (Willagee) [3.30 pm]: As has just been outlined to us, this amendment substantially falls into two separate parts: The first deals with the Premier's response to One Nation, and the other deals with the cabinet reshuffle during the winter recess. One would have to concede significant differences in the level of importance attached to those two elements. Nevertheless, the general aspect of the amendment is directed at the leadership of the State and the role of the Premier and the leadership he has shown. It is one of those times when it would be desirable if we could set aside the rigid party system and have a free vote on such a matter. It would be most interesting, and probably entertaining, to see how members on the government side would vote for the two components to this amendment if they could vote freely. I hazard a guess that probably the overwhelming majority of members on the government benches, if they were able to vote freely and as they saw fit, would support the amendments. Perhaps all members might not support both, but many would. From my intuitive experience, the majority of members in Government believe that the Premier showed less than the desirable amount of political leadership in reallocating portfolios in the cabinet reshuffle and has shown less than the desirable amount of leadership in response to One Nation. The Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, and others, have said publicly what many in the Liberal Party believe the Premier should say; that is, that One Nation should be put last on the ballot papers in this State at the next federal election for very important reasons.

The Labor Party went into the last federal election with the catchcry of "leadership". Leadership was the key issue on which the Labor Party wanted to focus, and it contrasted the leadership qualities of Paul Keating with what was on offer from the Liberal Party, which was the leadership qualities of John Howard. Ultimately, of course, it was an unsuccessful campaign, and many believe it was always going to be an unsuccessful campaign for a variety of reasons: The Government had been in office for a long time; Paul Keating was unpopular in many parts of the community and the general view was that the Government was out of touch and a change was needed. If we set aside pure politics and take the broader view of the electoral system, it is not a bad thing for governments to change fairly frequently; perhaps every two to three terms. Changes of Government should occur every eight to 12 years. If one extracts oneself from one's political beliefs, which is hard to do if one is a politician, and looks at the outcome of the last election, an impartial observer might argue that it was not a bad thing that the Federal Labor Government was taken out of office and that the alternative Government was given a try. What occurs in countries where there are very long periods of government of one complexion is that the process of government either becomes hopelessly retarded and out of date with trends in the community or it corrupts itself. Australia suffered from that in the 1950s and 1960s when we had a Government of one persuasion for a very long time. That Government ended up being a poor Government which was out of touch with the trends in the community.

It is desirable to have occasional changes of Government, although it goes without saying that I voted for the Keating Government at the last election and was very upset that it was defeated. A greater tragedy than the loss of the Keating Government was the election of John Howard as the Prime Minister of this country and all that went with it, because John Howard is not capable of leadership. He has demonstrated that in the short term he has had as Prime Minister

of this country. What I feared would happen at the change of government at the last election has happened to a large extent; that is, Australia has stalled, if not gone backwards. It has turned inwards upon itself. It is fighting itself and tearing itself apart because it lacks political leadership. It lacks a sense of national direction, which it had for a greater part of the 1970s and 1980s, even under people like Malcolm Fraser. At least the government then had a sense of direction, and a sense of national leadership was attached to government, from Fraser to Hawke to Keating. However, with Howard, there is a void of leadership. That has been a national tragedy, because not only does the nation need leadership; it also needs comprehensive and skilful government. I do not think many people, if they are honest with themselves, would say that that is what we are receiving at the moment.

The situation nationally is that we are lacking in leadership. That has contributed significantly to the increasing support for Pauline Hanson and the policies she has espoused since the last election. Two years ago, when I was campaigning for the state election, Pauline Hanson made her maiden speech in the Federal Parliament. From that day on, when I was door knocking around the suburbs of my electorate, people invariably raised with me the matters she addressed in her maiden speech. I could see then that she had tapped into a deep well of dissatisfaction, frustration, cynicism and anger in the community. That sentiment was shared by blue-collar workers, old people, professional people and many others, who, for one reason or another, had become frustrated with the direction of government. They listened to what Pauline Hanson said and gave her comments more credibility and credence than they deserved.

It was necessary two years ago, as it has been necessary every day since, for the political leaders of this nation at every level, including those in the state, economic and social spheres, to stand and face the arguments she espoused and address them in a logical way to defeat them. That would have explained to the people of the country why she was wrong. It was not done. John Howard chose not to do so for purely cynical, political reasons; that is, he thought he might be a beneficiary of the amount of support One Nation would attract, as he thought it would come primarily from blue-collar workers. He was very wrong, as the Queensland election demonstrated. Once the genie is let out of the bottle, as occurred some time ago, it is very difficult to put back. John Howard finally found this out, as have other political leaders. Nevertheless, it is never too late. It is incumbent on political leaders in such circumstances to name the threats to the community and argue against them. They should argue why these policies are threats and what damage they might do to the community.

That is why the Premier of the State has a responsibility, which he is currently shirking. We can only speculate on the reasons for that. John Howard in many ways is still shirking his greater responsibility as Prime Minister. He is a feeble person concerned about political advantage and making gains from every circumstance. He is such a long-term, professional politician that in some ways he has lost the sense of what is right and wrong. He should publicly state what is right and wrong, and why; he should not look for political gain from every circumstance. I think the Premier of Western Australia is a better man than John Howard; he probably has better qualities, and is more in touch with what he believes is right for the community than is the Prime Minister. He still has the opportunity to stake out the ground to make clear his view of the rise of One Nation and how it can be combatted.

In the way circumstances have developed, the next main milestone to combat One Nation is at the ballot box at the next federal election. The Premier should do so. Mr Deputy Speaker, the Premier is placing the political future of people like you in a perilous position by failing to act in the appropriate way. I would desperately like the Premier of Western Australia - putting aside politics and my political opposition to him - to stand up publicly, if necessary, with other political leaders of the State, to condemn the policies of One Nation and to outline the practical move to combat it; namely, by putting it last on the how-to-vote card at the ballot box.

I agree entirely with the Premier's challenge about other political parties. If other parties such as Australia First or Australians Against Further Immigration espouse similar objectionable policies, they should also be put at the bottom of the how-to-vote card. The Australian Labor Party should act in that way, and make clear the reasons for doing so; namely, because what these parties promote is wrong, not for some cynical political gain.

I travel around my electorate a great deal, and in the past seven weeks I attended numerous community meetings and functions where I heard a lot of support for and promotion of Pauline Hanson and her party's views. I found that distressing. However, as a former student of politics and journalist, I found it fascinating. In some ways, it is intellectually interesting to watch what has occurred with One Nation. I would have said five years ago that we would never see such a development, but we are seeing the closest to a mainstream fascist political party that this country has ever seen. Striking similarities exist between the operation, structure, modus operandi and policies of Pauline Hanson's One Nation group and the fascist parties of Europe of the 1920s and 1930s.

The German fascist group was the National Socialist Party. I heard the One Nation political adviser David Oldfield describe himself on television on Monday as a national socialist. It was stated that Pauline Hanson could be the only leader of the party. The German Nazi Party's motto was "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer" - one nation, one people and one leader - which is exactly the structure and policy of One Nation. There can be only one type of Australian

for One Nation; namely, the Australian who fits into a stereotype of which it approves. That person is preferably not Asian in appearance and preferably a person who will adhere strictly to One Nation's policies, or face the consequences.

A Senate candidate from South Australia was revealed to be a man who carries a gun to political meetings. He showed his gun to someone at the meeting. He denied it then admitted it saying, "These are the things I say confidentially; I don't expect them to be paraded in the public arena." Some people who think they are loyal members of the party, who, for some reason or other, might want to contact other members of other branches of that party, or in some minor way disagree with the hierarchy of the party, find themselves expelled from the party. They are then attacked publicly for having the gall to complain about the way they were treated.

This is in essence a fascist party, or a party of fascist belief. Its members have a view that there is a fixed format and mono culture for Australia. People conform to that culture or, in Pauline Hanson's words, they are "not a good Australian", and she will direct them to the airport and put them on a plane. These are the same sort of views as those promoted in the 1920s and 1930s in far more troubled political and social times than we face today. Nevertheless, they are also very similar in the way the party operates. We have every reason to be extremely concerned about the prospect of members of such a political organisation - one nation, one people, one leader - who brook no opposition whatsoever, gaining influence in the national Parliament of this country. It has already made us the object of great curiosity overseas. People who have been or who live abroad, like my brother who lives in Kuala Lumpur, tell me that what is happening in Australia with One Nation is invariably a topic of conversation overseas. Why the rise of racism in that country? It has already made Australia the subject of some concern and curiosity in the international arena. It is doing us tremendous harm as a nation.

Also, One Nation's attitude is morally and principally repugnant in relation to not only migrants of non-Anglo Saxon or non-Caucasian backgrounds, but also our indigenous people. At one stage Pauline Hanson described our Aborigines as the "most privileged people in Australia". That is ridiculous. She has adopted the old fascist tactic of using the most vulnerable people in the community as scapegoats for people's anger and frustration. She has picked on Aborigines, migrants, the unemployed and single mothers. Who knows who will be next?

The Premier, the supreme political personality in Western Australia - be that for the good or otherwise in the current circumstances - has the chance to stamp himself as a man of greater standing than he has done so far. He should get on the front steps of Parliament and say that he does not care what members of the Liberal Party might think, the Liberal, Labor and other parties of this State should put One Nation last on their how-to-vote cards. People such as Graeme Campbell and others who have similar policies should be put in the same category. I agree: The Labor Party should do that.

Dr Gallop: We have done that. The Australia First party goes to the bottom of the pile with One Nation.

Mr CARPENTER: Good. If I lived in John Howard's electorate and I were, as I am, a committed Labor voter and there were a One Nation candidate running against John Howard who, with the support of Labor Party preferences, could defeat John Howard, I would not vote for the Labor Party or I would not put One Nation ahead. In such circumstances I would recognise that Howard, much as I have little time for or opinion of him, is a better person to put in the national Parliament than someone who represents a fascist organisation and who has no place in the national Parliament or in the mainstream national political debate in this country. I would ignore the Australian Labor Party if it directed me to do anything other than put somebody from a One Nation ticket on the bottom of the pile. I would have no compunction in doing that. Then I would think long and hard about whether I could ever support the Labor Party again if I were instructed to put a group such as One Nation ahead of the Liberal Party. I simply would not do it.

The vast majority of people who normally vote Labor and Liberal, who constitute the parliamentary Liberal Party and the National Party for that matter, would feel and, I hope, act the same way. If they did not, as was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition in an earlier speech, they would risk crippling Australia at a time of difficult economic circumstances, which are about to befall this country. Whether we like it or not, and beyond the powers of State and Federal Governments to some extent, we are heading for a very difficult economic and social period because of the economic crisis that is now spreading out of Asia and hitting other countries around the world. The last thing we can afford to have is a Government which is influenced by racism and fascism, and it is fascism. Members should make no mistake; that is what we are looking at. There is no way we should allow the Australian Government in any sense to become the captive of such ideology and political thinking. I urge the Premier to do as requested by the motion and show some leadership. He should say, "Put One Nation last on the ballot paper."

In relation to the cabinet reshuffle, I have some sympathy with the Premier. Unless he were prepared to take drastic action and dump about half of his Cabinet, he might as well have done as he did, which was just shuffle a few around. Many backbench members are better than the people who hold cabinet positions. A minor reshuffle was his only way

out, probably because if he were true to himself as the leader of a political party, he would have dumped people left, right and centre, and I recognise that that would have been a difficult task.

MS WARNOCK (Perth) [3.53 pm]: Like my colleague the member for Willagee, I will reflect briefly on the matter of leadership and refer to the last part of the amendment to the Address-in-Reply which refers to the refusal to take a principled stand on preferences for One Nation. In relation to that and to the matter of leadership, there is an interesting reflection on leadership in a piece that featured in *The Australian* newspaper this morning. It was written by a university lecturer, a chap called Mark Tredinnick, and it talks largely about how disappointing John Howard has been as a leader - in the opinion of the writer, that is. Obviously, my colleague the member for Willagee concurs with that. That article has some interesting general views about what leadership is and what a leader should do. It is worth quoting a couple of lines from that article. The writer says -

Howard has shown in office that he does not know what leadership is or how to practise it. He has not got the gift of it. No matter how well he tries to manage things, how much he asserts his authority, the voters are not convinced. And that is the final measure of leadership.

He is practising the wrong art - politics and management, not leadership. The feeling in the electorate that Australia has fallen out of its story, that we are lost and unguided - this is the sign that his leadership has failed.

The writer goes on to quote another writer, Hugh Mackay, whom many people will know is a regular social commentator in many newspapers. People have heard him speak and they have read his books. According to Hugh Mackay, quoted in that piece in *The Australian*, Australians -

look to leaders for three things: strength, inspiration and the power to give us hope and a sense of larger purpose.

I must say that that is what I have always felt about leadership, and that is what I believe that a leader should do. Those words, as I have said, refer to John Howard, and they were the opinion of the article writer in *The Australian* this morning. However, I believe, too, that leaders should lead from the front - sometimes a very uncomfortable place to be if the flak is flying, but basically that is the job of a leader as I see it.

Individual members of the parliamentary Liberal and National Parties have taken a strong, principled stand on One Nation and its policies. The Leader of the House has spoken out in a very principled way and said, "Regardless of what you feel about what the vote outcome may be, you should put One Nation last." I have heard the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests say the same thing at public gatherings. The Deputy Premier has shown his usual tough-mindedness in the same way, but the Premier has not been prepared, it seems to me, to lead from the front on this important issue. I am not saying that that is always the case with the Premier, but my opposition colleagues and I believe that this matter is extraordinarily important and it calls for leadership of a very strong kind at this time.

As my colleague the member for Willagee said, Australia is going into a difficult period, notwithstanding the enthusiasm of the federal Treasurer for the economy as it is at the moment - he looked particularly ebullient on television last night. Notwithstanding such economic matters, we all know that we are heading into a difficult period because of the Asian financial crisis and because there has been so much structural change in the work force over the past 20 years. An awful number of people are genuinely confused about where they will go in future. It is a difficult period; it therefore calls for very strong leadership indeed.

There are many reasons for our standing up very strongly and taking a principled stand on One Nation. I am not suggesting for a moment that the views of that party should be censored; there is no question of that. I was a journalist for about 30 years, and I used to be sent such material in brown envelopes. It was always sent to me from a post office box. There was never a proper address and one could never find people when one wanted to give them a bell and ask, "What about talking about your policies?" Such material used to be circulated from strange bookshops. Generally speaking, it was pretty well regarded as not the kind of thing to which most respectable people paid much attention. That kind of thing, as I have said, has gained respectability lately, which I must say is not only fairly shocking but also darned uncomfortable for the victims of that material.

As I have said many times in this Parliament - ad nauseam, indeed - I believe in giving credit where credit is due. Senator Ron Boswell from Queensland has an absolutely honourable record in this matter. No doubt at risk of his own preselection, he has spoken out endlessly against such groups, including the League of Rights. In terms of politicians in Australia, he probably has the most honourable record on that subject going back over many years. Those views, as I have said, have now been revealed as being part of the so-called policies of One Nation.

Conservative politicians in Queensland decided at the last state election not to put One Nation last on their how-to-vote card, and the result is fairly obvious: They got a Labor Government, albeit a very precarious Labor

Government. I am not a political analyst and do not pretend to be. I have not even been a political science student, as has my colleague on my right, but the political analysts generally have agreed that had they decided to put One Nation last, the conservatives would not have lost so many seats in the recent election. People such as I have decided - and, like the member for Willagee, had the Labor Party done anything different I would have been quick to disapprove of the Labor Party - that they find One Nation repellent because of its undoubtedly racist views and its enthusiasm for easy gun ownership. I come from a country background, where there were plenty of guns lying around - far too many in my view - and I believe One Nation's views about guns are not desirable in Australia. We should do everything we can to stand against its views, which are taken from American magazines and talk about the rights of gun ownership and so forth. I also find repellent the propensity of One Nation to pick on people at the bottom of the heap, such as Aborigines and single mothers, and single them out for regular abuse. They are easy targets, and if the party keeps doing that it might stir the enthusiasm of some voters. However, I find it repellent behaviour and intend to say so, regardless of the risk that might be involved.

I heard someone who knows more about economics than I do - I have said many times that I know very little about economics - Lyndon Rowe of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, a former colleague of the Leader of the House, speak very feelingly at a rally organised by the Ethnic Communities Council. He has taken a strong and early stand and, as a leader in his area, he has spoken against the evident damage of One Nation's offensive views on foreign investment, its dotty views about bank loans and printing currency, and the effect they would have on Australia's trade position and reputation. I am pleased he has seen fit to do that. It is a stand against what my colleague has called a fascist party; certainly it is the equivalent of Jean-Marie Le Pen's party in Europe, which is described as a fascist party in France. Those who are opposed to this movement have some odd bedfellows. I have not often found myself on the same side as New South Wales politician and right wing Christian leader, Fred Nile. It may be the first time we have agreed on anything. He has taken a strong leadership stand on this issue. In June *The West Australian* reported his views about the evident prejudice in One Nation's views. Fred Nile is not a raving lefty or member of Resistance, but is a deeply conservative Christian crusader. The report stated -

Mr Nile did not mince his words when he declared after the Queensland election that Asians and Aborigines were being made scapegoats by Ms Hanson in the same way that Jews were by Adolf Hitler.

Ms Hanson was the puppet of a propaganda machine which was pushing racist buttons in the community, Mr Nile said.

It is extremely interesting that somebody with Mr Nile's views should feel it is beyond the pale for someone to take those views and push buttons in the community to cause people who are confused and worried about the future - goodness knows, opposition members have canvassed today many reasons that people might be worried about their future - to seek easy scapegoats among certain groups in the community. None of those people in the community who have spoken out strongly against One Nation is trying to stifle its views. I believe, as do many people, that had John Howard stood up strongly in the beginning, said he did not agree with its views, given strong, cogent reasons for that, and said why One Nation was damaging to Australia, the current situation would be entirely different. Leaders are supposed to do that. It is not a comfortable position being a leader, but it is something leaders must do even at the risk of losing votes. Sometimes leaders must say things people do not find palatable, but they are obliged to say them. Various leaders in the community must take the lead and put up tough and convincing arguments against views which are not only personally repellent but also damaging to the country.

I do not think many politicians in this Parliament are stupid enough to ignore the underlying message of concern from the people who flocked to One Nation. I do not suggest for one second that those who attend rallies are all motivated by the very unattractive views of that party, for which I criticise it. Clearly, in the community - social commentators such as Hugh Mackay will agree - there is a great deal of confusion about the future. That may have something to do with the approach of the end of the century, and it has much to do with the economy, the restructuring of jobs and the hastily made changes. People at the bottom of the heap and some in the middle have suffered badly from the changes in the past 20 years. I do not suggest any of us is unaware that some people are confused and worried about their future. Also, they are cheated off with politicians and with the way political parties are run. They seem to feel there is a wall surrounding politicians which somehow they cannot get through. I am disappointed by that, and my response is always that "We are you and you are us and if you want to have a go, you are welcome next time to take on the job yourself". Those in the mainstream of politics understand that many people have suffered through dry economics, particularly those in country areas. Many services have closed down in country areas and we understand exactly the concerns some people have. The rise in crime levels in the community is a universal concern, and people have reacted badly to that.

However, a leader should address these problems directly and, at the same time, speak out strongly against a group of politicians or non-politicians - as members of One Nation describe themselves, despite the fact that they are paid by the taxpayers and sit in Parliament - who have offered either impractical or totally unacceptable solutions to the

problems which beset Australia at the moment. I support the amendment very strongly and I ask the Premier to consider standing up on this extraordinarily important matter of principle.

MR MCGOWAN (Rockingham) [4.09 pm]: I support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, and do so for a number of reasons. I will first address the cabinet reshuffle and then refer to One Nation preferences. It is of relevance to me, bearing in mind the area I represent. The whole purpose of the Liberal Party's efforts in this regard is to knock off the federal Leader of the Australian Labor Party, who represents the area I represent.

Today and yesterday the new Minister for Health stood in this place and lauded the benefits of the new Peel Health Campus. In doing so, he has failed to let everyone in this House know that for every service that has been improved at the Peel Health Campus there has been a corresponding reduction in services at the Rockingham-Kwinana health service. Last Friday, I received a briefing from representatives of this health service concerning the new hospital in Mandurah - no-one denies the need for it; it is overdue. There are 110 beds there and services must be provided to accommodate them. A joint general manager covers the Rockingham and the Peel health services.

The Government has cut back severely in the services being provided at the facility at Rockingham-Kwinana. The Peel Health Campus, which services an area with approximately 50 000 people, has now usurped the responsibilities of the Rockingham-Kwinana health service which has a catchment of 100 000 people. There is a direct disproportionate distribution of services in the Rockingham-Kwinana-Mandurah area, which will impact severely on my constituents. Every time the Minister for Health lauds the benefits of these new facilities, as he did in his first announcement as Minister for Health, I will remind him that he has removed from the Rockingham-Kwinana facility general surgery, orthopaedic services and virtually all services for elderly people, all the things they require for gastroenterology and the like, and has placed all of them in Mandurah. We know to be statistically correct that the Rockingham area has a far higher proportion of senior Western Australians than does the Mandurah area. I do not deny the need for a good, decent hospital in Mandurah, but not when services are removed from the area of greatest need.

I now turn to the rise of the One Nation party. It is very relevant to me because my electorate of Rockingham is the heart of the federal electorate of Brand. The decision - or lack of it - by the Western Australian Liberal Party about directing its preferences is directly related to the electorate of Brand. Members of the Liberal Party can talk about various things, but Laurie Oakes has them worked out. In an article in *The Bulletin* he states -

The WA Liberals are holding out because they like the idea of giving preferences to One Nation in Beazley's seat of Brand, thinking it smart tactics to knock off the Labor leader . . .

Those opposite are all about trying to knock off the Labor leader in the federal seat of Brand. That is their only point in this whole exercise.

Mr Baker: Never.

Mr MacLean: We leave that to your numbers people.

Mr MCGOWAN: I am sure the deputy leader has learned his lesson from the election result in Queensland - I expect he is some sort of political analyst and probably an historian, to boot - that by trying to be too smart by half, those in the Liberal Party can only do themselves immense damage. I will tell members straight: I feel that I, as a Labor member of Parliament, have a great deal more in common, immeasurably more, with all members opposite, than I have with members of the One Nation party. In fact, sometimes I think some of the members opposite could sit on this side of the House when debating some issues.

Mr McGinty: Many of them cannot.

Mr MCGOWAN: I suggest on many issues the member for Yokine could sit over here, as could the member for Murdoch. I sometimes even think the deputy Liberal Party leader could sit over here as well.

Mr Barnett: You would not have me!

Mr MCGOWAN: I will be frank: I think we have a great deal in common, but I do not think either of us have much in common with the One Nation party. Selected members, such as Senator Lightfoot, would have a great deal in common with the One Nation party.

Mr MacLean: That is low, especially seeing he cannot defend himself.

Mr MCGOWAN: The member should be quiet. Overall I think members on both sides of the Chamber have a great deal more in common than we have against each other. Yet those opposite are trying to be too smart in trying to knock off Kim Beazley. That is what they are all about. If it is so obvious that Laurie Oakes can work it out from Sydney, it is not difficult for us to work it out here.

Let us look at the One Nation party. Many people have commented on its racial policies, but I want to comment on its economic policies. We have all heard chanted as a bit of a mantra its printing-the-money policy which, of course, is straight out of the book of the League of Rights. When I visit the people in my business constituency, which I do regularly because I represent an area that has a great many people involved in big business along the Kwinana strip, I have discussions with them about issues of concern. I have done this lately. Every one of them is highly concerned by the rise of One Nation. All these businesspeople know that a country such as Australia needs a stable legal and monetary system to operate effectively; otherwise, we will have a capital outflow, a capital strike. We live in an era when capital is very mobile around the world. If those who control capital have the feeling that the policies of a country will upset the legal and monetary framework of an area, they will institute a capital strike.

One Nation's policies, or lack thereof, will result in a capital strike in this country. If that happens, large numbers of people will be out of work. Then all the taxation revenue that we rely upon for pensions, welfare, unemployment benefits, youth allowances and all the rest will start to dry up. If the One Nation agenda gets up in this country, all people will suffer, including working people, people who run small businesses, and people on welfare. If those opposite form a coalition with One Nation, if they get into bed with that party in the slightest way, that is what will happen in this country.

Those opposite must make a stand now. They must make a statement of principle now, because this country will be wrecked if they do not. They will wreck our nation's economy. All managers on the Kwinana strip will tell them that. These businesses are exporting to Asia. They rely upon foreign investment and foreign markets. They are saying that every person in every business they sell to in Asia is aware of the One Nation threat, and all their buyers raise it with them. All of those big business people along the Kwinana strip can work out what those opposite are trying to do. They think Liberal Party members are being stupid, and that is right.

One Nation's gun ownership policy involves making military style weapons freely available. Like you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I have fired military style weapons. I have fired a self-loading rifle. The ammunition fired from an SLR, which will be freely available in this country if One Nation's agenda gets up, can go in one side of a navy warship and out the other. It will go straight through armour plating half a centimetre thick, twice. When fired these rifles can blow a person in half, and they will be freely available. That example of its policies shows the sort of party we are dealing with.

One Nation is a company which operates in a bizarre fashion. It appears to be some money raising arrangement for David Ettridge and his people. They cannot be replaced, regardless of whatever happens. It claims to be the party which is against politicians' perks, yet the first time one of the party's members is elected to the Queensland Parliament, that member takes all the perks that person can get. The federal leader of One Nation goes around the country claiming the highest level of travelling allowance of any backbench member of Federal Parliament. Members of One Nation are absolute frauds. One Nation claims to be the party for battlers. In Federal Parliament, its leader votes in favour of the youth allowance and nursing home fees, yet this is the party for battlers. Those in One Nation are frauds, and it is about time we worked them out.

It is relevant to my electorate because a One Nation candidate is challenging my close colleague Mr Kim Beazley, the member for Brand. We know who the candidates are, yet the Liberal Party will not say to whom it will direct its preferences. We have the prospect of the first Western Australian born Prime Minister in our history; the first Prime Minister from outside the Sydney-Melbourne axis since Frank Forde in 1945. That would be quite a benefit to my electorate, the area in which I live. It is a common complaint from residents in the area in which I live and represent that they have received a raw deal from the Government. Whenever I hear a complaint I remind them about the one person who has ensured that our area has received a very good deal.

Garden Island has benefited from over \$1b of public investment, and the creation of 3 200 jobs. The development of Garden Island commenced in 1968 during the time of John Gorton. However, the massive expansion of HMAS *Stirling* commenced in 1987 when, as Minister for Defence, Kim Beazley moved more than half the Navy to Garden Island. The Kwinana strip has over \$10b worth of public assets, from which \$100m goes into the Western Australian economy every year. That is a result of the naval base which was put there by Kim Beazley. That was an enormous achievement for Western Australia, and for my electorate, that came directly through Kim Beazley.

In 1991, as Education Minister, Kim Beazley put into place a policy to move university campuses away from central establishments such as the University of Western Australia, Murdoch University and Curtin University of Technology to where there were traditionally low levels of educational participation. As a result of that policy, in 1993 Kim Beazley established a university campus in Rockingham. The two biggest achievements in the past two decades in my area have come about directly as a result of Kim Beazley's actions.

People would do well to remember that being represented by someone with power to deliver on promises is not only of benefit but will provide great accolades for their area. However, One Nation is trying to knock this man off. This

man has done more for my area than anyone else. The *Sunday Times* of 7 June is headed "Two camps vow to oust Beazley". Members opposite belong to one of those groups; the other is the One Nation party. The article reads -

One Nation's Brand candidate, Rockingham businessman Lee Dawson, said Mr Beazley would be put below the Liberal candidate on One Nation how-to-vote card.

Lee Dawson is the Liberal Party's stooge. He has already said he will give preferences to the Liberal Party. By the way, he is a former member of the Liberal Party as is Pauline Hanson and David Oldfield.

Mr Kierath: What do you expect him to do?

Mr McGOWAN: Is the member for Riverton still in the ministry?

This is what the One Nation candidate in Brand has said about Kim Beazley -

"We are going after Mr Beazley - we have him in the crosshairs of our rifle,"

That is the bloke the Liberal Party is considering giving its preference to. I wonder what members opposite think when they come up with things like this. It is unbelievable. It is my area's big chance to have a Prime Minister as our member of Parliament. It is a big opportunity for Western Australia. People in my area must realise this. It is only with someone who can deliver on promises that Brand will go ahead.

That is what Kim Beazley offers. A One Nation candidate does not offer that, and neither does a very obscure Liberal backbencher. It is my area's big chance and people need to be cognisant of this. They also need to realise that through the preference arrangement between One Nation and the Liberal Party, when they vote for One Nation they are in effect voting for the Liberal Party. That means that if the Liberal candidate gets up, they will have voted in favour of nursing home fees, the sale of Telstra, the goods and services tax and the youth allowance. All these things hurt the battler. If electors voted for the One Nation candidate, they would also be supporting the Liberal Party candidate, Rick Palmer, who has a past record of damaging the interests of the Rockingham-Kwinana area.

I have a few utterances from Mr Palmer about the Rockingham-Kwinana area to give to the House. In January 1998 an article in the *Sound Telegraph*, the local newspaper quoted Mr Palmer as saying that a Fremantle line was not the best option for Rockingham, and the reasons for a Fremantle line did not stack up. In 1995 he again stated that there was no value at all in building a rail link to carry people from Rockingham to another city, namely Fremantle. The Liberal Party candidate is against a rail line.

The second utterance from Mr Palmer is from the *Sound Telegraph* in January 1994 and relates to the Compact Steel Pty Ltd mill. Mr Palmer stated that there was no better choice for Compact Steel than the Rockingham site. He said that the people of the region had generally expressed full support for the concept and they were accustomed to heavy industry being nearby. Mr Palmer was advocating a steel mill within one kilometre of people's houses in Rockingham.

Mr Barnett: That was the Labor Government's policy.

Mr McGOWAN: Neither the federal candidate, Kim Beazley, nor I have supported that. I can provide the Leader of the House with quotes as well.

Mr Barnett: The Labor Party allocated \$1m of taxpayers' money for a steel mill in Rockingham.

Mr McGOWAN: No, it did not. It allocated \$1m for that project in Western Australia. The Leader of the House knows that is true.

I have set out the reasons that the people of Brand should not be fooled by this deal, or whatever it is, between the Liberal Party and One Nation. If they vote One Nation, they will get a Liberal member and all that brings with it, including his past record. If they vote Liberal they will get a One Nation candidate as well - depending on who comes higher in the ballot paper. They should not be fooled by the sleazy little arrangement that is in place.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (17)

Ms Anwyl
Mr Brown
Mr Carpenter
Dr Edwards
Dr Gallop

Mr Graham
Mr Kobelke
Ms MacTiernan
Mr McGinty

Mr McGowan
Ms McHale
Mr Riebeling
Mr Ripper

Mrs Roberts
Mr Thomas
Ms Warnock
Mr Cunningham (*Teller*)

Noes (27)

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

Pairs

Mr Grill	Mr Board
Mr Marlborough	Mr House

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR MCGINTY (Fremantle) [4.33 pm]: I take the opportunity in the Address-in-Reply debate to deal with a number of matters related to the health of the Western Australian community. Members will recall that when the state Budget for 1998-99 was delivered, some \$60m was allocated additionally for hospital recurrent funding. That \$60m was very quickly to be swallowed up. Members will recall that at the time there was a pay offer to the nurses. This was prior to the arbitrated settlement of the nurses dispute, which resulted in an increased money offer to the nurses. At that stage \$10m of that extra \$60m provided for in the Budget was allocated to the nurses' pay rise. The three new either collocated or privatised hospitals at Bunbury, Joondalup and Peel were to cost an additional \$38m. Since then the increase has been arbitrated by Deputy President MacBean of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission. If fully implemented and accepted by the nurses, it will add a further \$10m to the cost of the nurses' settlement; in other words, the increases in nurses' salaries will add \$20m to the Budget.

Mr Prince: I think you are wrong there.

Mr MCGINTY: I have checked the figure with the department.

Mr Prince: It goes over two years.

Mr MCGINTY: The back pay of the 4.5 per cent to 1 January of this year, which is paid in this financial year, is the biggest single additional cost factor involved there.

Mr Prince: All right.

Mr MCGINTY: The emeritus Minister for Health is already showing that he is losing his grip on the issue. Before any provision is made for growth, the ageing population or anything of that nature, the nurses' pay rise costing an additional \$20m and the three collocated or privatised facilities costing \$38m will eat up \$58m of the allocated \$60m. In other words - this figure will surprise members - \$2m has been set aside for recurrent funding of the entire government hospital system this financial year once those two factors are taken into account. Therefore, we are left with \$2m to be shared among government hospitals. The most significant development that has occurred since the Budget came down and since the arbitrated nurses' decision by Deputy President MacBean has been the agreement between the Commonwealth and the State to increase Medicare funding by \$125m over five years, which translates to an extra \$25m per year of federal funding to be injected into the State's hospitals.

I was very pleased to see the Premier and the new Minister for Health announce through the media that that \$25m would be used to reduce waiting lists. That is an appropriate reaction and one that has the support - albeit cautious support - of the Opposition. The reason I indicate a note of caution is that we have heard it all before. Some 20 months ago in the lead-up to the state election, two big promises were made in respect of waiting lists. The conservatives said that if they were elected they would halve the waiting lists. At that time, in ballpark figures, about 12 000 people were on waiting lists in Western Australia. Today, there are more than 17 000 people on waiting lists. Rather than the waiting lists being halved, the number of people on them has increased from 12 000 to something in excess of 17 000. The reason I say "something in excess of" is that the figures for the growth in the waiting lists in non-teaching hospitals in the metropolitan area are now available. Previously figures have been available for only the five teaching hospitals. That figure has increased from 12 000 to 17 000 in the course of 20 months, notwithstanding a promise to halve the lists.

The other and very significant promise that the Government made in the lead-up to the last election was that no

patients would wait longer than the recognised time for their condition; in other words, an urgent patient with a life threatening condition would be operated on within a month. It is a matter of public record that approximately one-third of patients with urgent, life-threatening conditions do not get operated on within one month, notwithstanding a coalition promise that they would. An enormous number of patients in the semi-urgent category who should be operated on within 90 days must wait longer than the 90 days. I am sure that every member of this House is aware of people - particularly in the orthopaedics area where the Government promised that no-one would have to wait longer than 12 months for an operation - who are waiting longer than 12 months to receive medical care for their condition. We all know that when we talk about elective surgery we are not talking about cosmetic surgery but about surgery required as a result of significant impairment of somebody's mobility which is often causing someone pain, and for category 1 cases involving life-threatening illnesses such as cancer.

This area is the greatest single failing of the Government because of its failure to deliver a health system that meets its own yardsticks and promises made during the last election campaign. I wish the new Minister well in his endeavours.

Mr Day: Thank you.

Mr McGINTY: I hope he can deliver. Every day people come to my office with unbelievable tales which, in a civilised, prosperous, western society, are unbelievable. I am referring to the victims of our public hospital system, our health system and the failure of the Government to allocate sufficient funding.

I am sincere when I wish the new Minister well in that endeavour and I am pleased he is here. I will relate the story of a person who has been failed by our public hospital system in quite tragic circumstances. Members will recall that about 12 months ago an Australian was murdered in the Philippines. Geoff Pike, the brother of that murdered person, went to the Philippines to look for his brother's three children, all of whom were Australian citizens born in Australia. Geoff found his three nieces living in circumstances of considerable poverty. He brought them back to Australia and adopted them as his own - an admirable thing to do.

One of the girls, Jana, is now five years old. She witnessed the death of her father when he was shot in the head, a traumatic incident for anyone to live through let alone someone of such tender years. Jana, who has speech problems perhaps because of that trauma, is in year 1 of her primary school where her speech problems were readily identified. In fact, she was formally assessed for her speech problems today at the Joondalup privatised hospital. She is struggling at school. According to her foster father she hates school because of her lack of language skills and her speech problem. She has been told she will have to repeat year 1 next year because she does not have the language skills to enable her to progress.

Here is a young girl who has been through an enormous trauma in her life and who has significant health problems. What has been the response to her from our health system? First, the Education Department no longer employs speech pathologists to help children like Jana with their problems. In the past, speech pathologists were brought into the schools through the health system. I am not criticising the Education Department. However, the service has been privatised and is therefore no longer available through the schools. Having identified the problem the school referred Jana to the Joondalup Private Hospital.

Her father was told that 250 young children are waiting for speech pathology services through the Joondalup Private Hospital to correct or ameliorate their condition so that they can then get on with their lives, particularly their education. Not only are 250 children waiting for speech pathology services but also the waiting time for treatment at the hospital is 12 months. Having been assessed today, the earliest she can expect to be treated by a speech pathologist to overcome this serious condition is August 1999.

If her condition is categorised as serious enough to warrant her being placed in a learning development centre - her father believes that will probably be the case - a place will not be found for her until the beginning of the 2000 school year. I hope members are as appalled at this as I am. These early years are crucial in the educational advancement of children, therefore it is important they get their health right so that they can get on with schooling and with their lives. If, as appears to be the case, this condition is untreated for two years because the Government has not provided enough money to meet the enormous demands from people, particularly young families, in the rapidly growing northern suburbs, Jana faces the consequent devastation of her education which could fundamentally damage and alter the whole of her life.

That is an example of how sufficient funds could enable someone to more quickly receive the appropriate professional remedial treatment, thereby causing a life to be fundamentally different. I urge the Minister to give priority attention to the case of Jana Pike. The lack of health funding is permanently damaging the lives of not only Jana Pike but also hundreds of Western Australian children who urgently need remedial treatment. I urge the Minister to do what he can to be of some assistance to her.

The issue of waiting lists has been of enormous concern for some time. At 31 May we began to receive a number of figures for waiting lists and for the first time we were told that the new Joondalup Health Campus, which the Premier opened amid much fanfare in March this year, had more than 1 000 people on the waiting list, Bentley Hospital had 1 699 people, Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital had 887 and the Rockingham-Kwinana District Hospital, which we heard a little bit about today in question time, and which will take some of the overflow from the new Peel Health Campus, had 1 279 on the waiting list. There are another four hospitals for which I understand the Health Department will provide figures this month for the first time, when it produces its monthly waiting list bulletin. For the first time Western Australians will be able to see the full impact of people waiting for surgery. Although, as I indicated, the official figure is 17 000 people waiting for surgery at the five teaching hospitals, by the time we add the other eight metropolitan non-teaching hospitals, not counting major regional hospitals such as Geraldton, it will quickly become obvious that the number of people waiting for important surgery here in Western Australia is well above 25 000. That should not be tolerated. I will be interested to hear from the Minister for Health over the next few weeks details of how he will spend the extra \$25m a year from the Commonwealth specifically dedicated to waiting list reduction strategies.

It has been apparent to me that since last year's funding for waiting lists ended the Government has not had a strategy for dealing with waiting lists which have blown out for a number of reasons, including disputation with nurses and abnormal weather conditions which have caused an increase in illnesses.

We in this Parliament cannot stand by idly and see the Government without a waiting list strategy. I am interested to see the amount that will be spent on appropriate capital works, where wards will be reopened, where operating theatres will operate for longer times and to see the detail of how that money will be spent. The last time the Government funded a strategy to reduce waiting lists, it was \$15m a year for two years; in other words, a \$30m strategy. In the first year, money was spent on necessary capital works of upgrading operating theatres to improve the throughput. In the second year, that \$15m went into hospital operating costs. It was all spent in recurrent expenditure; nothing of a capital nature was involved. That is one of the reasons that, over the past 18 months or so, the waiting lists have blown out. Unless the facilities to have the throughput, to have the beds open and to enhance operating theatres are available, we will never win this war, which is a most crucial one. We have a major problem with our waiting lists. We are heartened to see that the Government has committed \$25m to waiting list reduction strategies. Let us hope that it works out.

The other matter I wish to raise has caused me considerable angst. I drew the matter of salary packaging in the Health Department to the attention of the Parliament some 12 to 18 months ago. When this matter was raised at the beginning of last year, members will recall the propriety and the moral basis upon which the Health Department entered into tax avoidance arrangements with its employees to capitalise on the status of our hospitals as public benevolent institutions. Therefore, as the Health Department did not have to pay fringe benefits tax, it offered to those employees on workplace agreements the ability to avoid tax by allowing the department, their employer, to pay their bills from up to 30 per cent of their salary in a way that meant no tax was payable on that income.

A new dimension has now come to light which I want to report because it highlights the immorality of what is occurring. It is a scheme that affects thousands of Health Department employees, particularly the higher paid - the doctors and a number of the professional staff who work in hospitals. This is occurring not only in the Health Department; some 40 government agencies also offer salary packaging with a tax avoidance component in it. In the time that is available to me, I will tell the story of a supporting mother and the impact salary packaging has had on her. Her former husband entered into salary packaging in a way that avoids not only the tax he should be paying, but also his responsibility to pay for the maintenance of his child through the Child Support Agency. The woman concerned - I will use only her first name - Vivian, was told last year that her family support payment would be reduced by \$3 000 a year. This was the payment she received from her former husband for the support of their 12-year-old daughter. As the custodial parent, she received \$9 803 in child support in the 1996-97 financial year. The drop of 30 per cent to \$6 801 was an enormous blow to her. She works as a casual relief nurse and struggles financially to support her daughter. Her maximum annual income is just over \$20 000. The reason that was given for the huge drop in the child support payment was that Vivian's ex-husband, who works for the Health Department, went onto salary packaging as part of his workplace agreement with the Health Department of Western Australia. Salary packaging in the Health Department works this way: Up to 30 per cent of a person's salary can be paid, not as salary, but directly to that person's creditors to pay for such things as a home mortgage, holidays, a boat, a car, school fees, etc and no tax is paid on that "income". The Health Department does not pay fringe benefits tax because of its status as a public benevolent institution. The employee ends up with much more money in hand by avoiding tax and the Commonwealth misses out on that revenue which it should gain.

Child support payments are generally a percentage of income and, in this case, as income has been notionally reduced by 30 per cent, the child support payments were reduced proportionately. The benefits to the employee who, in this case, is the non-custodial parent, are higher income, lower tax and lower child support payments. If the employee's

income was \$50 000 a year, his total savings would be more than \$10 000 a year - \$3 000 in reduced child support payments and some \$7 000 a year by not paying tax on the top 30 per cent of his income. That is a rort, and as a tax reform package is being delivered tomorrow, I hope that this rort, which, because of its double whammy effect, not only deprives the Commonwealth of income -

Mr Bloffwitch: I find that hard believe. If that happened, the Health Department would have to pay 49 per cent fringe benefits tax on allowing that allowance to pay such things as mortgages and various other things.

Mr McGINTY: No, because it is a public benevolent institution. That is where the sting is. Because it provides a benefit to the public as a whole, it does not pay fringe benefits tax; that is the sting. I can see the member thinking, "Very clever." It is sharp practice and one of which we should not approve.

Mr Bloffwitch: It is terrible practice.

Mr McGINTY: That is right, particularly when someone is using it to avoid the obligation of looking after his child.

Mr Bloffwitch: I was involved in a similar case, only that person put it into a timber venture factory. I had the department, on appeal, reinvestigate and it found he was doing it himself and it awarded the woman the back payments.

Mr McGINTY: In this case, Vivian lodged an appeal with the Child Support Agency and did the very thing that the member for Geraldton suggested: It increased that payment, not to the full amount, but it restored some of the child support payments she was missing out on because, obviously, the former husband was a lot better off. Not only did he have a take home pay increase, while notionally his salary decreased by classifying 30 per cent of it as tax free and not as income. The appeal to the Child Support Agency restored all but \$1 400; in other words, about half of what she lost she received back by the appeal mechanism. I would have thought that with the husband being better off by not paying tax on part of his income that, in fact, the mother, who is the custodial parent, should not have lost anything. That is one of the evils of this sort of sharp practice which has been entered into by the Health Department, perhaps more so than other departments and it should be addressed. Salary packaging worked in this way is nothing more than a rort. The Health Department estimated - and this is 12 or 18 months ago, in the early days of the scheme - that it had deprived the Federal Government coffers, just from the employees of the Health Department of Western Australia, of some \$6m a year in tax revenue. This is something which should be stamped out and I hope the Minister will take it into account.

Amendment to Motion

Mr McGINTY: I move -

That the following words be added to the motion -

but regrets to inform His Excellency that the Court Government's policies have failed to address escalating crime rates. In particular ABS statistics released on Wednesday, 15 July 1998, titled "Recorded Crime Australia", confirm that over a 12 month period that Western Australia -

- (a) recorded an 11 per cent increase in assaults;
- (b) was one of only two States to have a victimisation rate above the national average for armed robbery;
- (c) recorded a 43 per cent increase in unarmed robbery;
- (d) recorded the second highest rate of unlawful entry with intent - UEWI - involving the taking of property in Australia;
- (e) recorded the highest victimisation rate for other unlawful entry with intent - UEWI - in Australia, with a victimisation rate of 904 per 100 000 persons, nearly double the national rate of 480 victims per 100 000 persons;
- (f) recorded an 8.4 per cent increase in motor vehicle theft; and
- (g) recorded the highest rate of "other theft" in Australia with 4 204 victims per 100 000 persons, well above the national rate of 2 856 per 100 000 persons.

The House notes the genuine and strongly held concerns of the people of Western Australia with regard to the vicious and senseless crimes that are causing people to live in fear for their safety and wellbeing.

We further note that more of the same government policies will not turn around the deplorable crime rates in this State.

We call upon the Government to take immediate and decisive action to -

- (a) provide for truth in sentencing and appropriate deterrents for those who break the law;
- (b) ensure that police have the resources to patrol our suburbs and to apprehend and prosecute offenders; and
- (c) address the causes of crime in our community as a matter of urgency.

MRS ROBERTS (Midland) [5.02 pm]: The figures contained in the amendment are the most alarming statistics in the recent history of this State. The list, which is taken directly from the Australian Bureau of Statistics report released on 15 July 1998, highlights that in a range of areas Western Australia is either leading the nation, or coming close to it, in victimisation rates for a range of dreadful crimes. In other instances it is recording massive increases in the rate of victimisation. For example, there is a 43 per cent increase in the rate of unarmed robbery. It seems that in the past week or so the Government has reacted in a knee-jerk manner to this problem. Yesterday the emphasis of the Governor's speech was on law and order and legislation which promises to do something about this problem. Parliament has been waiting for some of that legislation for years. Much of it was promised long ago, such as legislation for the control of weapons and legislation dealing with prostitution, which has connections to drug offences and organised crime. The current situation also places police officers in an invidious position.

At last the Premier will move to introduce legislation for the carrying of graffiti instruments - nearly a year after the Leader of the Opposition introduced legislation which the Opposition hoped could be adopted in a bipartisan way. Similar legislation was put in place in South Australia more than two years ago.

These statistics should come as no surprise because the Government, through the Minister for Police and the Premier, should have been watching these statistics on a month-by-month basis. At police headquarters in Perth monthly reports are produced on the status of these crimes. Also those statistics are broken down into police regions, and it has been possible to track the rate of crime in this State over the full term of this Government. Further, the Government's global report indicates the emerging trends over the past three years. This year's crime statistics, dreadful as they are, are just an extension of what has happened before. For example, in the category of robbery, between 1994-95 and 1995-96 the rate of unarmed robbery increased by 7.6 per cent. Between 1995-96 and 1996-97 a further increase of 23.7 per cent was recorded. It should come as no surprise to anyone that, with more of the same policies, the rate has increased by 24.2 per cent between 1996-97 and 1997-98. Added together, those statistics present a bleak picture.

In the category of armed robbery, which the Government should have been very worried about a long time ago, the statistics were highlighted by the Opposition in the Parliament at the time. Between 1994-95 and 1995-96 the rate of armed robberies increased by 16.8 per cent. Between 1995-96 and 1996-97, the increase was 23.1 per cent. This year the rate has increased by a further 28.3 per cent. It is not as though all of a sudden the Government has realised it has a problem. I suggest, somewhat cynically, that the Premier has seen the results of polling indicating that the Government is losing ground hand over fist in the area of law and order. I note from polling carried out by the Police Union, which was circulated to a number of members of Parliament, that, probably for the first time in many years, the general opinion in the community is that the Labor Party would perform better in the area of law and order than the Government does.

Mr Bloffwitch: When did that happen?

Mrs ROBERTS: I think the polling was commissioned in May and the results were distributed to some members of both parties in June. We know this Government does opinion polling, and we also know what people are saying in our electorates. It is a bit shallow for the Government to suddenly say that these are dreadful statistics and it will declare war on crime.

Mr Bloffwitch: It will be interesting to see whether you support any hard measures the Government introduces or whether you will say they are too harsh.

Mrs ROBERTS: In the past few years the Government has been in denial. Time and again, last year and the year before, I have waved figures in the face of the Minister for Police and the Government. I have said the figures are dreadful and have asked what will be done. The Minister for Police has traditionally said there is no real problem and that in a particular category over a particular time the situation has improved.

The Government has tried to gloss over these very poor figures, year in and year out. The difficulty it faces is that this year there can be no cover-up of these figures. I refer to the saying that you can fool some of the people some

of the time, but not all the people all the time. This Government is fooling no-one on the question of law and order; most people do not need to read these statistics to know the dreadful state of crime in the community and the impact it is having on their families and friends.

Interestingly after these statistics came out, there was a call from the Government and the Police Commissioner for a bipartisan approach, to put politics aside and to work together to solve this problem. The Opposition supports reducing crime and improving clearance rates, but does not support a line which says, "Just be quiet and agree; don't make waves; just sit back and trust us." Those opposite have no record on which we could base any trust at all. In the midst of this, they continue to try to cover up the bad figures and again to put a gloss on the situation.

Nothing demonstrates this more clearly than the press release that went out containing the latest police statistics. It is unbelievable. It has a heading about the decrease in serious assaults in Western Australia. Just about every statistic has gone up, but this figure has been picked out. Those opposite know there are colossal problems with motor vehicle theft, armed robbery, unarmed robbery and home burglaries. However, they pretend they are doing really well on law and order and put out this press release with statistics under the heading referring to a decrease in serious assaults. It talks about a decrease of 12.1 per cent in the rate of serious assaults reported to police in Western Australia over the past 12 months.

I say congratulations; that is great. I wish we were doing that in every category. The press release then went on to say that to complement that increase, the Western Australia Police Service operational statistics, released on the date of the press release, 30 July, indicate that the level of reported serious assaults cleared by police has increased from 82 per cent to 87.4 per cent. Yet again, we are being told the good news story - not only has there been a decrease in serious assaults, but also the clearance rate has improved by 5 per cent. We are not told that the clearance rate has been reduced in the area of indecent assault. The previous year the clearance rate was 97.5 per cent, and now it is 87.5 per cent. That is glossed over and not talked about at all.

We are told that the fuel immobiliser scheme is working. I do not see how that can be if we end up with a 12 per cent increase in car theft. To justify that, we are told that, even though there has been a 12.8 per cent increase in the figure for the previous year, it remains well below the figure in the pre-immobiliser days in 1994-95. We are not told that it is still way above the pre-immobiliser days in 1995-96. In fact, there was a decrease between 1994-95 and 1995-96. The comparison is made with the figures for two years beforehand to cover up the fact that, despite the immobiliser scheme, car theft is still out of control. A 12 per cent increase demonstrates that.

Mr Tubby: What is your solution? What are you going to do about it?

Mrs ROBERTS: Perhaps the member should listen. If he did, he would realise I am coming to the amendment to the motion fairly shortly.

Mr Tubby: You've only nine minutes; you've wasted about 21 minutes.

Mrs ROBERTS: Perhaps if the member were a little quieter and listened, he might learn something. Another gloss the Government tries to put over is that there has been a massive 60 per cent increase in police funding. In fact, the Governor made that point in his speech at the opening of Parliament yesterday. That speech reads as though there was a 60 per cent increase this year. There was not. The argument is that there has been a 60 per cent increase since about 1992. I have never seen the figures to demonstrate that is the case, and I am interested to see them produced.

Over the past three years we have seen a decrease in the operational funding for police officers who are working at the front line. Their operational funding budget has been cut significantly. As part of this Government's gloss, which attempts to cover up what is really going on in law and order, we hear mounds about the great capital works and how the Government is doing a great job with every police station and lockup in this State. I will present some interesting information about the Rockingham lockup. Contrary to the positive talk, there are some very bad stories about of the neglect of police stations and lockups in this State.

Rockingham is a major regional centre with a population of about 65 000. It has a courthouse which holds petty sessions courts every Tuesday for all persons arrested during the week in the Rockingham and Kwinana area, as well as those who have been summonsed and remanded from another date. I will start with the inhumane conditions of the cells. A lockup manual states that every prisoner should be treated in a humane and dignified manner, yet officers at the Rockingham station are forced to place prisoners in a cell that is stained with human blood, disgustingly dirty, and often with a wet floor, leaving the prisoners standing in wet socks, on the seat, as staff order that all prisoners must remove their shoes if they contain laces. The staff members find themselves continually apologising to prisoners who, rightly, complain about the inhumane conditions they are forced to endure. We must keep in mind that not all of these people are convicted, vicious criminals. Some are awaiting a court appearance where they may be found not guilty. The toilet and the exercise yard, which is supposed to be used by prisoners, looks and smells as though it has not been cleaned in several years. Prisoners who are taken to this toilet often refuse to use it. Some officers

prefer to allow prisoners to use the toilets located past the cells which are used by staff members, a practice which some other staff find objectionable.

There is a complaint about the lack of staffing at Rockingham. There are no designated lockup staff at the Rockingham police station at any time. Generally whoever is in the office at the time initiates the responsibility and pitches in. This often leaves two or three people to handle up to 10 prisoners who are coming into the lockup at regular intervals in the space of only two hours. Even with proper and adequate lockup conditions, there is not enough staff to provide the custodial care in which the Western Australia Police Service trains its officers.

Mr Bloffwitch: I wonder when you will ever allow the Prisons Department to look at that.

Mrs ROBERTS: I knew members opposite would not want to hear about this.

Mr Bloffwitch: Yes, I do want to hear about it; in fact, I welcome it.

Mrs ROBERTS: All of this adds up to an awful lack of security. Police officers at the Rockingham police station say that every Tuesday they have one or more maximum security, sentenced prisoners being detained there on a bring-up order for court. It is not unusual for the prisoner truck to transport up to five prisoners at once. These prisoners may be on remand or sentence with a return order to prison. The only safe cell available at the Rockingham lockup is the observation cell to which prisoners must be walked out the back door of the station and across the car park, a practice which is totally insecure, especially for maximum security prisoners.

To give an example of the problem this is causing for security and to the community, on Tuesday, 298 July 1998 five prisoners were brought to the lockup by the prison truck. They were all put in the exercise yard. The first one was brought into the charge room for processing. Within 10 minutes of placing the prisoners in the exercise yard, a maximum security prisoner from Casuarina Prison, serving time for armed robbery and awaiting sentencing for further charges of armed robbery and burglary committed while on parole, escaped by separating the wire mesh on the roof after being hoisted up by the other prisoners. This appears simply to have been an opportunity taken by a prisoner who commented to a constable the week before that security was very slack at Rockingham. The prisoner has now been recaptured but, while an escapee, he was certainly a danger to the public. As a result of this incident, there is a station order that the exercise yard is not to be used. With the cells being used as storage space, this leaves only the observation cell.

I understand this Government has been promising a new police station and lockup for Rockingham for some time. We eagerly await that because it is long overdue. In the interim, these disgusting conditions and this totally insecure situation, which, especially given the lack of staffing, may result in police officers being overpowered and injured, must be addressed immediately. At the very least the Government needs to implement interim measures until the new Rockingham police station is built, including employing people to do the cleaning. This Government has nothing to be proud of in the area of law and order; it is in a shambles. This is another instance of the Government trying to gloss over the facts and pretending that it is doing wonderful things in the area of law and order, when the Police portfolio has been completely mismanaged from start to finish by this Government. Morale in the Police Service has never been lower, the crime statistics have never been worse and dreadful situations like this are occurring while the Government sits on its hands. In terms of offering -

Mr Tubby interjected.

Mrs ROBERTS: The member for Roleystone would have to be deaf, dumb and blind if he did not have a copy of the amendment and did not hear it in the first place. The Opposition has called upon the Government to take immediate action in three areas. The first is to provide the truth in sentencing laws that the Government has been promising for ages and over which Mr Foss has been sitting on his hands.

Mr Tubby: These are our initiatives. We want your positive initiatives.

Mrs ROBERTS: We want to see that legislation in the Parliament this session. We want police officers to have the resources to patrol our suburbs and to apprehend and prosecute offenders. They tell me they do not have those resources now. We expect the Government to take some action to address the causes of crime in our community as a matter of urgency. The Government is sitting on its hands over the unemployment, youth, and drug issues and a range of other factors which contribute to the causes of crime.

Mr Osborne: What school are you going to close to do that?

MR GRAHAM (Pilbara) [5.21 pm]: I want to pick up on the inane interjection by the member for Bunbury. There seems to be a few of those in law and order debates. With all due respect to the member for Bunbury, I hope and I trust that his comment was meant to be flippant. I would be happy in the next election campaign to attend some public meetings and point out that the member for Bunbury does not support truth in sentencing and deterrents for

those who break the law because a school is needed somewhere else. I would be happy to go to Bunbury or Geraldton and point out that both of those members would not support ensuring police have the resources to patrol our suburbs and apprehend and prosecute offenders because, by way of interjection, they indicated their belief that a school should be built somewhere. That is the kind of nonsense that gets into law and order debates and it infuriates me.

The Government, whether Liberal or Labor, has the primary responsibility to ensure the safety of its citizens. It is not about industrial development or education; it is about the safety of its citizens, first and foremost. That is one of the primary reasons that our system of Government was invented. Let us not fool around with it, belittle it or be silly about it.

There is no doubt that Western Australia is experiencing a crime epidemic. The Government has been denying it for years, but crime has been increasing steadily since the change of Government in 1993. There is no debate or dispute about that, except from successive Ministers for Police in Liberal Governments. I make the point that that is not what the Government says in its own publications.

In its submission to the Federal Government Grants Commission review for 1999, the Government said that the Federal Government should take into account the high and increasing rate of crime in Western Australia. That is the official government position. Members opposite should not pretend it is other than that. They have been doing that for years, ever since they got into government. I recommend to members opposite that they read that report instead of listening to the nonsense that comes out of the mouths of Police Ministers. I have made this point to successive Police Ministers: The Minister for Police is supposed to be our person in the Police Force, not the coppers' person in Parliament. They do not understand that. They all seem to understand that until they get the job. Once they get the job they become the top cop and they are unable to accept that there are problems in the Police Force in Western Australia and that there is an increasing level of crime in this State. At one level the Government accepts and recognises that, but at the other level it is incapable of dealing with it.

Before I move onto that issue, I make the point that I have spent probably a fortnight to three weeks on the Internet looking at crime fighting initiatives and statistics around the world. I have only recently been connected to the Internet and had the ability to do that. I have had a lifelong interest in these matters, particularly juvenile crime. The Government has done many things since it has been in office, but it has not had a comprehensive crime fighting and crime prevention package. It still does not have one today. The Government is very good at issuing press releases, but any cursory glance at the research that is available shows the problem with crime and the rising levels of crime in Western Australia.

Statistics produced by the University of Western Australia, the Institute of Criminology, and the Government's own publications, show that the crime rate in Western Australia is streets ahead of the rest of Australia, particularly in the area of violent crime. It is a disturbing phenomenon. I recommend that members dig out some of the research that is available. The faculty of law at UWA produces some great papers. I do not agree with many of the conclusions they arrive at, but the raw statistics and detail show clearly what is happening in Western Australia with the rising levels of crime.

We read headlines in the *Sunday Times* which indicate that we are losing the battle against crime. The Commissioner of Police finally understands that Western Australia has a law and order problem. It is clear from their interjections that members of the Government do not yet understand that. The Premier - to give him some credit - understands that he has a political problem. That was the nub of the announcements yesterday.

I shall go through what the Government and the former Minister for Police have done. I shall go through the term of the former Minister for Police, the member for Darling Range. I have taken the liberty of pulling out of the Parliamentary Library a precis of every press release in the member for Darling Range's time as Minister for Police. Let us consider what the Court Liberal Government's chief cop had to say about law and order issues in Western Australia.

I will not read every press release, but they are here for members who want to look at them. The list reads: New cop shop in Dunsborough; nurses get a pay increase; Ballidu community praised for its support; a new three year sponsorship agreement for the State Emergency Service; senior constable appointed coordinator of the school watch committee; police officers now have access to fast legal assistance from the Government; WA police officers facing removal to have access to review process; the launch of an advertising campaign urging gun owners to buy secure cabinets; police officers offered a pay rise; Minister to attend the Australasian Police Ministers' conference in New Zealand; official opening of the Gosnells police station; fire fighters to give safety lessons to children throughout the State; new Murdoch police station opened; report recommending a level of insurance and compensation for volunteers.

The list continues: Minister for Police and Emergency Services, launch of a crime stoppers campaign program in Kalgoorlie-Boulder - I had one of those in Port Hedland; it is a telephone number which one rings to dob someone in.

Mrs van de Klashorst interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: Absolutely. Let me tell the member about the crime stoppers program. The launch of the crime stoppers program in Port Hedland involved flying 25 to 30 people into the town. They held a big public launch of the program. It is nothing more than a phone number which one rings to report a crime. That costs thousands of dollars. In the same week as the Government did that, it cut the funding to the Aboriginal patrol in the town. That is law and order and how the Government deals with it. I am giving my Address-in-Reply speech about it and members opposite will get more of it because I have had a gutful of it; it is absolute PR nonsense. Figures reveal that half of Western Australian gun owners have not secured their firearms. The list continues: Launch of police blues bus to promote safety and education issues; official opening of fire and rescue services new Karratha regional office. We should bear in mind that the Karratha fire and rescue service has been operational for 10 years; it is not opening a new office at all, it has only changed its name. To continue: Official opening of the new Roebourne Police Station; aerial water bombers; multi million dollar operations support complex at Midland; new committee set up to advise government on issues relating to firearms; and launch of scheme to install smoke alarms in seniors' homes. I can go on because I am only about half way through. The former Minister for Police made nine announcements of one new police station - that is in a city where a serial killer is still on the loose. Not one word was said, not one crime fighting or law and order initiative was announced in his entire time as Minister. It is piddling play at the edges smoke alarm nonsense, rather than dealing with matters of substance to do with the Police Force and the security of the citizens in Western Australia, as the Minister for Police should be doing. If members opposite do not like what I have said and think I have it wrong; the facts are here. They can go through them and stand in this debate to defend to the hilt the former Minister for Police, the member for Darling Range.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: Let me tell the member about the positives: Under its two Ministers for Police, Western Australia has gone from a national middle level ranking in crime to the worst.

Mr Johnson: Are you saying that crimes have increased astronomically?

Mr GRAHAM: I am telling the member - he should not get into semantics - that by his Government's own reports and submissions to the Federal Government, Western Australia is leading the nation in every category of crime. Western Australia asked for more money based on that fact. It is not known whether it will get it.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: Absolutely.

Mr Johnson: I agree with you, so do you support our looking at other deterrents?

Mr GRAHAM: That depends on what the member means by other deterrents. It might sound like I am not answering the member's question, but if the Government goes down the road of institutionalised violence, there is only one outcome - more violence.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: No, I used to live in Singapore, so I have a bit to say about it. I was part of the law and order system in Singapore for a while.

Mr Johnson: Was that before Lee Kuan Yew?

Mr GRAHAM: No, it was before, and the member does not want to go down that road. I say categorically to the member that if the Government goes down the road of institutionalised violence, the level of violent crime will increase at a rate that no-one ever thought humanly possible. That evidence is demonstrable everywhere in the world where it has been tried.

Several members interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: No, since the Liberal Party got into government.

I gave members opposite a bit of a blast when I started and I make no apologies for that because I hate the belittling of law and order issues; it is a serious and fundamental issue. The kind of toadying, obsequious speech given yesterday by the member for Mitchell in which he tried to shift the blame onto the media is exactly what is wrong with this Government; it is a symptom of this Government because it has a problem that it cannot deal with. It is not

the media's fault. As much as people try to dress it up, and put lines, stories and spins on it, the level of crime in Western Australia is increasing at an alarming rate and the Government recognises that. One cannot shoot the messenger for reporting those things. It is absolute nonsense. I challenge the member for Mitchell to invite me to his electorate during an election campaign where I will give his speech to his voters to tell them that he says they have no problem. We shall see how long he lasts; I bet he does not! The Government, having denied the problem for most of its time in office, is now trying to convince us that it will deal with it.

We heard the Governor's speech yesterday. Most people sat there and listened with great interest to what the Governor had to say. Members should excuse my cynicism, but, apart from funding council patrols - about which I shall have something to say in another speech - the upshot of the Governor's announcements, which are the Government's announcements, is that we shall form two committees. No budget announcement was made and no strategy was laid down; nothing was said other than that we shall have two committees.

Mr Pental: Even on the question of the council involvement, that was comprehensively rejected by the previous Minister for Police in March 1991.

Mr GRAHAM: The ironic thing about the two committees is that one will be chaired by the Premier who, apart from the previous Minister for Police, has demonstrably failed more on the two major issues which he took on from the law and order package - graffiti and drugs. He took personal control of both issues and has had that control for a number of years, yet we now have a Governor's announcement that we must deal with these two heinous problems; so we put the same bloke in charge of the same issues and widen his ambit to allow him to get more control, when he has proved ineffective on the ones he already has control of!

The second committee is chaired by the Commissioner of Police. Crime prevention and crime fighting are complex issues. The only thing one can say about the simple solutions put forward by people to solve complex law and order issues is that they are wrong. If the solutions were that simple, it is a fair chance that someone of moderate intelligence would have thought of them before and tried them, and the fact that they have not been implemented demonstrates quite clearly that they are not the sort of answers that work. However, some key elements and successful packages which have been developed in countries around the world, some of which I have visited and others in which I have been involved, have some key elements. In essence, they must have three key elements: Before the introduction or establishment of any new body, clear, concise and comprehensive plans and guidelines must be in place for what it is those committees, groups or bodies are to do. That is not the case in this instance. It is not the case in either of the committees that have been established.

The second key criterion is that the lead agency in any crime prevention body should not be the police. The weight of worldwide evidence indicates that when these bodies are set up and run by the police they fail. They must be set up by a Government which has thought through the issues and which has a comprehensive plan. We should not put the coppers in charge because they are not good at it. The characteristics that policing develops in people and the systems with which they are familiar are not conducive to the prevention of crime. I do not mean to belittle the role of the police; they have a very important role to play. However, they should not be the lead agency in these bodies.

The third criterion is that the budget allocated to these bodies should reflect the size of the problem. If one has a serious law and order problem, one allocates a significant sum of money to fix it. If those three criteria are not adhered to, the system established will not affect things one iota. It will relieve the political pressure because it will get the sorts of headlines we have seen recently in *The West Australian*, and that is what it is designed to do. However, it will have no marked, long term effect on crime rates or law and order. I sincerely wish that the Government had announced the establishment of a body that would deal with the law and order problem we have in Western Australia. This will not.

MR KOBELKE (Nollamara) [5.44 pm]: I support the amendment. The member for Pilbara has made an excellent contribution to the debate. The nature of some of the interjections illustrates the problems this Government has in dealing with this very important issue. Government members are not willing to face up in a reasoned and logical way to the complex range of issues that must be addressed. In the very short time available to him, the member for Pilbara outlined some of those issues very clearly and precisely. I will take up in part some of the issues to which he alluded.

The member of Pilbara outlined the Government's total contradiction in respect of the level of crime in this State. The fact is that the crime rate has gone from being in the middle range to, in general, the worst of any State in Australia, and that has happened during the term of this Government. The Government has not been willing to acknowledge that publicly and, as a result, has not been willing to put in train the steps required to resolve the problem.

This Government is interested only in media manipulation. We see very few examples of its tackling the real problems confronting the State and being successful in resolving them. This Government's immediate response is

that it has a political problem and needs a media strategy. It does not look beyond that media strategy to the issue and how it might be resolved productively.

Mr Johnson: What is your view on a zero tolerance policy?

Mr KOBELKE: These glib phrases do not solve the problems.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr KOBELKE: I will answer the question; the member can make his speech in a moment.

Mr Graham: It does not work in New York; it has been dismantled.

Mr KOBELKE: I thank the member for Pilbara for his interjection. This concept of zero tolerance is mentioned and suddenly it becomes the magic bullet. All one must do is put it in the gun, fire it and all the problems are solved. Anyone who thinks that that simplistic approach will work clearly will not contribute constructively to the debate on law and order in this State. That is not to say that in certain circumstances some policing, which in real terms involves operational matters, does amount to zero tolerance in a given area, at a given time and for a specific purpose. It may play an important role in that narrow sense. However, as the member for Pilbara has indicated, to take this glib phrase and try to apply it across the whole system simply does not work. It is a load of nonsense.

Mr Bloffwitch: I was in New York a week ago and it is working very well. I was there; you were not. Do not tell me rubbish.

Mr KOBELKE: The member might be very good at swallowing all the media hype, but that does not mean it is the truth. Three years ago I spoke to a person visiting Perth who was involved in city renewal in New York and other cities. Although we did not speak specifically about zero tolerance, his assessment was that the single biggest factor in turning around the social problems in New York was the immigration from central and eastern Europe as a result of the breakdown in the political systems in those areas. Many people came in and rejuvenated the city and started a wide range of new industries. In his view that changed the social fabric in some areas and stimulated the city. The social and economic factors, driven largely by that immigration, led to major changes. Zero tolerance is one aspect of the social fabric.

Mrs van de Klashorst: There are many more aspects. Zero tolerance is part of a whole range of things. You have said yourself that it involves social tolerance, understanding and changing poverty. That is part of zero tolerance.

Mr KOBELKE: I do not accept that zero tolerance is a solution. Members opposite are trying to peddle it as a magic bullet. They have failed dismally for six years and their answer now is that they have the magic bullet - zero tolerance. If we adopt the concept of zero tolerance, in one, two or three years we will have the same scenario or worse. Members opposite are not willing to enter into an open and rational debate about the real issues and the complex range of solutions that must be put in place. They have utterly failed.

Hopefully the problem has become so bad that with the establishment of the Premier's committee they may be unlike the leopard and change their spots. We might then be able to adopt an approach that will lead us somewhere.

In 1992, members opposite presented their law and order policy. Under the heading "CRIME CRISIS...IS W.A. SAFE?" the first sentence states -

Western Australia is in the grip of a crime crisis our police force is powerless to stop.

That was the coalition's view in 1992, when it was safe to walk the streets of Perth. The policy then presented a range of statistics, which cleverly referred to gross numbers - not the per 100 000 ratio - indicating increases of 200 per cent, 180 per cent and 349 per cent in many categories over the 10 years to 1991, which included two years of Liberal Government, because it suited their statistical purposes.

As Disraeli said, lies, dam lies and statistics. Those increases were very gradual when compared to those which have occurred since members opposite came to government. Figures have skyrocketed in many areas of serious crime during that time. The promise of stopping the revolving door and reducing crime was not kept. I take a further quote from the 1992 election policy -

A Coalition government will make the streets of Western Australian safe. We will make public transport safe from gangs of thugs and we will crack down hard on the increasing numbers of people prepared to use violence in the pursuit of crime.

Members opposite said they would build a strong and effective Police Force to halt the crime wave and introduce wide-ranging reforms to make sure that crime does not pay. They did not get anywhere with that aim.

Mr Baker: Excellent journalism!

Mr KOBELKE: Yes, it is a good press release. That is all members opposite are into; they make nice sounding statements they do not mean or are incapable of acting upon. This policy was released in 1992. Soaring crime rates have been evident from 1992 to 1996 on key statistics. Two brief quotes from the election platform of 1996 read -

Measures to continue a reduction in the incidence of burglary, theft and vandalism.

Further -

Continued reduction in the incidence of motor vehicle theft.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicate that over the past 12 months, vehicle thefts have increased by 12 per cent. Member opposite have not done very well on that problem. We can compare the statistics from one year to the next. Fluctuations occur which can be artificial. Changes in the method of statistics collection may be involved. For example, if graffiti was previously recorded as damage to property, and became a new category, the property damage statistic might fall with a commensurate rise in the number of graffiti incidents. Similarly, reporting problems may be involved. Report numbers can drop in a given year as police stop collecting the statistics. An office still collects the statistics, but people are discouraged from making reports. Many people have told me that they have complained about a minor issue, but police did not make a report stating that they were not collecting those reports as they were too busy with other crimes. Also, when police become active in certain areas, reporting levels increase even though the level of crime may not increase. Therefore, statistics are vague and can be used and abused in various ways.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in the past six years, in a range of serious crime categories, Western Australia, when compared with other States, has moved from a middle ranking State to the top or second top on the list of crime rates. Clearly, over the entire six years we have had a significant increase in the crimes which beset the citizens of this State. That has happened during the time of a Government which was elected on a key platform of getting tough on crime.

Crime was a major issue at the 1993 elections. However, it was a minor at the 1996 elections because the Government did not want to highlight the fact that it was not producing the goods to reduce crime. In 1992, leading into the 1993 election from opposition, a key part of the platform of members opposite, which was successful politically, was to suggest that something would be done about crime. If this Government has done anything about crime, it has increased the crime rate. It cannot be seen in any other way. The incompetence of this Government has allowed crime to get out of control. This Government must accept responsibility for that increase.

We must analyse why the Government has been so singularly unsuccessful in protecting the citizens of this State from outrageous incidents and crime. Why has it been so singularly unsuccessful in providing the security that ordinary Western Australians expect? We can put this down to four reasons. First, this Government is totally media-driven. Its members believe one need only fix the political problem by massaging the media. They do not know how to do anything else. We see that repeatedly from the Premier and the majority of his Ministers. I am willing to acknowledge the good work of certain Ministers in certain areas, but primarily this Government is about managing the media and fixing the political problem by changing the way the story is presented, not changing the facts of the matter.

The second reason is that Ministers are poor at consulting. This Government does not know how to talk to people and take on board their suggestions to arrive at programs which will work in the reality of contemporary Western Australia. This Government, with one or two exceptions, does not have those skills, which is a major problem.

Thirdly, again with a few exceptions, Ministers have no talent, willingness or ability to enter difficult areas and achieve results. This portfolio has simply not had Ministers with the strength, abilities and drive to draw all other Ministers together to adopt the wide-ranging and comprehensive measures needed to address this serious problem.

The fourth reason for this huge increase in the crime rate is the increasing prevalence of illicit drugs in our community. A range of problems apply to the drugs problem as across the entire law and order issue to which I have alluded. This Government, with one or two exceptions, finds it difficult to face up to the issue of how to handle the drug problem in our community. I commend the action taken by the National Party rank and file at their conference. I am not stating I agree with their proposal. However, I hope National Party members will have the guts to do something about that proposal in Parliament; that is, to say that we have failed to deal effectively with the drugs issue. If the provision of these drugs in some controlled way, after looking at the matter thoroughly, has a chance of improving the situation, let us try to put in place a strictly controlled trial. Then we will see whether any success can be achieved.

Mr Omodei: You are agreeing with the National Party.

Mr KOBELKE: I do not know whether I will commit to such a trial at this stage. However, the Government needs to consider it carefully and consult widely. If it offers some way of solving the major problems of drugs in our community, it should give it a go. The Government has singularly failed on the drug issue. The Premier continues to think that media hype and education is somehow a solution. Those views might have some currency in the Government, but the experience of the wider community is that it is not working. We need to experiment to find a resolution to the problem.

The current rate of home invasions is extremely disturbing. A large percentage of home invasions are drug-related, whether it is by people who need money to get drugs for themselves or the home attacked has been targeted correctly or incorrectly as containing a supply of drugs. It is totally unacceptable that people's homes are broken into at any time of the day or night, or that people are set upon in a violent way, to get money or other goods. The form of crime we have come to expect in this State has changed, and that is different from an increase in the rate of crime. Although we are seeing a range of crimes increase by huge numbers, we have also seen a shift in the forms of crime. These attacks on people, whether elderly or young, in their homes, and the attacks on elderly people walking in the street, indicate not only an increase in the rate of crime, but also a shift to the types of crime that no civilised society can countenance. The whole drug problem must be tackled in a way that is likely to be effective. That is the fourth area which possibly explains why this Government has been totally unsuccessful. Unless it makes a major shift in the direction of its policy and in its commitment to dealing with lawlessness in this State, the situation will only get worse. If this Government thinks that magic bullets, such as more physical punishment or zero tolerance, are the answer, in a year or two years the crime rate will be even higher.

Sitting suspended from 6.01 to 7.30 pm

MR RIEBELING (Burrup) [7.31 pm]: I support the amendment. It is with some disappointment that the Opposition must raise this issue, because one of the major platforms of this Government's election campaign in 1993 was that it could fix the law and order issue. Again, it went to the last election with the promise that it would promote law and order as a major issue and that it had all the answers to the problems. The only answer this Government has put forward is to lock up more and more Western Australians for longer and longer terms. The use of any imagination in attempting to reduce the crime rate appears to be beyond this Government.

Mr Bloffwitch: Give us your suggestions. You have 19 minutes to do so.

Mr RIEBELING: If the member for Geraldton will listen carefully, he will learn. It may take more than this speech, but certainly this speech will be much more informative than the speech the Government dictated to the Governor about its law and order policies. This Governor's address contains more and more of the same. This Government refuses to tackle the difficult problems in law and order. The National Party, to its great credit, has recognised the major cause of crime in Western Australia.

Mr Omodei: You will probably go one step further and make it compulsory.

Mr RIEBELING: I would for the member for Warren-Blackwood because it might lift his capacity and ability to perform, although I doubt it.

The drug trade is one of the huge problems in this country. Australia has followed the United States, which has poured billions of dollars into the prohibition of drugs. The United States has the worst crime and drug rates and the highest imprisonment rates in the world. If that is the success story this State wants, it should follow this Government's policies; that is, if enough enforcement is used, prohibition will work. It has never worked and it will not work in Western Australia.

Mr Johnson: Are you saying drugs should be legal?

Mr RIEBELING: I am saying the minimum step is to provide addicts with the drug of their addiction so they do not have to resort to crime.

Mr Barron-Sullivan: What is the maximum step?

Mr RIEBELING: The maximum step flows from that and it is to remove prohibition, but we are a long way from that. The National Party has taken the first bold step. People will pick on the National Party, such as the members who are suggesting through their interjections that I am soft on drugs. That is not the case. I hope no-one uses drugs, but the answer to controlling them is not to say they do not exist; the answer is to control the distribution of those drugs. Any money made from the drug trade should be directed into reform programs, which can be effective.

Mr Bradshaw: What about if we attract all the druggies from the eastern States who come here for free drugs?

Mr RIEBELING: What will happen if the sky falls in? Problems must be tackled as they arise. My information is

that up to 60 per cent of all offences in Western Australia are perpetrated by people involved in the drug trade to some extent, and most are victims themselves. That does not in any way reduce the seriousness of the offences those people commit. I recognise that they commit horrible offences in their endeavour to get money, and they must be punished severely.

Mr Johnson: Do you agree with me?

Mr RIEBELING: No. The answer is not to say that we do not like drugs - no-one likes the adverse effects of drugs - and to lock up those people and throw away the key.

Mr Johnson: What is the appropriate punishment for a person who commits a violent crime against an old person?

Mr RIEBELING: I will come to that. I have already outlined the major problem. The member sitting next to the member for Hillarys will never agree with me unless he is representing someone on a drugs charge.

Mr Baker: The duty is different if you are representing a client.

Mr RIEBELING: It is the most two-faced situation I have ever witnessed, that the member for Joondalup should be chairman of the committee investigating the misuse of drugs and at the same time be a lawyer representing people on drugs charges. It is unbelievable.

The member for Hillarys referred to violent crime; I agree it is absolutely unacceptable and I predict that in the next five to 10 years prisons with high walls and bars will be the province of violent prisoners. Within a decade only those prisoners will be locked up in maximum security prisons. The type of prison that should be developed for violent prisoners should be absolutely different from that for non-violent prisoners. At the moment that is not the case, and there is only one prison system. It is time some imagination was used in the system whereby the punishment for non-violent offences does not require people to lose their jobs and possibly face a break-up in their marriage. Perhaps the Government should think laterally about allowing those people to continue to function in society. It could perhaps remove them from their families and provide accommodation outside prison to allow them to continue in their jobs and remain productive members of society. That is possible in today's society. The problem with violent criminals is such that we must lock them up for increasingly longer periods. We must also put in place proper rehabilitation programs.

Mr Johnson: How can you rehabilitate habitual criminals?

Mr RIEBELING: Not all of the people in our prisons are habitual criminals.

This motion refers to truth in sentencing. That matter has also been in the news lately. We support the report of Justice Hammond, which states that everyone wants truth in sentencing. I have news for Justice Hammond and members of this place: Truth in sentencing for Joe Bloggs in the street means that if he were sentenced to five years in prison, he would serve five years in prison.

Mr Johnson: I agree with that.

Mr RIEBELING: If the Government were prepared to spend three times the money that it is currently spending on the prison system, the member could say that that is what this Government will do. However, I do not believe the Treasurer will spend that amount of money on our prison system.

Mr Johnson: There will be a saving, because they cannot commit further crimes if they are locked away.

Mr RIEBELING: I am glad the member for Hillarys said that. The real saving that can be made in the prison system, if one is smart enough, is not in keeping people in prison for longer periods but in making sure that when they get out of prison, they do not go back into prison. Money that is spent on rehabilitation -

Mr Johnson: We have tried that.

Mr RIEBELING: The Government has not tried that. This Government has wound back rehabilitation programs dramatically. The Government announced in the recent Budget that rehabilitation programs would be enhanced. My information is that one month into this Budget, only four of the 11 programs that were announced in that Budget are continuing to operate. I do not believe I have been misinformed about those rehabilitation programs; if I have, I apologise. I was told only today that the vast majority of those rehabilitation programs have been withdrawn.

I would have applauded both Justice Hammond and the Government had they come up with something new with regard to our parole system. It is a joke to say simply that what we in this place need to do is keep people in prison for 50 per cent of the time rather than for 30 per cent of the time and pretend that is different from what has been happening. The people of Western Australia are not dumb. They know what is the true situation.

The Government should set up a new system where a judge would sentence Joe Bloggs to 10 years' imprisonment, and that would be the end of the involvement of the judge with that prisoner. That prisoner would then go into the prison system, and the prison authorities would sit down with that prisoner and sort out what offence he had committed and what type of rehabilitation program should be put in place. They would then manage that person and put in place a rehabilitation program that at the end of the day would guarantee to society not that he would not re-offend, but that he was less likely to re-offend than he was previously.

The recidivism rate in Western Australian prisons is about 60 per cent, according to the Ministry of Justice; others say it is up to 80 per cent. The situation in Western Australia is that the dumbest criminals are caught all the time. They are very bad at what they do. These people who have chosen the life of crime are the world's worst at it, because they are the ones whom we catch.

Mr Cunningham: Not university trained!

Mr RIEBELING: That is right. We do not ever see the smart ones. Rather than concentrate on putting more resources into graffiti, about which the Premier is passionate, the Government should put more emphasis on trying to improve the clearance rate for burglary, major assault and the like. That would deter people -

Mr Omodei: That is not what your leader said today.

Mr RIEBELING: That is what I am saying. Is the Minister listening to me?

Mr Omodei: Yes. That is why I commented. It appears to me that Labor Party members are all over the shop and not sure about what they want.

Ms Warnock: He knows what he is talking about.

Mr Omodei: That means your leader does not know what he is talking about. You should make up your minds if you are to make any sense at all.

Mr RIEBELING: The member for Hillarys is a very good listener, but even he does not take it all in at times. This Government is emphasising a new approach to graffiti, which is fine, but what it forgets, and what this motion highlights, is that in the past year Western Australia has experienced an 11 per cent increase in assaults. Members may think I am silly, but I believe that the fact that we have experienced a 43 per cent increase in unarmed robbery is more important than graffiti.

Mr Johnson: They are all important.

Mr RIEBELING: I put greater emphasis on that than I do on graffiti; however, the Government does not.

Mr Cowan: Nonsense!

Mr RIEBELING: The Governor's speech has a whole section on how important it is to combat graffiti, but the Government does not place the same emphasis on these other offences.

Mr Baker: Watch this space!

Mr RIEBELING: I hope it will address those matters with some imagination and not just by locking up offenders for a bit longer. The Government will not do anything with them while they are in prison but will just lock them up and perhaps give them a good flogging. That is a joke, and no-one believes it will work.

Mr Baker: Ask the people what they want.

Mr RIEBELING: We can talk to the people, and if we say enough times that the answer is to lock up offenders for longer, they will believe it. The Press and Howard Sattler say that, but they are wrong. Members opposite say, "That is the way to do it. Let us whip it up, and we will lock people up for longer and longer." However, they have no imagination about how to solve the problem. If members opposite were serious about trying to solve the problem, that would be great, but that is not evident from any documents that they have produced. The Government's approach to drug reform, if we can call it that, is devoid of any imagination, with the exception of the National Party members, who offer a glimmer of hope.

Mr Baker: What about the new cautioning system?

Mr RIEBELING: It is a positive step to caution people rather than fine them \$20 or \$30, but we need to go further. Cannabis is a social drug and has been readily available for 35 years. If a copper wanted to make a few busts, he could knock off every 20 year old in the street and would probably come up with cannabis in 80 per cent of cases. Cannabis is pretty widely used among 20 years olds.

Mr Omodei interjected.

Mr RIEBELING: We should muzzle the Minister for Local Government. He would top the list of people who are devoid of imagination.

Mr Omodei: Are you saying that 80 per cent of the people in the street smoke cannabis?

Mr RIEBELING: No. The Minister should not bother to listen. He should go back to sleep or to reading whatever he was reading.

The other thing that must change - it is not in here and I hope the Government picks it up - is that over the past decade and a half, maybe 20 years, the Governments of the day, most of the time with best intentions, have removed personal responsibility for actions. That responsibility must be restored. One of the main causes for the problem of disillusionment in our society is that removal of responsibility for individual actions.

I am working on a paper that I hope will be accepted which will restore responsibility for individual actions. Restitution in many communities is never paid; it must be paid. We must work out a way that at the end of the day the perpetrators of these offences pay restitution. Whether they are punished in other ways is a different matter. The victim must be put back to a situation in which they were in prior to the offence.

Mr Omodei: And if they do not, you will put them in gaol.

Mr RIEBELING: No.

Mr Omodei: You will not put them in gaol?

Mr RIEBELING: Not necessarily. What I am saying is that a different system must be put in place. I am working on a system which will do that and does not necessarily go back to what the Minister always says: "Lock them up." That is exactly what this Government always thinks: "Let us lock him up. Let us lock everyone up. They are doing something I do not like. They are putting graffiti on a wall; let us lock them up."

Mr Baker: Nobody has said that.

Mr RIEBELING: That is what members opposite are leading to and that is what they will do in the end, basically because there is no thought of trying to solve the problems. One of the problems is trying to restore responsibility into our community. In many cases it will be difficult to achieve. However, the cost of not achieving responsibility for individual actions is too high for the community to not tackle. It will be a difficult problem but it is one that must be faced if we really want to tackle crime.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Deputy Premier) [7.54 pm]: I listened with some interest to the member for Burrup for one reason: I found about a week ago that I was to be the co-chair of a Cabinet standing committee on law and order, and I thought this would provide me with some information about what the Opposition thought in respect of the issue of law and order.

In many respects the issues about which any Government - not just our Government - can find itself susceptible to criticism are those areas where Governments have a tendency to put a great degree of finance and support; I refer particularly to law and order and health. We then start measuring our contribution to those portfolios by the level of inputs rather than outcomes. In that sense, when members think over the five years of this Government, we have made a commitment to introduce 500 additional police to the service.

Mr McGowan: It was 800.

Mr COWAN: The member for Rockingham should just wait a while. We also pledged to release 300 police from civilian duties to return to the work of sworn police officers, which gave us the 800 additional police in the service working in areas which required the sworn police officer to do the work. That was accomplished.

Unfortunately, the Minister for Police is not here; he would correct me if I am wrong. Over \$370m has gone into additional resources for the Police Service over the five year period. In addition to that, we examined the laws. We said we would strengthen the penalties applying to car stealing, home invasion, burglary and repeat offenders. Remember the outcry on that side of the House with the "Three strikes and you are in" provision? We also thought we would do something about the Pawnbrokers Act when we decided that it would be appropriate for people selling property and general household goods or personal effects to have some form of identification.

Mr Carpenter: When was the outcry on the three strikes?

Mr COWAN: On that side of the House.

Mr Carpenter: When?

Mr COWAN: When it was debated in the House.

Mr Carpenter: I do not recall an outcry. I am sure it was Labor Party policy. I think you are mistaken.

Mr COWAN: I am quite sure that I am not. Before that outcry this Government legislated for repeat offenders and that produced exactly the same outcry. The member for Willagee was not here at that time, so I would not expect him to recall that.

This Government also amended the Pawnbrokers and Second-Hand Dealers Act. We required proof of identity on the sale of goods in order to more easily detect those people who were selling stolen property. The end result of all of those changes to the law is that those people who want to obtain cash for the purposes of - dare I say it - feeding their habit, have now decided to change their tactics. They assault people; using some form of offensive weapon they hold up the fast food delicatessens or take away food shops; or they invade the premises of elderly, defenceless people and seek to steal cash from those premises. Therefore, it does not matter how much we do, we must be a little smarter. We must measure the level of outcomes we can generate from what we do with law and order.

I indicate to the House from the outset that the Government has no intention of supporting this amendment. However, we recognise that many things must be done. Perhaps one can give - if one needs to - some credit to the Opposition inasmuch as it, like everybody else, can identify the problem. Unfortunately, it has not provided a great number of solutions, although the member for Burrup suggested that solutions exist and they must be found. I agree with that.

I make no apology for the fact that I voted against the proposals that were put to the National Party convention. It is now history that they were passed by a majority, albeit a very narrow majority in one case, therefore it is my responsibility to start doing some of the things that the member for Burrup talked about; that is, looking at alternatives.

One thing that was lost during the course of reporting of the National Party convention is that a very conservative group of people are absolutely fed up with there being no outcome to the extent that they are prepared to throw their conservatism to one side and say, "You must do something. You must try what is not the usual practice. You must try something out of the ordinary because somehow or other the Government has a responsibility to make sure that it can get these things to work."

As I said at the beginning, I have been asked by the Premier to co-chair a standing committee on law and order. That committee will have underneath it a council known as the Safer Western Australia Council to be chaired by the Commissioner of Police. Already we are building great expectations on that changed process in that it will bring together a whole range of groups that have a responsibility for and an interest in dealing with issues associated with crime. That is one of the areas in which I am sure we shall be successful. We will bring together all the disparate groups which are responsible for dealing on a whole of Government basis with crime and issues associated with crime. We will bring together those members of the community who have an interest in crime. It is my expectation -

Mrs Roberts: Like everybody.

Mr COWAN: Yes, it is known that we cannot bring in everybody.

Mrs Roberts: Everybody has an interest in it.

Mr COWAN: Yes, everybody does have an interest in crime, but we expect that that interest would be reflected by leaders within the community who have demonstrated their interest. In other words, how do we define someone who has an "interest"? Is it someone who identifies the problem? Is it someone who then presents practical, workable solutions? I am always amazed by people who say that offenders need a good flogging: The best policy we can have is to introduce a public flogging at half time at the football every Sunday, and that should fix the problem. Everybody in this room knows that when one looks at the records of those who offend, one sees that the majority of them have one thing in common; that is, they have at all times in their lives been subjected to violence or abuse. I want someone to explain to me how additional violence or abuse will correct the fact that they are offenders.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr COWAN: It does not work that way and most people know that. However, it is a simplistic solution which people love to hear; they think that is wonderful. We fall into the trap so often of telling people what they want to hear. In that sense, it is no solution at all. I look forward to the establishment of the standing committee on law and order and the Safer Western Australia Council. I also look forward to making sure that we can deliver practical outcomes and certainly the way to do that is to take advice, to take advantage of those people who are known for their research into crime and its cause and effect, and to deal with that as well as the response which punishment itself needs to deal with.

Mrs Roberts: Probably 50 per cent of our community has either been a victim of crime or someone very close to them has been a victim of crime. The whole community has an interest in crime.

Mr COWAN: I think that percentage could even be higher; it depends where one wants to place the bar in respect of the definition of crime. All of us have had our cars and homes broken into and had things stolen, so everybody has been in that position.

Mrs Roberts: I am suggesting that over the course of the past two years or so, nearly 50 per cent of the community would have been a victim of crime. In my instance, my mother's home has been broken into twice, my grandparents' home has been broken into and my grandfather has been knocked unconscious, and that is not rare. It is similar for nearly everyone.

Mr COWAN: I acknowledge that story could be recounted by a great number of people. I do not want to prolong this debate. I am sure a number of colleagues will want to speak. I say to members of the Opposition that perhaps the only credit that can be given to them at the moment is that they, like everybody else, have a capacity to identify the problem. This amendment does not provide any solutions; it merely identifies the problem.

Mrs Roberts: Yes, it does. That is not correct. I have proposed to provide for truth in sentencing and appropriate deterrents, and that we ensure the police have the resources to patrol our suburbs and address the cause of crime in our community.

Mr COWAN: Perhaps I can go a step further: The Opposition has identified the problems and restated the principles that so many people state when the issue of law and order is discussed. Fortunately the Government has the responsibility to put into effect those principles and I look forward to the task. There is one thing members can be sure of: I will not be doing it on my own. I will be calling on the support of all my colleagues from both sides of the House.

MR MCGOWAN (Rockingham) [8.05 pm]: I support the amendment moved by the member for Midland. In doing so, I would like to relate an experience I had recently. I had the opportunity to visit a heroin clinic in Subiaco. I met a number of people there who were former addicts and they were involved in a program known as naltrexone. I will discuss that later. I had never been to a heroin clinic before. I presume I have previously met people who are drug addicts, but I did not meet them knowing without a shadow of a doubt that they were heroin addicts.

I spent a few hours talking to a number of the addicts who were in the process of reforming and who relayed their personal experiences to me and how they found naltrexone worked. They also relayed to me how these hard drugs had destroyed their lives. They were quite frank with me that they were, primarily in the case of women, involved in prostitution to support their habits - I presume not because they wanted to but because they had to because of their addiction. They had no control over their habit before attempting to solve it through various programs.

The men that I met were involved principally in violent crime or crimes of various descriptions to support their habit. These crimes included armed robberies, burglaries, home invasions, breaking and entering, car stealing and dealing for that matter because they had uncontrollable needs that they thought they were unable to solve.

Mr Omodei: Did they say how they started their addiction?

Mr MCGOWAN: It ranged; a couple did. The majority came from backgrounds where they were missing something in their lives and they found something that supported them. I try to take a compassionate approach to these people. I have been very fortunate in my life and never found the need to indulge in anything apart from the occasional beer, as the Minister has, but I try to take a compassionate approach to them. I met a range of these people and I knew without doubt that they were drug addicts. They relayed their stories and how they were trying to do something about their addiction. It is very interesting to hear what these people do to support their habits.

From that experience I have come to the very firm conclusion that all the crimes that we experience in society today which are causing so much justifiable community outrage - the home invasions, the armed robberies, the car stealing and these sort of things - are principally the result of drug use. If somehow we can come up with a solution to this hard drug problem, it will solve these other crimes. I take note of the fact that people have mentioned the United States as an example. The United States' solution has been to cure unemployment. Bill Clinton has been very successful in the United States; I have a lot of time for him. He has come up with some very good solutions to the problem of unemployment.

Mrs Roberts: Unemployment in America is less than 4 per cent.

Mr MCGOWAN: It is, and the US has solved its drug problem primarily by reducing unemployment. Before Bill Clinton was elected he had a sign behind his desk which said "It's the economy, stupid." He has fixed the economy and as a result he has largely helped to fix the crime problem. I know that many people have said this, but I agree

that drugs are driving these hard crimes. The reasons behind the use of drugs are often incomprehensible to us because most of us come from very good and privileged backgrounds.

Mr Omodei: The member for Burrup said crime is out of control in the United States and that it has the highest crime rate in the world.

Mr McGOWAN: It does. The United States has not solved the problem; it has reduced it. The Minister should not misunderstand me: I do not support the American gun policies. The main problem in our society is drugs. I sympathise with the line just taken by the Deputy Premier - that we must come up with lateral solutions to this problem.

I was formerly a military officer and drugs were definitely very lowly regarded in the military - they still are and should be. However, the wider community must come up with lateral solutions. What we are doing at the moment is not working. That is what the National Party said at the weekend and what the Deputy Premier and most members on this side of the House have said.

We should be very much more lenient in relation to the possession and personal use of cannabis. While at university I knew a number of people who used cannabis. I do not regard them as criminals or part of the criminal element. I do not think its use was a gateway into heavier drugs.

Mr Omodei: Do you not believe it is a gateway drug?

Mr McGOWAN: No. What is the Minister's opinion?

Mr Omodei: I think it is.

Mr McGOWAN: That is very interesting. Prior to the dinner break, on 6PR the Commissioner for Police outlined the Government's new policy to be announced within the next few days. He has stolen the Government's thunder. The Minister probably does not know about this because he is on the outer. I assume that he is happy there was no reshuffle in July - he has lasted another six months.

Mr Kierath interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: Look at the Minister for Planning; he is like a shag on a rock. He would also be happy there was no reshuffle in July because he would also have been dropped. He should not try to deny it because he knows it is true.

Mr Omodei: Do you think I am up to scratch as a Minister?

Mr McGOWAN: The Minister is on the outer but he is comparatively good.

It is very interesting that the Minister did not know about this announcement. The commissioner spilled the beans on 6PR. He has revealed that in a few days the Minister for Family and Children's Services, the expert parliamentary performer, will announce that the Government intends to introduce a cautioning system for the use of cannabis. Members opposite, who think it is the gateway to hard drugs, are to introduce a cautioning system. If a person is caught with a bong or a joint, he or she will receive a caution from the police. That is good.

Several members interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: Look at them; they are embarrassed. First, not one of them knew.

Several members interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: The Minister did not know.

Mr Omodei: Of course I knew.

Mr McGOWAN: The commissioner has announced that policy.

Several members interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: We will wait until the member for Joondalup is in the Cabinet in 2020.

Several members interjected.

Mr Nicholls: Do you support the cautioning system?

Mr McGOWAN: I do. It is the Government's policy; it is about to announce it.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member is making a speech. It is going in circles and at times he is inviting interjections. However, there are too many interjections.

Mr McGOWAN: This Government intends to introduce a cautioning system for cannabis use. Let us look at its record. Before the 1996 state election, on 11 October 1996, the Premier declared that the situation in Western Australia in respect of marijuana would not change while he was in power. He is quoted in *The West Australian* as follows -

"I would not care if every other State and Territory had moved down a position of having a soft line on drugs," he told a drug awareness launch in Perth.

"We will not go down that path.

"We have heard first-hand today from two parents who have lost their son, who started off with cannabis.

"Anything that encourages people in our community to start using mind altering substances is something I am strongly opposed to and always will be."

What a hypocrite! In three days the Government will announce a cautioning system for cannabis use. Anyone who uses cannabis and is caught will be given a warning by the police.

Mr Kierath interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: Mr Kierath is no longer invited to Cabinet meetings so he should not speak. The Premier again attacked the Labor Party in the context of the 1996 state election. We have also had the Premier condemning Dr Wooldridge for pledging support for any State or Territory that makes positive moves in relation to marijuana. The Premier said that even if every other State and Territory were to take a softer line on drugs, Western Australia's strong stand will not change while he is in power. Perhaps there is something we do not know and he is about to leave office. The member for Alfred Cove might have the numbers. The Government's stance is about to change in spite of everything it has said publicly and capitalised on in election campaigns.

The Minister for Community Services is quoted in the 9 June 1997 edition of *The West Australian* as follows -

"We will not engage in the politics of surrender and capitulate to drugs in our community."

In Parliament on 18 June she said -

The Government will not capitulate to drugs in our community and it will not involve itself in the politics of surrender.

She has surrendered; everything she said was false.

Mr Omodei: Did you ask the heroin addicts whether they started on cannabis?

Mr McGOWAN: No.

Mr Omodei: Why not?

Mr Carpenter: Did you drink a cup of tea before you had your first beer?

Mr Omodei: Are you saying that drinking tea leads to drinking beer?

The SPEAKER: Perhaps the member for Rockingham will address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr McGOWAN: I will refer to the member for Joondalup - one of our favourites. During the last election campaign the member circulated flyers stating "Vote for Chris Baker for Joondalup and Say 'No' to Labor's Pro-Drug Policy". The circular states -

There is growing concern amongst Teachers, responsible Parents & the Police that Organised Crime is using Marijuana as a 'gateway' drug to entice our young people.

Labor is Soft on Crime because it is Soft on Drugs.

The member is now part of a Government that is about to implement the Labor Party's policy. He is a hypocrite. If he is true to this campaign document, he should resign.

Mr Baker: If you were a young first offender what would you rather face - a fine of \$150 and a criminal conviction or mandatory counselling and drug education? Which would be more beneficial?

Mr McGOWAN: A cautioning system will be brought in and that is right.

Mr Baker: It is a single caution.

Mr McGOWAN: I do not think anyone should use drugs.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Willagee!

Mr McGOWAN: I would not encourage anyone to use drugs. However, I think the point should be made that the coalition capitalised on what it thought was a big issue in the last state election and people like the member for Joondalup were elected as a result. The coalition has now backflipped on that policy.

Mr Baker: Not at all; it is still illegal.

Mr McGOWAN: The coalition has come to Labor's line and adopted it. It knows that this is the only policy that will work. We have to free up our Police Force so that it is not pursuing these minor matters. That way it can get into the big stuff, the major crime. My police station is devoid of a reasonable number of police officers. In my area I cannot afford to have the police running around spending all their time on these issues when bigger offences are being committed.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: The member for Joondalup has been shown to have no credibility. He has been shown up again.

Mr Baker: If the police discover cannabis incidentally they will take action. They do not go looking for people who have cannabis for personal use.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Joondalup has had his interjection and is now interjecting too much. All interjections are beyond the standing orders. It is only my tolerance in the Chair that allows a small number of interjections to liven up the debate. However, it is getting beyond what is acceptable.

Mr McGOWAN: I have pointed out the coalition's failure on that count. The Government has failed on another count. I visited Dr George O'Neil's clinic in Subiaco a few months ago and met a number of heroin addicts. He has a naltrexone program, which is an alternative to the methadone programs. Ostensibly the addicts take the methadone instead of heroin. Naltrexone reduces people's desire to take heroin if they can stay on the program. It is a form of cure for heroin addicts if they stay on the program. Heroin is a highly addictive drug and some people must like using it; it is difficult to keep people on the naltrexone program. In other States these programs are properly funded by the State. The New South Wales Government has put something like \$5 000 an addict into this sort of program. It knows that spending \$5 000 on one addict will save the community that money 10 times over in medical costs and crime costs by removing the need for people to commit armed robberies, house breakings and other crimes to pay for their habit. I am not saying that naltrexone will necessarily work; I do not know whether it will. I saw a good program the day I visited but there are some problems. A lot of the participants will not stay on the program and a huge number of other users will not attempt the program because it involves not using heroin or any other drug. However, it is worth a try. We have to look at all alternative solutions. This one is worth a try. I suggest all members go along and see it and Dr O'Neil would be happy to see them. His major problem is that the State, through the Health Department, will not fund his program to anywhere near the necessary level. Dr O'Neil receives \$25 to \$30 an addict. Basically, he is funding it himself. In New South Wales, the programs receive \$4 000 to \$5 000 an addict. In Western Australia, we hand out \$35 an addict. These are the people who are breaking into the homes of people in my electorate, robbing service stations and committing other crimes. Giving the program a go would be a good investment.

Mr Riebeling: The New South Wales Government believes that for every \$1m it puts into these programs it can take \$3m out of the prison system.

Mr McGOWAN: That is a good statistic. It is incumbent upon the Government to look at this and give it a go. I wanted to talk about other options the Government should try. However, it is time that it thought a bit laterally and had a bit more of a go.

MR BLOFFWITCH (Geraldton) [8.25 pm]: I have five minutes before I relieve you, Mr Speaker, in the Chair so I will be brief. I had the opportunity of going to New York a week ago.

Mrs Roberts: Is the member for Geraldton saying he will be in the Chair next?

Mr BLOFFWITCH: Yes. I was apprehensive about going to a city of that size. I was told that New York was the crime capital of the world, a place where a person would not dare to walk on the street after 7.30 at night because he would be mugged. I went there and I had the opportunity of visiting the New York Police Department. I was told

that four years ago it adopted this policy of zero tolerance, the minimisation of any sort of crime. This is the idea the Opposition has ridiculed. The New York police did not start with the Mr Bigs; it started with the pusher on the street, with the kid who was abusing an old man. It started with misdemeanours committed in town. When it started, the Police Department had the backing of the mayor and the authorities. It has turned the crime rate in that city around. I could wander down the street at 2 o'clock in the morning and I did one night. There were still a million people on the street. I could not believe the crowds on the streets of New York at any time of the day or night. I felt absolutely safe. I never felt intimidated or worried.

We questioned these people over and over. I am not saying that this policy alone solved the problem. One thing in the Opposition's motion that I agree with is that we must provide more resources. Two places where I saw police services working extremely well were cities in which the officers were paid very high salaries.

Mr Kierath: Were they performance based?

Mr BLOFFWITCH: No, they were not performance based. When I told these police officers that 90 per cent of our home burglaries were unsolved, they said that if they went over 40 per cent unsolved they would sack themselves because they would not be doing their job properly. That is exactly what I was told. I asked one fellow about drugs and corruption. He told me that his wife is a sergeant, he is an inspector and their combined salary is \$US190 000 a year. Why should he ruin that for five grand? In New York, police officers are earning twice the salary of a school teacher or a nurse, the prestige of the force is high, and the recruits are university graduates. They are a better class of people. The old truth is that we get what we pay for.

These things cannot be changed overnight. The New York police had a five year plan to cut the crime rate, and each year they saw an improvement and they received an increase in wages. These are the things we have to do in this State. We have to get as tough as we possibly can. We need a Police Force which is more worried about criminals than me going five miles an hour too fast.

Several members interjected.

Mr BLOFFWITCH: We need a Police Force that will concentrate on these fundamental issues. If we have such a force, the public of Western Australia will be a lot better served.

MR PENDAL (South Perth) [8.29 pm]: Responsibility for the escalation of crime in Western Australia is at least partly in the lap of the Government as a result of the policies it has pursued or, in some cases, not pursued in the past three or four years. To an extent at least, the problem of the escalation of crime is of the Government's own making. Let me give just two examples. In March 1995 I led a deputation to the then Minister for Police, the member for Wagin. It comprised several business people from South Perth, including the then Mayor, Peter Campbell, and people who were involved in the commercial arm of Neighbourhood Watch. We put the proposition that the Government should trial for three years a system of private security patrols in the suburbs, but under the strict supervision of the police. The proposition was put because South Perth Business Watch had been able to demonstrate that there had been a dramatic decrease in commercial burglaries following its employment of private security patrols for the four or five major commercial centres of the municipality. In effect, the crime rate within the commercial sector had disappeared. That delegation argued with me and I subsequently argued with the then Minister for Police that if one could do it in those circumstances, one could do it in residential areas as well. Therefore, we costed a program. By providing private security patrols under police supervision in the residential parts of South Perth we might seriously attack crime levels.

Members might recall that the matter has become so serious in South Perth that the current clearance rate for home burglaries is 4 per cent. Eleven or 12 years ago the figure was 22 per cent across the metropolitan area. It then fell back and it currently hovers at around 11 per cent or 12 per cent for the whole metropolitan area. However, in South Perth only 4 per cent of burglaries are currently being solved. That is what makes people angry. Therefore, what was put to the Government at the time - a three year trial of private security patrols - seemed at least to offer a positive partial solution. The Minister of the day comprehensively rejected that proposition. Notwithstanding a request on my part not to respond straightaway, he was in the media within 24 hours rejecting the scheme out of hand.

Yesterday, when the Governor presented his speech to Parliament it appeared that the message had finally got through, because the Government announced the very scheme that it rejected in March 1995. There is a bit of cheek in the verbiage, but the Governor's speech states -

As a first and very innovative step, the Government will help local councils establish their own security patrol services.

In other words, the problem was that the Government did not listen. The Government that was elected in 1993 on a policy of cleaning up suburban Perth took less than two years to reject a soundly-researched proposition, but now

at the height of a crime wave in the suburbs it has at last - belatedly - seen fit to introduce a system of helping local governments to establish their own security services.

Mr Riebeling: If we brought in that system, how would people in the suburbs have equal protection by enforcement agencies?

Mr PENDAL: We envisaged it being introduced only on a trial basis in certain localities in Perth. The view was that if it were proven to be a success, one could then start to manage the problem to which the member for Burrup referred. We even costed it so that we were applying the same level of security across the metropolitan area, and it would be within the capacity of the Government of the day to bear the cost uniformly. However, I must say that our figures never reached the point of proving that beyond doubt. Ours was a request in respect of a suburb that had become the victim of crime to the extent that 96 per cent of burglaries were unsolved. We believed that there was a possibility that the solution lay there.

All I am saying is that the Government, which was elected on a certain platform, chose to reject out of hand, within 24 hours of the deputation of local government officials, local businessmen and Neighbourhood Watch people, a proposal that had been costed down to the last dollar, and that is one reason that the position has continued to deteriorate since then. People have found that they can get away with it; therefore they find comfort in the fact that there are virtually no police on patrol at night in the suburbs. I will prove that point in a moment.

Mrs Roberts: The member is quite right about that; most police officers will tell us that.

Mr PENDAL: I will deal with that point now, because it touches on the part of the motion which calls on the Government to ensure that the police have adequate resources. On 1 April this year I asked a series of questions. I waited until June before the answers were provided, and they came after I complained during a debate in this place midway through that eight-week period. I wanted a better understanding of just how many police are on patrol at night when we can expect burglaries to be most frequent.

I listened with great interest to the Deputy Premier's logic tonight. He gave a good address. It was not one of those rednecked solutions such as overly harsh punishment. He gave a good analysis. He even spoke of the way in which the Government arrived at adding 800 extra active personnel - the 500 plus 300. But what he did not say was that none of that has had any effect. What he did not say was that the Government's efforts, for whatever reason, have not made an ounce of impact on the single biggest major crime with which most Western Australians will be confronted, and that is home invasion. Most Western Australians will not be confronted with homicide or even serious assault. The greatest problem that will concern any Western Australian is that someone will break into the sanctity of his or her home and, at the very least, steal their hard-won goods and increasingly, at worst, attack them into the bargain.

If one follows the Deputy Premier's logic, we now have an extra 800 people in the Police Force and they are helping to reduce the incidence of home burglaries. Is that the position? I suggest that it is not. In my question - I do not know whether it is significant that it was asked on April Fool's Day - I said -

- (1) I refer to the fight against crime in the suburbs and ask, at any given time of the night, for example 8.30 pm each day, what number of -
 - (a) patrol cars . . .
 - are on active duty in the southern suburbs from South Perth, to Cannington, to Fremantle?

I worked out while I was waiting in the queue to speak that that comprises about 20 per cent of the population of the metropolitan area. What number of patrol cars were on patrol in that period at any given time of the day or night?

Mr Cunningham: One or two?

Mr PENDAL: No. The answer is 23. The numbers are 19 on a Monday night, 19 on a Tuesday night, 19 on a Wednesday night, 26 on a Thursday night, 27 on a Friday night, 27 on a Saturday night, and 23 on a Sunday night. The weekly average is 23. However, here comes the crunch. I then asked what number of police personnel were on duty in that massive area; and again, I worked it out to be just 52. We have about 4 500 police officers, 10 per cent of which is 400, and 1 per cent of which is 40; so roughly 1 per cent of the Police Force is patrolling an area the equivalent of 20 per cent of the population of the metropolitan area.

Mrs Roberts: The Minister for Health has left the Chamber. It is too much for him!

Mr PENDAL: I am not surprised. Mr Deputy Speaker, you made a number of good points in your speech. You mentioned the actual police presence in the suburbs. That acts as a deterrent. I know that every time we apply pressure on the Commissioner of Police to bring the mounted police into South Perth, the burglary rate drops. One

does not need to be a Rhodes scholar to work out that it takes the mounted police longer to go down Labouchere Road in South Perth than it does one patrol car, which can whizz through Labouchere Road in nine or 10 seconds before heading out to Willetton, Hilton or Fremantle.

The number of people who are delivering milk in the suburbs each night is greater than the number of people who are providing a police service! However, it is strange that we never seem to have that difficulty with the disposition of police personnel when the police conduct random breath tests. When I passed the old Swan Brewery some time ago, 18 to 20 police officers were tied up in one little spot waiting for people who were 0.01 per cent over the blood alcohol limit so that they could book them. I do not believe that random breath tests and traffic patrols should be the work of the police. That work has nothing to do with public security or safety. It certainly has to do with driver education, and I am not saying that we should not have random breath tests, but I object to the situation that my constituents confront every night of the year, where fewer police are available to them by way of burglary patrols than other parts of the metropolitan area have available to them to stop drink drivers.

Mr Johnson: I do not disagree, but the information I have is that most of the police officers who operate the booze buses are cadets fresh out of the academy, and that forms part of their four-week training period. Only a few senior police operate those booze buses.

Mr PENDAL: That is good, but I would rather see the cadets do real police work.

Mr Day: Do you not agree that deaths from a firearm accident or from a motor vehicle accident caused by a drink driver are equally important, and that the police have an important role to play in promoting road safety?

Mr PENDAL: I do not. I have said before that we should go back to the situation that we had 20 years ago, where we had a road traffic authority and specialist officers who understood road traffic law and driver education.

Mr Kierath: Put up a private member's Bill. You might be surprised!

Mr PENDAL: With that sort of encouragement, I just might do it!

I keep returning to this point. It is no good any of us saying that we now have the largest number of police personnel in history. I have had numerous robust discussions with the Commissioner of Police about his plea that we understand that he cannot put a police officer on every corner. I would settle for a couple of coppers in every suburb, let alone in every street. The problem arises from the nature of the people who are in charge. The outgoing Minister for Police is a good man and a good member of Parliament, but I am not sure that he covered himself with glory as the Minister for Police. Mr Falconer is a straight, decent, honest and incorruptible policeman; and it is not a bad start to have someone who is incorruptible. However, I do not think he is doing the job, because my constituents do not have the luxury of being able to say that their benchmark is the metropolitan average.

You have said, Mr Deputy Speaker, that in a crime canyon such as New York in the United States, if the police did not catch 40 per cent of the home burglars, they were given the chop. Some of the senior retired police officers in Western Australia who only 15 years ago presided over a burglary solution rate of 22 per cent say that the difference is that in those days, every crime scene was visited. It became very helpful to young officers to build up a picture of crime scenes, and although what they noticed at one crime scene would not necessarily lead to a solution in that case, over a period of time as they developed their skills of detection they would finally see a relationship between seven or eight crime scenes and make one arrest, and that would reduce the average. That does not happen now, although I am told that in recent months the police have claimed to attend the scene of every burglary.

The solution will not be easy, but the people in my electorate do not believe the Government is performing when it cannot do anything better than solve 4 per cent of the crime that most affects their lives. Therefore, what the police, the Minister and the Government need to do is open their minds a lot more to the sort of community input that was given to the member for Wagin in his capacity as Minister for Police in March 1995. The proof of the validity of that input in that month and year is in the Governor's speech yesterday. However, it has taken the Government three and a half years too long. After a comprehensive rejection, the Government has finally seen the light; and until it keeps doing that, it will never get on top of the suburban crime problem.

MR CARPENTER (Willagee) [8.50 pm]: I support the amendment. I am pleased that it has been brought to the Parliament because it echoes almost verbatim point by point the sorts of things that I have been saying around my electorate for quite some time; however, most noticeably over the past six or seven weeks when the Parliament has not been sitting. I took it upon myself to embark upon a series of meetings and contacts with groups in the community and by Friday afternoon of last week I was absolutely sick and tired of hearing about crime. I had had a gutful of hearing about crime, and law and order.

At half past four in my electorate on Friday afternoon - my last appointment for the week - I went out to meet a woman who had come to see me. She was sitting there with a broken nose and two black eyes. Her story was

reported in the *Sunday Times* on the weekend because I telephoned the *Sunday Times*. To give a little bit of a pen portrait of what her case was, the woman lived in Hamilton Hill. She went out for her daily constitutional walk at six o'clock in the morning with a friend and was the victim of an unprovoked attack by a fellow who lives in the area. She was punched in the face, and had her nose broken and her eyes blackened.

The real crux of the story, however, was the response and the delay in the treatment of her case by the police who basically said to her, "We will get around to it some time next week." They did see her straight away. However, when it came to any follow-up contact and questioning of the offender, whom she knew, they said, "It is going to take us until some time next week because we are too busy. We have just too much on our plate." This was a woman who had a severe facial injury from a crime.

The woman who came to see me before her had been raped. I had an appointment with her from 4.00 pm until 4.30 pm. She was looking for an emergency transfer and accommodation from Homeswest. I had had enough of it by then. As this amendment states, there is a massive problem with crime in the metropolitan area and in many of the suburbs. Everybody in this Parliament knows about it and the Government has conceded it.

One of the good things to come out of tonight's debate is that it encouraged people to make suggestions in this public forum on ways to address the problem. The member for Burrup alluded to some suggestions, as did the members for South Perth, Rockingham and so on. We can address this question either in a very narrow framework on the subjects of crime and punishment, which we are always tempted to do. However, we can also take the first point of suggestion that this amendment raises; that is, we call upon the Government to take immediate and decisive action to adopt a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to the crime problem.

In many senses perhaps we are wasting our time with all the other sort of things that we might try unless we recognise that it is a whole-of-government approach. Many of the activities of Governments in areas which they might not immediately recognise are related to law and order do have an impact in that area; notably, of course, in the area of unemployment and putting people out of work and so on.

I will go through point by point the sorts of areas that are referred to in this debate. I refer firstly to the subject of punishment. If I were to be honest with myself, I suppose a couple of years ago I was one of the people more lenient on the side of punishment than some others. I have toughened up a bit in my attitude in this area simply because of the bulk of cases that I have had to deal with - people from all over my electorate; people who are in many cases completely incapable of defending themselves and have become the victims of crime. However, I do not believe that we should thrash young offenders to within an inch of their lives, hang murderers and so on.

I commend the Deputy Premier who had some courage in tackling the argument of whipping and birching offenders because, as in my electorate, I imagine in his electorate there are many people who are now strongly of the view that that is the way to go. It is tempting obviously for people to adopt that approach. However, it should be resisted because I do not believe it is the answer.

I have spoken to about 20 or 30 groups about this matter and one of the things I often refer to is my own family history. I do not know if I have done it in the Parliament before. If I have, I apologise for what I am about to do, which is repeat myself.

The Carpenter strain, of which I am a member, came to be in this country because of the crime situation in England in the 1850s. My great, great-grandfather, Charles Carpenter, came to Australia as a juvenile criminal in 1851. He was 13 years old when he was arrested for stealing in England; he was gaoled for four years there and then sentenced to four years' gaol by way of deportation to Australia. In effect, deportation in these circumstances was a life sentence. I do not believe he re-offended. He may have done, I do not know. I do know it did not stop him from offending in the first place. The prospect, for a 13 year-old-boy, of spending a very long period in prison in the conditions that existed in 1850 and then, effectively, being sent to the other side of the world for the rest of his life did not deter him from committing the crime in the first place.

Another case often thrown up at me is that of the young American boy in Singapore who was birched after spraying graffiti on a car, or whatever. It might have stopped him re-offending; it did not stop him in the first place. We must look at the general social and personal circumstances that surround offenders as well as the punishment. However, I am now of the belief, and I have convinced myself, sadly, that a more severe punishment regime is obviously part of the mix; hence the Labor Party is now calling for a punishment regime which is tagged "truth in sentencing".

The punishment that is meted out to an offender in the justice system must be commensurate with the crime that is committed; and people who are victims of crime must know that the people who have perpetrated the crime on them will be punished in a way that is severe enough to reflect the severity of the crime. I believe that to be a just principle and if more severe punishments do deter some people from committing a crime, that is a good thing. However, it is not the answer to a high rate of crime because unless the wider social circumstances that attend to individuals

committing crime are addressed, the person being punished more severely will simply be replaced by another person who has been produced by the same set of circumstances. That is where we must look at the other factors at play in the community currently; and, noticeably, in Australia we must look at unemployment.

The biggest single difference between the Singapore scenario and the Australian scenario, and those in other parts of the world, is not the punishment regime. The punishment regime in Singapore is probably no more severe than it is in countries like Colombia. The biggest single difference is there is virtually no unemployment in Singapore. In Colombia there is massive unemployment; there is a huge difference in the demographics between those who have the bulk of wealth in the community and those who do not; and there is a major problem with their indigenous community. On the crime figures I have seen, Colombia executes more murderers than any other country and it also has the highest murder rate. There, the form of punishment does not affect the crime rate whatsoever. One must look at other circumstances such as unemployment.

In Australia we have an unemployment rate which by our own standards is quite high. In some of the suburbs that I represent - Willagee, Coolbellup, Hamilton Hill, Hilton - the unemployment figures are very high, in some areas over 20 per cent. These people are long-term unemployed and that has a dramatic and deleterious effect on the families who find themselves in the circumstances where they do not have a regular breadwinner. Quite often in those circumstances one will see - as history teaches us - a rise in the crime rates in those areas for one reason or another.

Unemployment is contributing significantly to the crime rate in Western Australia, particularly in some suburbs around the metropolitan area. It is almost criminal that we have a State Government which has been busily sacking people in the face of this fact, especially those employed by Westrail, Main Roads Western Australia and so on. When I left high school, the first paid job I had was flicking sticks off the gravel at Main Roads and I did that for a few months. I looked around at the sort of people with whom I was working and I recognised even then that many of the people who were employed in that sort of occupation would have great difficulty finding worthwhile work anywhere else. However, at least what they were doing provided them with a job, a structured lifestyle, an income, some degree of pride in themselves and they were useful members of the community and were employed. It is a social tragedy that, over a period of time, the Government has been laying off those sorts of workers in our State left, right and centre.

If members take the view that I take when looking at society as a whole, they will agree that, if one inflicts damage on people or on part of a community and makes their lives more difficult and more intolerable, there will be a repercussion. Down the track there will be an outcome from that and somewhere along the line those people who have been directly affected, their families who have been indirectly affected, or their children who have grown up in circumstances directly affected by the loss of employment, may end up as criminals, the victims of crime, living in broken homes or as drug users. If we are to be serious about crime, the Government must take on board the responsibility of providing a fuller employment base for the community and not take pride in the number of people it sacks from government work. I understand the economic arguments for it, but I do not accept them. I do not believe in what the Government tries to portray as a seamless transfer between being sacked from the public sector and being employed in the private sector; the two do not necessarily go together.

Government must wake up to the fact that unemployment plays a vital role in the eventual crime statistics that permeate through the community. There is the punishment regime, with which I do not disagree, which may have to become more severe in the way that the Labor Party is suggesting. There are also the matters of unemployment and police resources. I am glad that the former Minister for Police has come back into the Chamber because, like the member for South Perth, I also have a great deal of time and respect for the former Minister for Police and now the Minister for Health. He knows about the battle I pursued as the newly elected member for Willagee to keep the Hilton police station open. It was the only police station in my electorate and at one stage I received an assurance from the then Minister for Police that there were no plans to close the Hilton Police Station. The shell of that commitment has survived; that is, the police station doors are still open, but no-one is inside. That is a sad development. As a result of the fuss I was creating about the potential closure of the Hilton police station, I was invited to police headquarters to speak to Deputy Commissioner Brennan, a man for whom I have a great deal of respect and who is a police officer of high standing in the community. Deputy Commissioner Brennan went through the ideology or theory of the Delta program with me and explained that it would provide better outcomes in the policing operations of the State and that the old idea of having the community police at the little community police station, while good on paper, simply did not work in the modern era and was an unnecessary drain on resources.

What has happened is that while the doors of the Hilton police station are still open, it is effectively closed because no-one is inside. Someone will be behind the desk - not a police officer - who will tell anyone who enters that he must go to the Fremantle or Murdoch police stations. The reality for the people in my electorate is that there is no police station other than the new one which has opened in Murdoch.

That brings us to the very salient point raised by the member for South Perth about how far away might be the nearest

policeman or woman if someone should need him or her. The fact of the matter is that so few police are on the beat, on the roads and out in the streets in the southern suburbs that the nearest police officer might be a long way away now that that person's local police station is closed and the police are operating out of one or two major police stations. I will bet my left leg that the response times are not as good as they were previously. I am led to believe, and I have numerous questions on notice to find out whether it is a fact, that the number of police actually on the road since the Brentwood and Hilton police stations have closed is less than it was before, not more. People intuitively know it, because when they ring up for help from the police, no-one comes; when they go down to the police station no-one is there.

Of course people feel bad about crime. Of course if one person is more inclined to commit a crime than another, he or she might do that in the knowledge that no police are around and they will not be around for a very long time. There are no police out on the streets in the way in which we would like to see them. They are out in patrol cars, but are not on the beat in the suburbs. I have had the same experience as mentioned by other members with the crime rates going up and down in direct relationship to whether police have a visible presence on the streets; this is noticeably so in Coolbellup. When police are on the streets in Coolbellup, the crime rate goes down. When the police go away, the crime rate goes back up again. It is obvious and it saddens me listening to people telling me about the circumstances that they face. They almost feel as though they are living in a place where they receive no assistance from police and are left to their own devices.

I was very pleased and impressed, and very surprised, with the outcome of the National Party conference. I do not profess to know whether heroin trials are the answer. However, I agree with what other members and people in the National Party have said: Let us give it a try; let us see what happens. Provide heroin in a particular place so that people do not have to buy and deal out on the streets and break in and steal to feed their habits. Let us give that a try; it is worth it. I congratulate the National Party on that resolution from its state conference. That is a useful step forward. The Government should take the naltrexone scheme seriously. It could possibly affect thousands of drug users. This could have a tremendous impact on the crime rate simply because it takes heroin use off the drawing board for a lot of people. That should be considered as a matter of priority and funding should be provided. People are sceptical and every now and then people will scoff at it. It might not work, but let us give it a try, because what we are doing now is not working. There is no doubt about that.

The other matter that was raised, and I have heard it before from people who have been to New York and looked at it, related to zero tolerance. It goes against my instincts. I abhor the idea of zero tolerance and heavy penalties, but maybe we have reached the stage where a form of zero tolerance should be applied in some specific areas. Perhaps areas should be targeted; for example, the City of Fremantle. It might be worth a try.

The Government has failed in one of its key responsibilities; that is, the maintenance of law and order at state level. I do not attribute blame to any person or Minister because the previous Minister acted with his best efforts and intentions. What we should look at is the Delta program. Let us ask experienced police officers on the streets whether they honestly believe that the Delta program is working and whether we get the sense - I think we might - that the Delta program is not working. The new Minister for Police should go down to Bob Falconer's office and say, "Bob, Delta is finished. Go back to what you were doing before. Do something different." If the Delta program is not working, we should not persist with it. Let us try something else. In the end, as all Police Ministers have found, the Government wears the flack. The Minister wears the flack for the law and order statistics and the performance of the police. We should say to the Commissioner of Police and the Police Force, "We, the people of Western Australia, believe you should do it this way, not the way you want to do it. You do it this way or we will find someone who will."

MR DAY (Darling Range - Minister for Health) [9.10 pm]: I am taking on something of a cameo role, as the recently appointed Minister for Police is in Albany for an urgent engagement. I will take the opportunity to make a few general comments based largely on my experience during the past 18 months as Minister for Police.

Mr Riebeling: It will not take long then.

Mr DAY: I have had a significant experience over the past 18 months. The member might argue about what has been the value of it, but my experience has been substantial.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Baker): Order!

Mr DAY: This is a demonstration of the multi-skilling philosophy of this Government.

The debate has been interesting. The issues which have been raised are extremely important to the Government because they are important to the community in Western Australia. There is no doubt that there is a substantial

degree of concern in the community about the level of crime, particularly with some of those crimes that affect a significant number of people, including home burglary, armed robbery and car theft. However, the news is by no means all bad.

This motion is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics figures that were released on Wednesday, 15 July when I was still the Minister for Police.

Mr Graham: Which are official figures.

Mr DAY: The figures are based on information supplied to the Australian Bureau of Statistics by the Police Service.

Mr Graham: They are the official figures.

Mr DAY: They are the figures of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Mr Graham: They are the same figures you would have used at the police ministerial council. Do not try to dress them up as something else. They are the official figures.

Mr DAY: I am not disputing the figures in any way. The figures are based on information given to the Australian Bureau of Statistics by the Police Service. They are of course for the 1997 calendar year.

Mrs Roberts: They have comparisons with the figures for the other States and the Western Australian police figures do not have the figures of other States.

Mr DAY: Exactly. The Western Australian figures are based on information supplied by the Western Australia Police Service to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. As with any statistics, we can read into the figures whatever we like. In some areas there has been a significant increase; for example, unarmed robbery was up approximately 40 per cent based on the 1996 calendar year. The reason for that substantial increase is attributed at least in part to the fact that for the first time bag snatchers were included in the category of unarmed robbery. There has been a significant increase in the number of bag snatches as a result in part of the impact of the pawnbrokers legislation which means it is harder to dispose of stolen property through pawnbrokers. People are therefore more likely to steal hard cash.

Mrs Roberts: It is not merely an increase; it is an increase each year for the past three years.

Mr DAY: I am talking particularly about the increase in 1997 compared to 1996.

Mrs Roberts: There was an increase between 1994 and 1995 and between 1995 and 1996.

Mr DAY: There may well have been. I do not have the figures here. I am not disputing the fact that there has been an increase. However, in other areas there have been significant decreases - for example, in the not so often heard about crime of kidnapping and abduction where there was a decrease of 32 per cent. It is also pleasing to see a decrease of 10 per cent in the rate of sexual assaults. As I have said, we can read into these figures whatever we wish. The Government does not dispute in any way that there are major issues in the community to be faced up to as far as levels of crime are concerned. As I have said, they are of major importance to the Government. We take them very seriously because of the concern that exists in the community as a whole.

A whole range of issues has been raised this evening by members of the Opposition and by some members of the Government. We need to realise that this is by no means merely an issue for the police or the Minister for Police or for the Government for that matter. It is not simply the Government that can deal with this problem.

Mr Riebeling: Do you remember in the state election campaign saying that you would solve it?

Mr DAY: Anybody who believes that he can simply solve these problems of crime in the community by himself is deluding himself. Any Government that thinks that it can halve levels of crime on its own is deluding itself.

Mr Brown: That is what you said. That is the policy with which you went to the people.

Mr DAY: I do not believe that the Liberal Party said that. The coalition would certainly have indicated that it could have a major impact on the problems by dealing with the issues in a comprehensive manner.

Mr Brown: You have had an impact - the levels are up.

Mr DAY: As I have said, some levels are up and some are down. There is no doubt that if we are to deal with those sorts of problems, we need to adopt a coordinated and comprehensive response across the whole of the community and government, including the Police Service and other government agencies, such as Family and Children's Services, the Education Department as far as truancy and other issues are concerned, and the Health Department where issues impact on the levels of crime.

There are some very good examples of the coordinated response that is being provided in Western Australia. For example, in Geraldton there were major problems with crime, particularly in the city centre, until two or three years ago. As a result of a very substantial effort by the superintendent in charge of the Geraldton police district, Superintendent Graham Power, and all of the police officers working together with many other government agencies, community organisations, local government, the City of Geraldton and no doubt the Shires of Greenough and Chapman Valley, to address in a comprehensive manner the causes of the problems which faced Geraldton, a very substantial reduction has occurred in the level of crime and anti-social behaviour in Geraldton. In addition, in Geraldton there is the Aboriginal cyclic re-offending program, which is a long-term program put in place by the Government to ensure that members of a particular section of the community which tends to be over-represented in crime statistics are dealt with from the very early ages of about four or five years to ensure that young Aboriginal children are given every opportunity to go down a successful path in life as opposed to one which will lead them into recurring incidents of crime and in some cases following on in their parents' footsteps. The aim of that program is to ensure that a coordinator is in place, which has now happened, to coordinate the various activities, whether they be from the Education Department, Health Department with the various health services, the Police Service, the Ministry of Justice, community organisations or local government. As I said earlier, the objective is to ensure that those young people who may be more likely to offend later on can be given the best possible start in life, so they play a productive role in the community in the future.

The same sort of program is now being implemented in Midland with the second of the pilot programs in the Aboriginal cyclic re-offending program. It certainly involved a significant amount of discussion in the Government about two or three months ago. As the Minister for Police at the time, together with a number of other Ministers, I was very keen that the money be provided for the appointment of the coordinator in the Midland district, so we would be able to undertake the same sort of pilot program in order to get a coordinated long-term approach to deal with potential young offenders, so that they never offend in a serious way.

We must also realise that simply by throwing more police at the program and resources at the Police Service, and by increasing penalties, we will not deal with these problems successfully. We need to look at and deal with the fundamental causes of crime. In many cases they are as a result of family breakdown and the lack of proper parental guidance. In many cases the parents themselves have not had sufficient training or expertise in bringing up children. The program involves the education system as a whole. It is pleasing to note that a lot more emphasis is put on early childhood education as a result of the activities of this Government in particular in putting a large amount of extra resources into ensuring that young children of the ages of four, five and six who have learning difficulties can have those difficulties picked up at an early stage, so that as they go through the education system they are more likely to be successful.

Many studies have shown that children who have learning difficulties at school and who are less likely to succeed in the education system are much more likely to be involved in acts of crime in later life. We therefore must deal with these issues on a long term basis while responding to short term demands.

Issues within my portfolio of Health can also have an impact on crime. We must ensure that young people and families who have long term health problems receive attention so they have a sense of belonging in the community and do not feel alienated. That will help them feel much less disaffected.

Mrs Roberts: I have been waiting for the previous Minister for Health to progress the sobering up shelter for the Midland area. I hope we might get better results from you.

Mr DAY: The member for Midland has reminded me of the need for a sobering up shelter in Midland. I raised it last week. I know it is needed and I have been pushing for it in that area. However, there have been significant difficulties in determining where it should be. Has the member for Midland a preferred site?

Mrs Roberts: I was happy with the original location selected by the Anglican Church close to the police station.

Mr DAY: I will take up that issue; I agree there is a need for it.

Mrs van de Klashorst interjected.

Mr DAY: Does the member for Swan Hills have a view, even though she does not represent Midland these days?

Mrs van de Klashorst: I agree with the people in Midland that the shelter should not be located directly opposite a primary school. It could be located on land at the Swan District Hospital where it is reasonably central. Although the hospital is not keen on that idea, it could be pursued.

Mrs Roberts: The previous Minister talked about that site about a year ago and it progressed nowhere.

Mrs van de Klashorst: That is right; however, with some pushing it could go further.

Mr DAY: It has not progressed because of substantial opposition within the local community about exactly where it should be located.

Mrs van de Klashorst: The opposition came from the Midland business community.

Mrs Roberts: There is opposition from some other parties to the site in the vicinity of the hospital.

Mr DAY: Whatever the case I will take up that issue again. I agree there is a significant need for a sobering up shelter in Midland.

We must also acknowledge that violence in the community as a whole is greater these days. That is not something for which the Government or the Police Service can take responsibility; it is a problem for society as a whole. For whatever reason, more and more people in the community are likely to display acts of extreme violence. We have seen tragic examples of that within the past few years. It is a deep-seated problem for the community. In part, it relates to the amount of violence shown on television which is resulting in much more normalisation of levels of violence in the community. We must tackle that problem from a fundamental perspective if we are to be successful in fighting it.

I touched earlier on the issue of young offenders in the community. We have seen tragic examples recently of young offenders who, in many respects, cannot be expected to take full responsibility for their actions. One example is the absolute tragedy of the death of Constable Peter Ball last week, whose funeral was held today, and who was allegedly killed as a result of the activities in part of a 13 year old offender.

Although it is not our responsibility here, we have heard about some tragic instances of very young offenders, who had access to firearms in the United States, killing a large number of people. The offenders in those cases cannot be expected to take full responsibility for their actions. It is a problem for the community of the United States as a whole. If I can give a bit of gratuitous advice to the United States, it should seriously address its firearms legislation if it wants to stop a repeat of those incidents.

As I said, this is not simply a problem for the Police Service or for the Government, although it takes it on its shoulders very seriously. The Premier, the Deputy Premier and all members of the coalition take a strong, direct interest in it, demonstrated by the fact that the Premier is directly involved in the Cabinet subcommittee that is being established.

A comment was made earlier about the role of local government in crime prevention. There is no question that local government has a valuable role in preventing crime in the community and ensuring that a response is made in some cases when it occurs. Local governments are increasingly taking an interest in providing security patrols for their local residents. The member for South Perth commented about an approach to the Government about three years ago for security patrols to be provided in the South Perth area funded by the State Government. I entirely support the philosophy behind that.

About three or four years ago some business people in my electorate of Kalamunda said that they were prepared to pay a levy on their local council rates if a regular security patrol were provided for the Kalamunda central business area.

Mr Graham: The police used to patrol the streets of Perth until your mob got into government and stopped it.

Mr DAY: The police still have patrols. We have more police than we have ever had and they have more resources. However, the biggest challenge to policing is the level of crime in the metropolitan area. We have a substantial increase in population and an expanding metropolitan area. Unfortunately it is not possible to have the same degree of personal contact in the metropolitan area as exists in country areas such as that represented by the member for Pilbara.

Mr Graham: Until you got into government the police used to patrol the streets.

Mr DAY: The police still patrol the streets.

Mrs Roberts: And they responded to home alarms.

Mr DAY: They still respond to confirmed home alarms. The problem was that about 94 per cent of home alarms were false and wasted police time.

Local government has a substantial role to play in this area and more and more local governments recognise that these days. I hope the City of South Perth, if it is not already, displays the same interest as many other local governments are displaying. Assistance is being provided through the budget of the Minister for Local Government to enable that to occur.

I refer to road law enforcement and claims that if we redeployed many of the police now involved in random breath testing or speed checking operations, many more officers would be investigating crime which would result in substantially lower crime rates in the community. Police have a major role to play in road law enforcement, first and most significantly because about 220 people are killed on our roads each year and 600 are seriously injured. Road safety in itself is a major issue for the community. In many respects it is more important than levels of crime in the community.

Mr Pandal: It is an issue, but it is not a crime prevention issue.

Mr DAY: It can be a crime prevention or crime detection issue because police officers involved in random breath testing, stopping speeding vehicles or doing random vehicle checks can pick up other crimes such as drug dealing and trafficking.

Mr Pandal: Rubbish. It is just that it is not their primary function and it should be.

Mr DAY: It is a primary function of the Police Service. It is one of the core responsibilities which I strongly supported as Minister and still do - probably even more so now as Minister for Health - to ensure that we have appropriate road law enforcement so that we can reduce the death and misery on our roads. It is an extremely important issue for the community as well.

MS McHALE (Thornlie) [9.30 pm]: Perhaps one of the earliest lessons that I learnt when I became a member of Parliament was the degree to which people felt unsafe in their homes and fearful of being in their homes, particularly late at night. I was struck by the number of people who came to see me in despair because their houses or their next door neighbour's house had been broken into. Somebody in close proximity to them had been affected by crime. There was despair and cynicism that nothing was going to happen. They came to me as their local member, often because the police had told them to see their local member because they could get nothing done - "See your local member. We need more resources. Your local member will do something about it." I listened to the almost daily accounts of home invasion, break-ins and burglaries - whatever members want to call them - and very quickly I realised that this was one of the most critical issues I would face as a member of Parliament. It was particularly single women, older people and many older women living on their own who would come to me out of a sense of fear and desperation that nothing was being done to reduce the crime rate.

It is a tragedy that the community feels unsafe to be at home alone at night, which is one finding of a certain survey. It is a tragedy that people feel unsafe when they are out walking or jogging after dark. It is an inadequate response to say, for instance, that women should not be out on the streets at night - our streets should be safe. That is not a solution to crime in our community. Women should feel free to walk in the suburbs at any time of the day or night, but clearly they are not. Clearly, they feel that it is unsafe to be either in their own homes alone at night or in the streets after dark.

This debate is a nice juxtaposition to my having been to a meeting this evening convened by my local government to consider how agencies could work together to deal with crime in our community and try to work towards a safer environment for our local community. I commend the City of Gosnells on taking the initiative to bring together government agencies, members of Parliament and representatives of our youth to work collaboratively to try to deal with what is perceived to be one of the biggest social concerns facing the community.

It is interesting to note that two community surveys that the City of Gosnells did in 1997 and 1998 indicated that safety and security were the number one issue facing ratepayers and residents of the City of Gosnells. That finding is replicated in several neighbourhoods and suburbs throughout Perth and Western Australia, but it is very telling to see it brought down to the level of a local council.

One issue that we discussed at the meeting tonight was the perception of insecurity and fear. The perception of feeling unsafe is certainly incredibly high and as an issue it is as real as the actual rate of crime. Any program that the Government looks at to promote security and safety must address the real and perceived risks that our community feels in local suburbs. In order to be effective, we must deal with the perception of insecurity as well as the actual rate of crime. We also must ask why that perception of insecurity is so high. Is it based on experience, actual rates, or media reports of burglaries, home invasions and other crimes? Notwithstanding the causes of that perception, in dealing with crime and security the perception is very real in our community that no longer are we safe in our own homes or in our streets. That is a sad indictment of our community and it is certainly a sad indictment of government policies.

The Deputy Premier spoke earlier, and as with many of his deliveries, he spoke in silence and we listened to what he had to say. He homed in on the complexity of crime and its causes and the vexed question of the nature of penalties and punishment in relation to the increasing crime rate. He also, as is his wont, had a go at the Opposition for not providing solutions. Perhaps in government or in opposition leading up to the previous election we did not

satisfy the community's demands for harsher and heavier punishments or penalties, but we tried to find a balance between dealing with the causes of crime, which are enormously complex - several members have referred to them - and punishment issues. As parliamentarians and legislators we will continue to grapple with that matter because there is a demand, as the Deputy Premier and other government members indicated, for reintroducing the birch and capital punishment. That reflects the tensions in our community and the frustrations that people feel in having to deal on an everyday basis with personal or related experiences of the increased crime figures that are outlined in the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle.

It is a fact - members can look at some of the more thorough research - that when we consider the causes of crime we keep coming back to issues such as poverty, job opportunities, parenting skills and drug dependency. They are all factors in crime statistics and the causes of crime. If we are serious about dealing with crime we must be serious about dealing with those social indicators. The link between poverty and crime rates is clear. As the member for Willagee said, the link between employment and crime has been made. Of course, we know increasingly about drug dependency and crime.

I would also ask the government committee to look at the issues of isolation. We have geographical isolation as well as social isolation. In our communities and neighbourhoods, isolation and a lack of identity are also factors to be taken into account when we look at crime in a more thorough and considered way. The more complex the neighbourhood, the more anonymous the environment, the more difficult it is for codes of acceptable behaviour to be established. The more isolated one is in a community - I am now looking not only at social isolation but also geographical isolation from the main hub of our communities - the greater the relationship with criminal activities.

The structure of, and an overall sense of pride in our neighbourhoods, is important. That is why I keep harping about the importance of getting the Langford redevelopment off the ground. There is a perception amongst Langford residents that they live in an area of high crime. I do not know whether that is correct, and I doubt whether the number of offences against property will bear that out. However, such a perception exists and because it is quite a small suburb, people in this neighbourhood hear about crime, and it is reported. I believe the statistics for crime against property in Langford may not be as high as the state average. In fact, the figures for crime against people are above average. That is a much more worrying trend. Hence the importance of looking at how we can improve our suburbs where there are significant crime trends.

I put on record - it is a pity the Minister for Housing is not in the Chamber to hear this - that last week I had a very positive meeting with the Langford community. I take on face value the assurances given by Homeswest and the Minister that he will now fast-track the selection of the project manager so that the Langford redevelopment will go ahead before the end of the calendar year. Hopefully in October the name of the project manager will be announced. That is not before time; in fact, it is overdue. Among other reasons, the importance of the redevelopment is linked to the perception of the area as being an unsafe environment. It is critically important that we start to look at that redevelopment.

I now turn to the motion. Of course, those on the government side will not support it because, in simplistic terms, it is an opposition motion. If they look at what we are calling upon the Government to do, they will see they are precisely the things the Government should be doing, and it has already indicated it will do a number of the things set out. I am rather bemused that the government backbenchers will oppose this amendment because it is an indication that they will not do the things we are asking.

Firstly, we ask the Government to take a holistic approach, a coordinated whole of government approach, to the problem. In its 1996 election commitment the Government said that it would do that. It has not done it, otherwise we would not be in the situation we are at the moment. It is critical that we take a holistic approach - or as is stated in the motion, a whole of government approach - because of the complexity of the causes of crime. For instance, it is critical that the Minister for Youth be involved to ensure that he looks at the current activities for youth in the neighbourhoods and suburbs. Young people say that there is nothing for them to do. It is not surprising that residents tell me they are being harassed by young kids who have gone to the pub, and then walk down the street when they are a bit full and start to throw things around the streets. Of course they should not be doing that; but they do. It is often because there is nothing else for them to do. That was reinforced at the meeting I attended this evening with members of the Youth Advisory Council of Western Australia who said that there is nothing in our local area for young people to do.

If we are to tackle crime, we must look at employment and unemployment and how that impacts on crime rates; how the lack of security in employment may affect it indirectly. I am not saying that there is a direct link between unemployment and antisocial behaviour; however, there are links between the disadvantaged, disposable incomes and crime. It is important to look at suburban development. The Langford redevelopment is one example of where we are hopeful the spin-offs will bring about a reduction in antisocial behaviour and a greater sense of pride in the community.

The disproportionate income levels in some suburbs is interesting. At the meeting tonight we were also informed that the average income for Maddington, which is an above-average area of crime, is \$17 000 per annum. In Langford the average income is \$14 000 per annum. To approach the crime problem in a coordinated, holistic way, we must take account of those sorts of social indicators.

The second point in the amendment is about providing for truth in sentencing and appropriate deterrents. The community is calling for that. Members of the community are confused by the sentencing patterns. They do not understand them and no longer accept what is happening, for instance, in parole situations. When people are sentenced to six years in prison, the community wonders why they are let out after serving only two. We must look more carefully at the sentencing patterns and the deterrents for those who break the law.

The question of police resources has been canvassed, and I do not intend to traverse those issues in my contribution. The motion also refers to addressing the causes of crime in our community as a matter of urgency. Again I doubt whether members opposite will have any difficulty with that demand. It requires them to look very critically at the drugs issue. At the meeting tonight the police admitted that in the Cannington district drug dependency was the biggest problem they had to deal with in terms of crime. Drug related offences are a radical shift in the nature of crime in our society. It puts it on a different level altogether. It requires a different approach to law enforcement and crime prevention. I must say that I do not think we understand half of what goes on in the drug culture and drug environment.

I conclude by relating the case of a constituent of mine with whom I was involved, who was drug dependent and committed armed robbery because of his drug dependency. He served his time and came out of prison quite recently. I have been in close contact with him since his release. I will tell members the story of what happened to him several weeks after coming out of prison. I understand that he was virtually abducted by the people with whom he was involved. They wanted to see whether he would squeal. What they did to him was something that most of us would never concede could happen in our society, but it did. He will be scared for the rest of his life. There is no way that he would talk about any of the people with whom he was involved in the drug scene. That is partly because he does not trust anybody - except for his local member, of course - and also he knows what will happen to him and his family if he does talk. That is the society in which people involved in the drug scene find themselves. It is hardly surprising that they will go to any lengths to either keep their drug habit or keep other people off their backs.

MRS van de KLASHORST (Swan Hills - Parliamentary Secretary) [9.50 pm]: I will expand on a speech that I made in the budget debate that the best agency in our community for crime prevention is the family. I will not go over that speech, but I did mention that mothers in families set standards and the males in those families more or less police those standards. This morning, on behalf of the Minister for Police, I launched safety house week at the Morley Galleria Shopping Centre. That brilliant idea came about because one person thought it would be a positive idea that when her children were coming home from school, they had somewhere safe to go if anything happened. It was a Western Australian idea that originated in the 1980s; it now operates throughout Australia. Western Australia has 7 900 designated safety houses, with 250 safety house committees and 279 primary schools involved in the program. I am pleased to announce, even though we have been told here today by the Opposition that the Government does nothing for crime prevention, that \$73 000 is provided by the Education Department for salaries and office accommodation, and also the Lotteries Commission provides a large amount of money to the safety house program as well as the extensive police involvement.

Most people would not associate the safety house program with a crime prevention strategy. However, I use this as an example to show how government agencies such as the Education Department, the Police Service and the community work together to prevent crime against children. I put on record my thanks to everybody involved in the safety house program, most of whom participate on a voluntary basis.

I see the key areas in crime prevention in the social and economic development areas as properly targeted and problem orientated community policing; effective alternatives to incarceration for young people, which is important; and target hardening. We must do two things: First, we must take the negative aspect of crime prevention to stop something. If we have violent criminals, even young violent criminals, in our society they must be stopped. We cannot allow violent behaviour to continue. We must move them out of society and into incarceration of some sort where they can no longer violate the people they target. It is extremely important to remember that. That is part of crime prevention.

It goes without saying that violent people cannot and will not be tolerated in our society. However, today I wish to emphasise the other part of crime prevention today, which is the positive aspect. The negative is to stop something, and the positive is to start something. I have a belief that for as much money as we put into the prison and justice systems in the State we should put the same amount of money into the other end of crime, which is crime prevention. Simply locking up people in prison will not solve the crime problem on its own. It is part of it, but we must also look at crime prevention programs.

Any crime prevention program must be multifaceted. As with the safety house program, it must be a partnership with the community - the community must drive it - the police, as many government agencies that need to be involved, and of course, the Government. All those people must work together. One agency such as the police cannot solve on its own the reasons that people turn to crime.

True crime prevention is stopping young people turning to crime in the first place. The average young person in the justice system in this State is male - about 99 per cent. I am being reasonably general here, but invariably they tend to come from dysfunctional families. They usually have a bad school history and are illiterate and innumerate. Very often they are unemployed and other members of their family are also unemployed. They are usually poor. Therefore, any crime prevention methodology must look at all these areas to try to find ways to stop some of these things happening and to perhaps find out what the community, the Government, the police and other agencies can do to help these people.

The ex-Minister for Police mentioned that one of the things the Government is doing in Geraldton is to target families in these circumstances. We are target hardening by working hard with those types of people to see what intervention can take place to stop youngsters in those families ending up in the justice system. Governments must do this. However, the unfortunate part about this is that Governments must spend a lot of money, but the results are not seen for 10 or 15 years. If one looks at intervention methodologies in families to stop a child coming into the justice system we will not know until the child is 10, 11 or 12 years old whether the program is working. It behoves all Governments of all descriptions to do this, otherwise all we will be doing is running around in a circle. We need to intervene.

One of the things that we must do is investigate where crime is occurring. We then need to set programs in place in those areas, rather than generically trying to deal with the whole State because that is not possible in a State like ours. We need to look at what these people need in the way of minimum housing. If there are no jobs or they are jobless, in what do they need to train to get a job? What are the educational opportunities in those areas for these people? What is the extent of parental responsibility? Should we put parenting programs in place to help parents? Are there many latchkey kids? If there are, how do we put things into place to solve that? Much crime in this State and around the world occurs between four o'clock and seven o'clock in the evening when children get out of school and have nothing to do. We also need to set up role models, especially for young males. That is an important part of crime prevention.

We must holistically approach this problem across all government agencies and the community so that everybody is working towards a crime prevention strategy. We are doing this in many cases now. For example, the scouts, the guides, and the cadet programs in our schools may not be regarded as crime prevention programs but they are strategies that are part of crime prevention.

Social and economic development is important. We have done this in Lockridge, and will be doing so in Balga, Girrawheen and other Homeswest areas. We need to look at these areas and to consider ways to stop people being crowded on top of each other. The member for Girrawheen is nodding his head. Cleaning up Lockridge was a major initiative of the Government which has changed the whole tone and tenor of the area. It was done holistically, not as a crime prevention program. However, the fact that the area has been cleaned up and is a nicer place to live in, means that people no longer fear to walk down the streets. The general tone of the area has changed and there is less crime. Once people are in that situation they will not tolerate losing that and will not tolerate crime.

We need to consider racial hatred which also leads to crime. We need to ensure that people are educated and stop racial hatred. Housing, schools, employment and recreational facilities in these areas must be considered. One cannot conduct any sort of crime prevention by looking at just one single item. One of the other aspects to be considered is that we allow the community in any particular area that is targeted to lead the charge. We as a Government - and any agency - cannot lead from the top down; we must work from the bottom up. We found that out with domestic violence.

As I said, the family is one of the best agencies for crime prevention; even strengthening the family and allowing families to be part of getting it together will help. We have other strategies in place. It is an overall thing. There is Neighbourhood Watch, which works well; but it works well only when the community is involved. If there is a wishy-washy Neighbourhood Watch in which nobody is interested, it does not work. There must be full community participation.

In one of my areas, Mundaring, there is a dynamic "Business Watch" and all the businesses are concerned and are part of it. There is also "Rural Watch" of which I am part because I live in a rural area. We do what used to be done many years ago; people care about other people. This is the key to the whole crime problem in Western Australia, and indeed the world. People have withdrawn into their own little areas and have forgotten to care. If they see something happening next door, they tend to turn the other way and say, "It is none of my business." If everybody

in Western Australia turned around tomorrow and cared for somebody else, half of our criminal problem would not exist. We must have programs that are evaluated and that work. We will have to put a lot of money into this and if we do so, we must know that there will be results.

There are many programs around the world. I cannot talk about them until the report is published as I am on the select committee. That is why I am generalising. Many programs do work and there is empirical evidence that they have worked. It is important that the programs set in place are ones which have worked and are proven because many other programs are being carried on that do not have long term results. Crime prevention, especially for youth, needs to be long term. The job must be a partnership between the community, government agencies and the police. The police alone cannot possibly do it.

One of the things I discovered, as part of my reading, was that quite often youngsters who get into crime have no significant person caring for them. Even under some of the most extreme difficulties of poverty, to have a caring adult worry about them, someone they can talk to, is one of the most effective ways of preventing crime.

I was in the Children's Court the other day with a group of people and we watched some of these youngsters coming upstairs from the cells. They had their shoulders hunched. They were dejected. Some of them were only between 10 and 14 years of age. They walked up into the court. The magistrates or the justices of the peace were there. They read them the charge. The kids shrugged their shoulders. There was not a single person there for those kids in the area in which we were seated. The simple fact that there was no-one there to care for them was the obvious reason they had ended up in that court system. Therefore, we must try to ensure that a caring adult is always there to assist some of these children. Even if parents are not always there for their kids, we, as a caring community, can be. We could use other ways of caring for these children. Teachers perhaps could take the place of parents. People in senior citizens' homes could become foster grandparents to some of these children. If we think about the whole issue, there are myriad ways in which we can provide care for children who perhaps do not have a role model and get into crime.

If all Governments - and this should be bipartisan and across politics - get together and look at the whole program holistically, we can do something in this State to prevent crime.

MR BROWN (Bassendean) [10.06 pm]: In the Governor's speech yesterday, the Governor had the following to say -

A Cabinet Standing Committee on Law and Order, involving the Premier and Deputy Premier, will be an integral part of the Government's stepped up campaign against crime.

It will oversee the maximisation of crime prevention strategies as part of a wide ranging program to rein back the incidence of crime.

The Government has also initiated the Safer WA Campaign to consolidate prevention strategies and ensure a rapid and appropriate response to law and order issues.

Safer WA will be a partnership between the Government, the community, police and local councils.

What was talked about by the Governor yesterday was a holistic crime prevention strategy. That is not a new idea to Western Australia or, indeed, to people who have been involved in some depth and looked at crime prevention issues.

In 1994 and 1995 I had the opportunity of being the spokesperson for the Opposition on justice. In that role I did a considerable amount of research on the issue of crime prevention. I subsequently took the opportunity to travel to the United States and Canada to look at the types of programs in place in both of those countries.

However, in 1994 - as I do each year - I produced an annual report to my constituents. I had this to say in that annual report -

Experience elsewhere revolves around having an effective and well resourced crime prevention strategy which identifies and seeks to overcome potential problems at an early stage. This requires cooperation and coordination between government departments, non-government agencies and the private sector. When this does not have the desired result in particular suburbs additional law enforcement resources need to be made available until the problem is dealt with.

I put forward that view in 1994, as I did in the Parliament and publicly at that time. Therefore, in response to calls by the Deputy Premier about some positive contributions being made by the Opposition to the escalating crime rates in this State, I say that I made that contribution in 1994 and have continued to pursue that policy.

As I said, in 1995 I had the opportunity of travelling to the United States and Canada to look at their crime prevention methods. I was particularly impressed by the Canadian crime prevention council, a council with considerable resources that came into operation as a result of a major parliamentary inquiry in that country. The crime prevention

council had, under its jurisdiction, a multi-disciplinary team involved in looking at all types of crime prevention measures. That multi-disciplinary team involved officers from the Canadian mounted police, prisons, education, youth and so on; that is, it took experts from all of these areas and senior people out of those departments and agencies and placed them with the council to work together on developing a range of strategies and initiatives which could then be implemented across and between government agencies, the private sector and non-government organisations.

More importantly than that, the council was able to drive those initiatives through those agencies; that is, in the council itself were very senior and experienced people who developed, analysed and initiated programs which could be then pushed through and implemented at a local level and across departments. Indeed, that experience was the subject of a paper that I gave on crime prevention at a major conference of about 250 to 300 delegates. The conference was called by the State Government in 1995 and both the then Attorney General and I delivered papers. There was a range of similarities in the messages we delivered. One of the messages of course was that there should be a uniform and holistic approach across government involving the public and non-government organisations. I recall vividly that the presiding officer at the conference commented at its conclusion that the one thing agreed by all participants, whether from the disciplines of police, youth organisations or whatever, was that such an approach needed to be adopted if the Government was serious about trying to deal with the prevention of crime.

It took some time for the Government to act on the outcome of the conference. In 1996 the "Western Australian State Crime Prevention Strategy" was produced. At page 10 we read -

Crime prevention is most effective when the whole community, including relevant government agencies and the police, work in partnership to implement initiatives at the local level.

It goes on to describe the different types of crime prevention and how to prevent criminal behaviour.

It has been known for some years that there is a need to deal with this matter by adopting a whole-of-government approach and a broad-based community approach. It is one thing knowing it and a different thing doing it. We have found that the knowledge has been there but the application has not. I will give examples of a couple of cases where we have seen that there has not been a coordinated approach. The first case that comes to mind is a program that operated in Midland called the index program. It operated for school refusers. They are young people of the ages of 13, 14 and 15 who refuse to go to school. If they are taken to school, they simply refuse to stay. The program welcomed school refusers and put them through a program and ultimately sought to place them in businesses in the Midland area. The program was run on a shoestring budget. From memory a government grant of the order of \$37 000 was received. The person who operated the program was paid quite a poor wage because the \$37 000 was for the whole program, including his wage. The program would take in the order of 10 to 15 young people at a time. After a period of time on the program they would be placed in employment. Six months after they were placed in employment the coordinator would check where the young person was. If the young person was still in employment or had decided to quit and go back to full-time education, it was considered that the program had been successful. Using that methodology, the program had a 70 to 75 per cent success rate. The program was for a group of young people who are one of the most vulnerable groups to fall into the criminal justice system.

What happened to that program? It ceased to exist because government funding was stopped. Why was government funding stopped? It was stopped for this reason: The index program was deemed not to be appropriate to be funded by the Education Department because the young people had left school and therefore it was not the responsibility of the Education Department. It was deemed not to be the responsibility of the Department of Employment and Training because it dealt with employment, and those people who were 15 years and under were not eligible to be in employment, even though they had exemptions to start employment. It was said that it was not an employment program. The Ministry of Justice said that it was not appropriate for it to fund the program because not all of those people had been involved in the justice system and therefore it could not be seen as a crime prevention program. That very good program that worked for young people who were very vulnerable to falling into the criminal justice system ceased to exist not because it was not delivering results but because of government bureaucracy and individual Ministers and departmental heads wanting to use money for their own agendas instead of the broader crime prevention agenda.

It is one thing to talk about a whole-of-government approach but quite a different proposition to implement the necessary arrangements. It means that when individual Ministers and departmental heads sit down and plan their budgets they have an obligation to look much wider and more specifically at the broad agenda of crime prevention than at some of their narrow outcome-based objectives to which they are currently wedded. If the Government is serious about having a whole-of-government approach and taking this issue on, it will need to revisit many of the objectives of individual agencies, otherwise it will be argued at a bureaucratic level, maybe even by the Auditor General, that agencies are spending money on programs which are not set down as an outcome. If the Government is serious about taking a whole-of-government approach it needs to have a capacity to drive that approach in

individual departments and agencies. Currently that capacity does not exist. The only way it can come about is if a model like the Canadian model is established, so that it can drive the process through agencies and constantly make sure agencies act and reiterate the point that, in spite of all their other obligations, agencies have an obligation to crime prevention.

If the Government is serious about it, information protocols will need to be set up between agencies as to the information that can be shared. For example, in education many teachers can provide very significant information on students. They need to be assured that the information can be passed on to the appropriate areas. Information protocols will need to be set up between the Police Service, the Education Department and youth organisations. There will need to be an interventionist approach. What happens now is that all too often services are provided but that is all that happens. People set up a sign which says that a service is provided. That is fine if someone goes looking for that service. What is needed in crime prevention is an active interventionist program which actively engages people who are in danger of falling into the criminal justice system and the implementation of strategies that will prevent those people falling into the system. That is, we will actively go out into the community and identify those at risk and seek to establish programs for them to provide opportunities. It has been demonstrated that many young men who are vulnerable to entering the criminal justice system have a predisposition to learn about motor vehicles. Some of the courses in this area give them an opportunity to learn properly about motor vehicles, to work on them and to gain some knowledge and experience. They become enthused with those projects and then have the potential to get jobs in garages or elsewhere. Someone with perhaps not the best education in the world but who is enthused about that occupation can have his energy channelled positively into those programs. That potentially diverts someone who is headed down the road of causing himself, his family and the community great grief. It can encourage that person to make a positive contribution to the community.

That does not come cheaply, but nothing does. The community and the Government must make this decision. Crime prevention entails a payment and that payment can be made in two ways: First, up front in prevention programs or, secondly, at the back, after the crime is committed, with incarceration. In my humble opinion it is better to make the investment up front when we can do something positive. Many things can be done in a very positive way.

It is not easy to get the cooperation of the various departments and agencies. I asked for a meeting with Homeswest, the Police Service, the Education Department and Family and Children's Services. It took a while to set the date for a meeting with those agencies and the local authority. It was planned so that all the agencies could attend to talk about and put in place strategies to cover each area of agency responsibility. We had a good start to the meeting - the representatives from Family and Children's Services did not arrive. They pledged to be there but they were not interested enough to attend. The other agencies talked about these issues and we are due to meet again, along with a number of residents, to try to deal with them at a local level.

It is not easy. We are encountering problems at the local level. I do not believe extensive patrolling by police is the be all and end all, but it would be nice to have a few more police on the afternoon shift. With the implementation of the Delta program the local officer in charge of the station is supposed to make decisions about budget management and how the station will deploy its officers to maximise the protection of the community. We are told behind closed doors that that cannot be done. Why not? We are told that, notwithstanding the theory of the Delta program, an instruction has been issued that no more than one car is to be deployed on the afternoon shift - there is no money to pay the officers. That is an absolute contradiction in terms.

We talked to Homeswest about its accommodation policies and its homemaker program - a program abolished by this Government. When we talk to Homeswest about some of the accommodation issues it faces, why it cannot work with some of the other agencies and why those other agencies will not participate, we are simply told that they will not cooperate. Dealing with these issues is difficult and time consuming.

We will not be successful if the Government responds with platitudes in this place. It is my strong belief that with an effective, well-resourced and committed crime prevention policy we can have a major effect as a community. However, the Government must drive the process. It should take the money out of each of the departmental budgets and ensure that it is used for those cross-agency initiatives. If that is done, it will be effective. If it is not, we will be back here in 12 months listening to the same debate and the crime figures will be going through the roof.

DR TURNBULL (Collie) [10.25 pm]: The vast majority of youth and others within our society are responsible and law-abiding people. When we talk about the crime wave we are experiencing in our State we are referring to a small number of people. The crime wave involving violence against people, stealing and drugs could be compared with cancer. There are many causes of crime and there are many causes of cancer. Some are genetic - they are within the person, in their genetic make-up. We have people who are unable to learn, who suffer from attention deficit disorder and who have lower intelligence levels. The food and drink we take in, such as drugs and alcohol, can also cause people to commit crime. External forces such as violent parents, criminal activities of mates and gangs, poverty and homelessness also trigger antisocial behaviour.

Of course, as there are multiple causes, there are also multiple solutions. We cannot look at one approach and say that that will be the ultimate solution. We cannot necessarily take something that appears to be active and appropriate in one area and apply it to another. We must analyse why it works in one area and whether it will apply to another. Dr George O'Neil's naltrexone program does not work for everyone - it works for very specific people in very specific circumstances. The National Party's recent state conference made a recommendation about a heroin trial. That might be a solution in some cases, but in the vast majority it most likely will not be.

I will refer to some of the programs I know have worked because of the circumstances in my electorate. The first program that I believe will be effective, although it will take a long time to produce results, is the parenting program run by Family and Children's Services. It is well directed at mothers, and in some cases fathers, who do not have very much experience in parenting. They can obtain very good advice from that program. One of the problems is that parents do not have many children - only one, two or three on average. How do they practise when they have so few children? Unfortunately when people are dislocated from their extended family they often do not know how to parent.

The other very good initiative in my electorate is the literacy program. This program focuses on the fact that many people who are in gaol have very low literacy skills. Unfortunately, despite the fact that primary school teachers feel they have done a good job and have tried to cope with these issues, many youths go to high school without having achieved the appropriate literacy level.

The Collie High School runs a literacy program in which volunteers mentor students needing help with literacy. Our youth worker meets young people in that program at school and after school in "drop-in" areas where they can talk. That contact is very important because it involves young people who are not presently involved in crime but who are on the edge of falling into it because they cannot cope at school or with life.

An extremely good mentoring program is also run for people who have dropped out of school and who are trying to get jobs. It works well in my electorate because it is not a large population and it is reasonably easy for the mentors to link in with the people who need them.

A homework class has been introduced with the literacy program. Although federal government funds pay for Aboriginal homework classes, no homework classes have been established to cater for other students who have very difficult home environments because of violent parents or parents who pay no attention to schooling. The homework program is conducted at the Police and Citizens Youth Club centre and is beginning to provide good focus for those who attend.

It is important to adopt a variety of ideas. Some people say that only one program is appropriate and there is no point in providing small programs all over the place. In the 16 years in which I have been the chairman of the youth work program I am convinced that the most effective approach is a number of small programs that contact up to a dozen young people. That number of people enables group ownership of the programs.

No youth worker should be required to work on a one to one basis with more than about 15, 12 people in the core group and perhaps 15 contacts. I know it is very expensive and difficult to access funds for these programs. I will recommend to the Cabinet cross-department committee that we consider funding these programs adequately.

One of the important issues to remember with these preventive programs is the difficulty of measuring outcomes. I have struggled to develop a way of assessing the outcomes of these programs. We cannot do it. Four or five years down the track the results are obvious to me. I assist in a small group called Fishcare which is very popular with a number of boys and a few girls who do not participate in other activities such as sport, Scouts or cadets. They love Fishcare. One day a young chap turned up at Fishcare whom I thought I had met previously. He was very helpful and knew all the fishing spots in the river and a great deal about the fish. It was not for about three months that I realised I had had dealings with him about a year earlier. At that time he had undoubtedly been a youth at risk and was close to offending. His school work was very poor, but he loved Fishcare. He has become one of the experts on managing aquariums in the school. I am sure that the youth worker helped keep him out of crime the year before and allowed him to move on and join in another activity.

The demand by the accountants - the bean counters - and the Auditor General that we provide an outcome statement for youth workers and programs in our community is unreasonable. That issue must be addressed when examining the funding of these programs.

I have elaborated on a few examples and tried to emphasise the disadvantages of trying to develop one overall program applying throughout the whole State. The uniqueness of the areas and the prevention and intervention programs are only as good as the people who operate them. They should not be required to produce a piece of paper with qualifications on it. Young people at risk respond to people who care for them and show their empathy or respect for them. That has nothing to do with a piece of paper containing a university qualification.

There are multi-causes of crime and multi-solutions, some of which are very long term. Some of these solutions which are particularly good are in our schools. We should have a long term tracking program for people who have schizophrenia. Marijuana is the trigger point for the majority of young men who show signs of schizophrenia. In each of the past three years in which I was a doctor I dealt with four acute schizophrenic cases, all triggered by marijuana. If we are to help young people avoid not only crime but also suicide -

Mr Riebeling: Are you saying they would not have been schizophrenic if they had not used marijuana?

Dr TURNBULL: Yes. Medically I would say that three out of four of these young people would not have become schizophrenic if they had not taken marijuana. A tracking system to provide more support for our schizophrenics would be very useful. The mental health program initiated by Hon Keith Wilson was the start of that. We must not skimp with funding for mental health assistance such as tracking and support of people who have schizophrenia. Some of those young people commit suicide and others become involved in crime.

I would like to suggest many other programs to the new committee, particularly employment programs, which are very important. Hundreds of thousands of hectares of forest surround Collie that need silviculture management which could provide very interesting and worthwhile employment for young people.

I thank my colleagues and you, Madam Acting Speaker (Mrs Holmes), for staying until this late hour.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (18)

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

Noes (26)

Mr Ainsworth	Mr Cowan	Mr Marshall	Mr Sweetman
Mr Baker	Mr Day	Mr McNee	Mr Trenorden
Mr Barnett	Mrs Edwardes	Mr Nicholls	Mr Tubby
Mr Barron-Sullivan	Mrs Hodson-Thomas	Mr Omodei	Dr Turnbull
Mr Bloffwitch	Mr Johnson	Mrs Parker	Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Kierath	Mr Shave	Mr Osborne (<i>Teller</i>)
Mr Court	Mr MacLean		

Pairs

Mr McGinty	Mr Board
Mr Marlborough	Mr House
Mr Grill	Mr Prince

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Barnett (Leader of the House).

House adjourned at 10.44 pm

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PREMIER

*Declaration of War against Crime***8. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:**

I refer to the Premier's declaration of war against crime and his decision to chair a new cabinet subcommittee on crime.

- (1) Is it not the case that drug-related crimes and heroin overdoses in Western Australia skyrocketed after the Premier personally took charge of the war against drugs?
- (2) Is it also not the case that graffiti crimes have exploded since the Premier personally took charge of the war against graffiti?
- (3) What assurances can the Premier give the House that his latest declaration of war is a serious attempt to tackle the issue and not just a public relations stunt designed to boost his flagging leadership?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(3) The Government started tackling the drug issue some years ago. The Leader of the Opposition is right: In the last 12 months we saw a big increase in the number of heroin deaths in particular, which caused us tremendous concern. We understand that a very high grade heroin became available on the streets at that time. As we already had in place a drug strategy, we were able to start tackling that issue. We cannot be complacent as a Government, but our success to date is the fact that the rate of heroin deaths is now 20 per cent below that of last year. That is certainly a positive step. Even more encouraging is the community involvement with our local community drug action groups. This strong, long term community involvement, along with an education program, will assist us in tackling the problem. We have been hitting the graffiti issue hard for some time. We have had a policy to remove graffiti from government buildings and infrastructure as quickly as possible, and, by and large, we have been able to achieve that aim. However, problems have arisen in removing graffiti from private residential properties. As many members opposite know, our task force has been hugely successful in targeting some areas in their electorates.

The member for Nollamara commented that the Government's projects were not working but that local governments' projects were working. An article in the newspaper gave the mistaken impression that the Government was not doing its bit in the City of Stirling with its graffiti strategy. A letter from the City of Stirling states -

The true position is that the City, in partnership with the WA State Government, initiated last November a highly successful campaign to rapidly remove and deter repeat graffiti throughout Stirling. The City and the State Government will share the estimated cost of \$1 million for what is known as the Stirling Area Graffiti Campaign.

Evidence of the success of the campaign is that other Councils are to adopt a similar partnership strategy with the Government and the WA Police Service. Quick, and if necessary, repeated removal is the best deterrent to graffiti vandals.

Quite contrary to your report -

This is a letter to *The West Australian* -

- the graffiti problem in Stirling has not "got worse".

Stirling applauds the State Government for its strong role in tackling the very expensive community eyesore of graffiti.

If the member for Nollamara wanted to be fair he would say that we have targeted large parts of his electorate and that we have been successful in removing graffiti from those areas.

I was asked a question by the media today about the increase in graffiti offences. I make it clear, of course, that graffiti was not seen as a crime when we formed the Government. We have changed the policies. The police now accept graffiti reports from trains, they actively seek out offence reports and they accept reports over the telephone, which is an important part of the City of Stirling's strategy. Part of our strategy is actually encouraging people to make reports about graffiti so that we can get on and fix it.

Mrs Roberts: It has been a crime for all those years.

Mr COURT: I am giving an explanation about graffiti statistics. Local governments are also reporting to the police whereas before they did not. The Stirling campaign has quite deliberately led to a major increase in reporting, which is what it set out to do. That resulted in a 67 per cent increase in reporting in the Mirrabooka district, from 1 549 to 2 297 reports, and other local authorities are reporting in. For example, the City of Wanneroo began reporting in July 1997, which alone added 1 468 reports to the total by June 1998. The Wanneroo reporting alone accounts for more than 50 per cent of the reported statewide increase.

I tell members opposite that we are proud that we have identified graffiti as a serious social issue - vandalism - and that we have actually set out in a constructive way, often in Labor Party electorates, to resolve the issue. If members opposite want to adopt the position that we have not worked in a constructive way with them as the local members of Parliament, I shall be disappointed, because we have involved local members in such programs.

Mr Brown: Not in my area. We have not heard peekaboo.

Mrs Roberts: Not in my area, either.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier.

Mr COURT: I am sorry that I have taken some time on this matter, but the deception that I have heard from members opposite needs to be corrected. The member for Bassendean said that there is a major problem in Beechboro Road. As soon as that comment was made, I made some investigations. I have asked for a report to come to my office about Beechboro Road, just as I did in respect of the electorate of Nollamara with the television stations there. I went out there. It was an absolute disgrace. We found that the problem was that individual property owners did not have the means or the know-how to remove graffiti from the large brick walls around -

Mr Kobelke: The problem is more than just removing graffiti. You have taken up one part of the issue with some little effect. What about answering the rest of the question?

The SPEAKER: Order! We have to get on with other questions. I have the feeling that perhaps interjections are extra questions that are continuing the process. I ask the Premier to come to a reasonably quick conclusion.

Mr COURT: I make two other points. The program in the member's electorate is not only to remove the graffiti, but also the walls will be coated with special substances to assist with the removal of further graffiti. Surveillance cameras will be in place in key positions, in an attempt to catch the offenders. It is a comprehensive strategy, and if members opposite take a negative approach to the Government's attempts to help their electorates it is a strange way of resolving the issue.

CRIME REDUCTION TARGETS

9. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

In the interest of outcome rather than process accountability, what specific targets for reducing crime have been set for the new cabinet committee?

Mr COURT replied:

The Government is not in the business of setting a specific target. I would like to be able to stand in this Parliament and say Western Australia has the lowest crime rates in this country. That is a goal the committee will work towards.

I was asked whether I personally took responsibility for law and order. As Premier, I take responsibility for all areas of government, whether it be law and order issues, graffiti problems, economic growth or unemployment. I recall that when former Premier Carmen Lawrence was asked whether she took responsibility for the unemployment rates in this State, she said she did not because the unemployment rate was caused by a world recession. That is the difference. The current Government takes responsibility for these issues, and the track record of members opposite when in government is that it is someone else's concern.

ARMADALE-KELMSCOTT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Status

10. Mrs HOLMES to the Minister for Health:

Will the Minister advise the latest situation regarding the status of the Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital, particularly in relation to -

- (1) The new facility providing public hospital services to the residents of the area.
- (2) The possibility of the new facility being operated by a private entity, with the State Government retaining ownership of the land.
- (3) When the new facility is expected to be fully operational and available to needy residents.

Mr DAY replied:

- (1)-(3) I am very happy to provide factual information about the redevelopment of the Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital. The new hospital development for the Armadale-Kelmscott region is very welcome and is long overdue. It has been brought about in the context of the Government's recognition that the existing hospital is substandard and inadequate. The people of the region deserve something better than that. It is worth asking ourselves what the Labor Government did for those people when it was in office. It did absolutely nothing. The Labor Party has something of a track record as far as private sector involvement in the running of public hospitals is concerned. Which Government sold the Hollywood Repatriation General Hospital?

Ms MacTiernan: The Federal Government offered you \$50m to take that hospital over and you would not do it. It was offered to you as a present, you hypocrite.

Mr DAY: I am drawn to a comment in a letter from the Labor candidate for the federal seat of Canning, who wrote -

Whenever a public hospital is sold to a private company the quality of services declines, staff are sacked, waiting lists and waiting times grow, and costs blow out.

How do members opposite explain the federal Labor Government's sale of the Hollywood hospital? Has it been a success?

Ms MacTiernan: That is different.

Mr DAY: Is that different because it is all in the past? When members opposite talk about hypocrisy, they should look at themselves.

This Government will ensure that the people of Armadale-Kelmscott get a new 120-bed hospital which is world class, high quality and top standard - the sort of facility which the residents of the south east corridor deserve and with which they should be provided.

Exactly how that will be done has not been decided. All options are open. A request for proposals has gone out to the private sector. The closing date for those proposals is the end of October. At that time, the proposals which come in will be carefully assessed by the Health Department, the Government and all of the relevant advisers, and around the end of the year the Government will decide how best to provide that much needed, new development for the Armadale-Kelmscott region.

It is clear that a strong scare campaign is being run in the Armadale area by the member for Armadale, in conjunction with her colleague the Labor candidate for Canning, to try to frighten people into believing that there will be no public beds in that hospital, and that the hospital may never be built, or may be built and soon sold off.

Mr McGowan: No wonder Mr Falconer is so happy!

The SPEAKER: Order! We had a small campaign before we recessed to get members not to make interjections which have little to do with the question that has been asked. The member for Rockingham is infringing; and if he persists, I will take action and he will not have so much time in this place. Perhaps the Minister will bring his answer to a close.

Mr DAY: The people of the south east corridor deserve a new hospital. We will make sure they get it, rather than simply talk about it. The expected completion date is the end of 2000, with the opening in early 2001. I will be delighted to invite the member for Armadale to the opening in early 2001.

HOSPITAL TITLE DEEDS

11. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Can the Minister explain why the land title deed to Osborne Park Hospital was put in the name of the Metropolitan Health Service Board on 16 September 1997 and why the title deeds to the Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital land were placed in the name of the Minister personally on 5 August 1997?

- (2) What legal advice did the Government obtain about the proper entity to hold such titles?
- (3) When was that advice obtained, and will the Government table a copy of it?

Mr DAY replied:

I thank the member for Armadale for some notice of the question, albeit that she obviously believes there is some massive conspiracy, when that is clearly not the case.

Ms MacTiernan: I just wonder why you breached the Hospitals and Health Services Act. It is a pretty simple proposition.

Mr DAY: I will give the answer to the question that the member asked.

- (1) The land-holdings at the Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital and Osborne Park Hospital sites are crown reserves and are not held as freehold titles. It was necessary to change the vesting for the Osborne Park Hospital reserve to the Metropolitan Health Service Board to enable the board to lease out the consulting facilities for the privatised radiology services at Osborne Park.

The land at the Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital site was vested in the Minister for Health prior to 5 August 1997. This vesting was cancelled, and it was revested in the Minister for Health on the same date in order to facilitate the excision of a small portion of land from the hospital site to the Albany Highway reserve.

Ms MacTiernan: Did you receive advice that it should be in the name of the Metropolitan Health Service Board?

Mr Court: Do you want to come to the opening or not?

Ms MacTiernan: Is that a threat? I will be on the age pension before that happens!

Mr Court: That will be your fault, not ours.

Several members interjected.

Mr DAY: As I was saying, it was previously in the name of the Minister for Health and was revested on the same day in the name of the Minister for Health. The essential purpose was to provide a turnoff lane to allow safer access to the hospital. Where a portion of the land has been excised from a reserve, it has been standard Department of Land Administration practice under the Land Act to cancel the previous vesting which was in the name of the Minister for Health, and to revest the amended reserve again in the name of the Minister for Health.

- (2) When all previous hospital boards were formed into the integrated health service, namely the Metropolitan Health Service Board, the internal legal advice was that it was not necessary to amend all of the existing land and property arrangements. Amendments have been made when the reserve details have changed. Legal advice is not required for routine adjustments to crown reserves.
- (3) Not applicable.

Ms MacTiernan: I have a supplementary question.

The SPEAKER: Order! No. The member has had a supplementary question, if by interjection.

Ms MacTiernan: You have to protect him, don't you? I understand.

WATER

Availability to Dry Farming Areas

12. Mr McNEE to the Minister for Water Resources:

A reliable water supply is a serious problem for many property owners in dry farming areas. The Government has recently funded some experimental work to assist farmers. Can the Minister give details of these initiatives?

Dr HAMES replied:

I thank the member for the question. This Government has been putting much effort into trying to get better water supplies to some of the drier rural areas in Western Australia. That is done in a couple of ways, one of which is through \$5m that comes annually from the Water Corporation to do things like pipeline extensions and catchment dam extensions, in particular. We also fund projects through the farm water grants committee. Last year it amounted to \$1m a year, and it has been increased this financial year to \$2m. The member for Moore chairs a committee that look at both those issues.

In one instance farmers were keen to look at some experimental works to try to improve the supply of water to the dry country areas. I am pleased to say that through the farm water grants committee the Government has now funded three experimental projects, valued at a total of \$24 628. The first of those is in Salmon Gums where it was stated that one of the biggest problems is the evaporation of water from farm dams. We are looking at a project for shading those dams, and at a relatively small cost. The second project covers a reverse osmosis desalinator of ground water in the Morawa region. Funds are being provided to put in the desalination unit for a farmer in that region. The third project will be undertaken in Cadoux where there is a major problem with a leaking dam. Some experimental work with a new sealant is being undertaken to try to stop that water leakage from that dam. Although it is not a large amount of money - nearly \$25 000 - the principle is very good. We are looking at alternative methods in those farming communities to try to save their water supplies and to improve the very dry conditions some have experienced, in addition to all the other moneys we have spent recently to improve their water supplies.

TAX REFORM PACKAGE

13. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

- (1) Is it the case that the tax reform package to be released tomorrow by the Howard Government will, firstly, further centralise financial power in Canberra and, secondly, result in a worsening of the problem of vertical fiscal imbalance?
- (2) Is the Premier aware of the comments of Alan Wood in *The Australian* newspaper - someone the Premier quotes approvingly - that unless the Premier rejects the Federal Government's package, the Premier will look like a spineless dill without even the courage of his convictions.

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(2) I read the article by Alan Wood. I have a lot of respect for what he writes. We have been arguing for the States to have access to a major growth tax, over which the States would have control - and I think we will get it.

Dr Gallop: Control? How are you going to get it?

Mr COURT: I will tell the Leader of the Opposition that tomorrow in question time.

WESTRAIL

Free Travel Entitlement

14. Mr JOHNSON to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

Is Westrail considering a proposal to permit people with a pension card and school age children to use their one free travel entitlement a year during school holidays?

Mr OMODEI replied:

The Minister for Transport has provided the following response -

Westrail will introduce a new reservation system in the second half of 1998 which will make it possible to utilise quotas for all the various types of fares. Under this arrangement use of the free journey entitlements will be possible during school holidays; however, the extent will be subject to demand.

PEEL HEALTH CAMPUS

15. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Will the Minister table today a copy of the contract with Health Solutions in respect of the Peel Health Campus as previously promised?
- (2) Will the Minister confirm that the promise by former Health Minister Kierath to provide dedicated mental health beds at the Peel Health Campus will not be honoured?
- (3) Will the Minister confirm that the Peel Health Campus will not be providing the full range of women's and children's health services as promised and that any women and children patients with complications will be transferred to the Rockingham-Kwinana District Hospital?

Mr DAY replied:

I thank the member for Fremantle for notice of this question.

(1)-(3) It is my intention to table a copy of the Peel Health Campus health services agreement in the current session of Parliament excluding commercial-in-confidence information.

Mr McGinty: That is sometime between now and Christmas.

Mr DAY: That is correct. I am advised that, based on the clinical need at that hospital site and population projections, dedicated mental health beds are not required currently at the campus. This decision was agreed in March 1997 between the Health Department's mental health division and Health Solutions. The Peel Health Campus has a capacity to care for patients with a range of low level mental health problems, for example depression, in its general medical wards. The Alma Street clinic at Fremantle Hospital has sufficient acute beds to meet the special psychiatric in-patient needs of the south west metropolitan mental health region, including the Peel region. This does not preclude the provision of dedicated mental health beds in the future in response to a demonstrated need. Therefore, if they are needed in the future and they can be justified, they will be provided. Peel Health Campus will provide a comprehensive range of gynaecological and obstetric services for women and paediatric medical services; in other words, for non-surgical admissions. Paediatric elective surgery will be undertaken at Rockingham where a large number of paediatricians and paediatric beds are available.

Mr McGinty: Not at Peel?

Mr DAY: I said paediatric elective surgery will be undertaken at Rockingham. As I indicated yesterday in answer to the member for Dawesville, the development at Mandurah is a very welcome new development for the people of that region. A very high standard, 130-bed, brand new hospital will be provided by this Government. We recognise where there is a need. We are meeting that need and doing something about it, not simply talking about it.

AUTISM

Early Intervention and Treatment

16. Mr BAKER to the Minister for Disability Services:

Does the Western Australian Government propose to support the establishment of a specialist centre to assist in the early intervention and treatment of autism?

Mr OMODEI replied:

I thank the member for this question. International developments in the diagnosis of autism have resulted in a substantial increase in the number of children diagnosed in recent times. The Western Australian Government has responded to this increase with a commitment of \$800 000 in growth funding for early intervention services for children with autism. This funding is allocated individually, based on the age of the child, and is available until the child commences full time schooling. Of this funding, \$120 000 has been specifically allocated to early intervention services for country families.

In the metropolitan area, funding is directed to those providers who have been endorsed by a tender evaluation process involving an independent tender evaluation panel. The four providers - the Autism Association of WA, Mildred Creek Early Intervention Service, the Intervention Services for Autism and Developmental Delay, and the Centre for Developmental Research and Development at Edith Cowan University - have been endorsed as providers of autism early intervention services. Families select the provider of their choice. A further tender will be held in 12 months and thereafter every two years. This will provide an opportunity for other providers to seek endorsed provider status.

NATIONAL PARTY

Drugs Policy

17. Dr GALLOP to the Deputy Premier:

I refer to the National Party's new drugs policy, in particular its support for a legal heroin trial. Does the Deputy Premier agree with the member for Joondalup, who told 6PR listeners that the policy was akin to giving free alcohol to alcoholics or stolen goods to convicted burglars? Will the National Party leader reassure the House that the policy is a serious attempt to address a major social issue and was not, as the member for Joondalup speculated on 6PR, an attempt to drum up publicity for last weekend's National Party conference in Hyden?

Mr COWAN replied:

Unlike the Leader of the Opposition we do not have to pull any stunts to ensure that we follow the democratic process, such as those the Leader of the Opposition has fallen prey to these days.

Mr Court: There was the Hyden declaration.

Mr COWAN: I confess that my leader at a federal level does employ a stunt or two every now and again. Sometimes they are effective, unlike the stunts by the Leader of the Opposition. In my view Mr Fischer is one of the hardest working and most effective Trade Ministers Australia has ever had. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition knows how I voted at Hyden. Notwithstanding that, as it was adopted by a close vote at the National Party convention, it is part of National Party policy to give that a trial. The first responsibility I have is to get the information upon which that motion was based; that is, the trials that were conducted in Switzerland and Denmark. Although it was not mentioned, a trial conducted in Brixton in the United Kingdom also dealt with this matter. When I get that information and can see whether it has worth, I will pursue that with the Government of this State to see whether it has application in this State.

NATIONAL PARTY

Drugs Policy

18. Dr GALLOP to the Deputy Premier:

Did the comments of the member for Joondalup assist in a frank and open debate about this subject in Western Australia?

Mr COWAN replied:

I am not aware of the comments that were made, so I am not able to respond.

The SPEAKER: Order! That was very close to asking for an opinion.

PEEL DEVIATION STRATEGY

19. Mr MARSHALL to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

Since Mandurah became the gateway to the south west the increased traffic flow has caused concern to the local residents. A Peel deviation has been planned to counter this traffic flow. What immediate action will be undertaken to implement the Peel deviation strategy?

Mr OMODEI replied:

The Minister for Transport has provided the following response -

The Government recognises the need to address the growing congestion along the Perth-Bunbury highway and planning is well advanced for the Peel deviation, which is expected to take the majority of the north-south through traffic out of Mandurah. Main Roads WA is undertaking an assessment of the priority to construct the Peel deviation and possible funding sources. The timing of construction will depend on the outcome of this assessment as well as the funding availability. A decision will be made within the next few months in this regard.

I join the member for Dawesville, who has pursued this matter quite vociferously as a regular user of that southern corridor to get to and from Perth. Traffic is congested there from time to time. I am sure that with the member for Dawesville lobbying the Minister, the project will come on stream sooner rather than later.

REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT

Process

20. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Does the Minister concede that there is widespread community, industry and scientific concern about the regional forest agreement process in Western Australia? If so, what action has the Minister taken to address the community's concerns?
- (2) Given that we are only months, and possibly weeks, away from a federal election, will the Minister guarantee that she will not sign such a significant agreement until after the federal election?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(2) The public submission period closed on 31 July after a three-week extension. The latest advice I have is that in excess of 30 000 submissions were received from Western Australians. Some of those have been

form-type submissions, some handwritten submissions, and some group submissions. That shows the tremendous community input into the regional forest assessment process and I thank everyone for the time and commitment they have given to it.

Some concerns have been raised by members of the WA Forest Alliance, the Conservation Council of Western Australia through Beth Schultz, and some scientists. Wherever information has been received or concern expressed we have sought details and have endeavoured to investigate, even to the point of appointing a further independent botanist to ensure that the information that had been provided as part of the public process had been properly carried out. I have given an undertaking that I will see the end of the RFA process as quickly as possible. The federal election is irrelevant to that process.

The SPEAKER: Order! Two questions took 15 minutes. However, including supplementaries, we had 13 questions, which is not too bad.
